

The Almanac

THE HOMETOWN NEWSPAPER FOR MENLO PARK, ATHERTON, PORTOLA VALLEY AND WOODSIDE

JULY 5, 2017 | VOL. 52 NO. 44



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THE NAME ON THE DOOR

Atherton's Bonnie Uytensu gives \$10 million
for new children's hospital surgery center

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Local News

MENLO PARK | ATHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Fire district plans to spend \$54 million

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

A budget showing \$50.6 million in revenues and \$54.6 million in spending for the fiscal year that started July 1 was approved by the board of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District on June 20. While the budget shows spending exceeding revenues, it also shows the district ending the 2017-18 fiscal year on June 30, 2018, with close to \$65 million in reserves.

The general fund budget for the district, which provides fire and emergency medical services (not including ambulance transportation) in Menlo Park, Atherton, East Palo Alto and some adjoining unincorporated neighborhoods, is similar in size to that of the city of Menlo Park.

The city provides police, planning and building, road maintenance, water, library, parks and recreation, and other services to its residents. Menlo Park projects \$56.87 million in general fund revenues in its fiscal year 2017-18 budget, compared with the fire district's \$50 million in anticipated general fund revenues.

Most of the fire district's revenues are from property taxes, which are projected to be \$44.3 million (compared with Menlo Park's projected \$19.7 million in property tax revenues) for the fiscal year. However, in the fire district, property tax revenues account for 88 percent of general

fund revenues, while in Menlo Park property tax revenues are less than 35 percent of general fund revenues.

Policy to underestimate

The fire district will almost certainly receive more than the amount of property tax revenues it has estimated, however. For years its governing board has voted to cap the budget estimate of year-to-year growth in property tax revenues at 4 percent, despite the actual growth in assessed values.

Most local government agencies currently consider a 6 percent growth rate to be a "conservative" projection, and San Mateo County recently reported that the county's assessed valuations grew by 7.9 percent in the just-ended fiscal year.

The fire district's budget shows assessed valuations in the district have grown by far more than 4 percent for each of the past five years, including a 10.03 percent increase in fiscal year 2016-17. The budget shows the district underestimated its property tax revenues by \$3.8 million for that fiscal year.

Fire board President Peter Carpenter said the district chooses to underestimate its property tax revenues because "we believe it to be irresponsible to spend money that we do not already have in hand and even more irresponsible to plan to spend everything we might hope to get on current expenses and then be forced to

Fire board approves budget for the fiscal year that begins July 1.



Photo by Michelle Le /The Almanac

The Menlo Park Fire Protection District fire station on Middlefield Road in Menlo Park is the next in line to be rebuilt by the district, which plans to have \$9.1 million in funding for improving the station saved up by the end of the 2017-18 fiscal year.

cry poverty and demand either a parcel tax or a tax-supported construction bond."

Other revenue

In addition to property tax revenue, the fire district expects to receive \$685,000 from two contracts it has with the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory and Facebook. While SLAC is not within the district's service area, Facebook is inside the district.

The district projects income of \$408,000 from the SLAC contract and \$275,000 from the Facebook contract in the fiscal year that started July 1. The budget says the Facebook contract is to pay the full cost of a fire safety inspector and half the cost of a plan checker "for an initial term of two years."

Fire board and Finance Committee member Chuck Bernstein said the district "agreed not

to oppose Facebook's development plans if the extra costs to us were reimbursed." Facebook also allows the district to use some of its space as a warehouse for emergency supplies as part of the deal, he said.

The district also has a "Development Contributions" fund with money from charges assessed to "new development projects within the District's jurisdiction." The fund is projected to have \$886,000 by the end of the fiscal year on June 30, 2018, with the money to go to new public facilities or equipment "that will directly address the increased demand created by the new development."

Wages and benefits

The fire district spends 72.1 percent of its budget on wages and benefits. Earlier Almanac reporting showed the district has since 2009 been among the

top 10 state or local agencies in California for the average wages paid to its employees, according to the state controller's office.

This budget shows the fire district expects its expenses for wages and benefits in fiscal year 2017-18 to be \$36.1 million, an increase of 24.2 percent from the previous year's spending, even though it plans to add only the equivalent of four full-time employees.

Much of the proposed increase in compensation, however, is for retirement costs, which, unlike property tax revenues, the board overestimates. The difference between what is budgeted and what is spent is put into a PERS Rate Stabilization Fund and used to pay down the district's long-term pension liabilities.

The budget shows projected spending of \$8.4 million on

See FIRE DISTRICT, page 6

Portola Valley Town Center needs attention, budget shows

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

The Portola Valley Town Center is nearly 10 years old and its age is showing, according to the official budget for the coming 12 months.

The air conditioning and heating systems in the buildings need mechanical repairs, and what were state-of-the-art systems in 2008 now need support and possibly replacement, Town Manager Jeremy Dennis said in his recent budget message to the Town Council.

With town staff foregoing the use of herbicides on trails, the mowing of grass and weeds will be more common. The public works budget reflects that change with a double-digit increase to pay for the greater intensity of labor involved. The budget even sets aside money for a push mower.

The council on June 28, with Mayor Craig Hughes and Councilman John Richards absent, unanimously approved a budget for the fiscal year that begins July 1. Revenues for the general fund are estimated at \$5.3

million, a 3 percent increase over the previous year.

That forecast includes a 4 percent increase in property tax revenues and a 5 percent increase in sales tax revenues. The general fund reserve on June 30, 2018, is expected to be \$2.1 million, slightly lower than was anticipated in the previous year's budget.

Expenses of \$4.9 million include a 15 percent increase in administration and operations costs, a 16 percent increase in public works spending and a 17 percent rise in spending for

Town Center maintenance.

Driving the administration increases are the hiring of a new staff member to keep the public informed on events, meetings, activities and other important matters, and the reclassification of two existing staff members. Sustainability & Special Projects Manager Brandi de Garmeaux is now the assistant to the town manager, and Administration Services Manager Susan Cope is the town's finance director.

A 16 percent increase in public works spending reflects, in addition to the expenses of

herbicide-free trails and public rights of way, money for a new solar energy kit for the radar-enabled roadside vehicle speed monitor along with additional tools.

New electric vehicle recharging stations (\$10,000) helped boost the forecast of Town Center spending by 17 percent. Also included in this category are \$8,000 for Acela — software intended to make it easier for local government to communicate with the public, and \$20,000 for cloud-based budget software. ■

Study: Displaced locals face many other obstacles

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

Low-income renters who are displaced from where they live tend to experience many adverse impacts in other areas of their lives, a recent study that focused on San Mateo County residents shows.

Such displaced renters are left with fewer job options and health services, longer commutes and greater environmental and safety concerns, according to a study by researchers Justine Marcus and Mirian Zuk with U.C. Berkeley Institute of Governmental Studies.

The data is based on in-depth surveys of 100 renters from San Mateo County who received assistance from Community Legal Services, an East Palo Alto nonprofit that helps low-income people.

Of the 100 renters, 58 had been displaced in the last two years. Respondents had a median household income of \$25,480.

According to countywide data, 87 percent of low- and moderate-income renters in San Mateo County are “housing

burdened,” meaning they spend more than 30 percent of their income on rent. Between 2000 and 2015, San Mateo County lost 44 percent of its non-subsidized affordable housing for low-income households.

The surveys indicated that of the people who reported being displaced in the last two years, one in three had experienced homelessness or marginal housing (defined as living in a motel or hotel, renting a garage, or “couch-surfing”); only one in five was able to find a new place to live within a mile of their former residence; and one in three left the county. Several reported that their families had to split up to find housing.

Those who did leave the county saw their one-way commute time increase by an average of 47 minutes and commute cost rise by \$390 a month for the main household earner.

The study, published in May, also reported that respondents said they’d experienced landlord practices that could be considered harassment or discriminatory. In other instances, market forces created pressure on landlords

to evict their current tenants because of plans to sell, renovate, or move into the property.

Between 2012 and 2015, the study reports, there was a 59 percent increase in the number of evictions for people who couldn’t pay rent on time and a 300 percent in no-cause evictions in the county.

One survey respondent reported that after she complained about cockroaches in her Menlo Park apartment, the landlord told her to move out.

Another person reported

being evicted from a Menlo Park property because the landlord received an unsolicited offer on the property for more money than he felt he could refuse.

In other instances, people had difficulty finding housing because landlords required credit checks or proof of income of triple the rent.

People who opted to move into cramped living quarters rather than be homeless said the close quarters limited privacy and strained relationships with the friends or family they

were living with.

In communities where people relocated — mainly in eastern parts of the East Bay or the Central Valley, the study says — there are fewer healthcare facilities, and air quality is often worse. About two-thirds of kids in displaced families had to change schools.

The brief concluded, “Homeless and marginal housing, often considered fringe experiences, were startlingly common among displaced households.”

Go to is.gd/housing402 to read the research brief. ■

Man pleads no contest to commercial burglary

A 26-year-old man from San Jose pleaded no contest to a felony commercial burglary in Menlo Park on June 23, and was sentenced to 90 days in the county jail. The crime could be reduced to a misdemeanor halfway through a three-year probation period, according to the San Mateo County District Attorney’s Office.

Filimon Acosta Paredes was one of three men who was

found by police at the Menlo Gateway development site at about 1 a.m. on Dec. 7 last year. Police found a hole cut in the security fence and power tools gathered together in a pile.

According to prosecutors, Mr. Paredes was a worker at the site and had been fired before Thanksgiving. Prosecutors say he believed he had been unjustly laid off and was retaliating.

Mr. Paredes will be required

to abstain from alcohol and drugs, and will be subject to chemical and genetic marker testing, and search and seizure. He cannot possess dangerous weapons or ammunition, and will have to pay \$400 in fines and \$100 per month for probation fees.

The case was continued to Aug. 17 for a restitution report. He is out of custody on a \$25,000 bail bond.

— By Kate Bradshaw

FIRE DISTRICT

continued from page 5

retirement, which is 88.5 percent more than the district spent on retirement in fiscal year 2016-17. However, in fiscal year 2016-17, the district paid \$6.2 million to reduce its long-term retirement liability.

The district has budgeted

\$23.5 million for compensation (wages, stipends and benefits — excluding overtime and retirement) and more than \$4 million for overtime, a 15.2 percent increase over the previous year.

Some of that overtime pay comes back to the district when it deploys its staff to state or federal disaster assignments.

But a large chunk of the

overtime is budgeted into at least 27 district programs that have no staff, but have overtime budgets ranging from \$3,000 for the hose program to \$108,160 for the “unmanned aerial systems” (drone) budget, for a total of close to \$700,000 in budgeted overtime for programs with no staff.

The district said off-duty

district employees sometimes participate in the programs, accounting for the overtime charges.

In 2016 many district employees made more than \$50,000 in overtime pay, with two employees making more than \$150,000 in overtime, more than doubling their total compensation.

Other spending

The district spends close to \$1 million a year in debt service for two certificates of participation (COPs), a method of public financing that does not require a public vote of approval. The district has one \$3.3 million COP and one \$8.9 million COP, which were used to finance property purchases and improvements.

The smaller bond has a 12-year term (through 2022) and interest rates of between 2 and 5 percent. The larger bond has a 30-year term (through 2039) and interest rates of 7.1 to 7.28 percent. Part of that interest is rebated by the federal government.

The district plans to spend \$277,877 on its new drone program in the 2017-18 fiscal year, including \$108,160 in overtime, with the remainder going to materials and supplies, contract services and fixed assets.

It plans to spend \$98,350 on its water rescue program, which includes \$59,400 in overtime and \$35,950 in materials and supplies, adding up to more than three times the amount

spent on the program in the previous year.

The district plans to spend \$7.4 million on capital improvements in 2017-18, with \$7.2 million going to the construction of its new downtown Menlo Park station and museum. The district also plans to spend \$700,000 constructing a shop at its Chilco Street station in Menlo Park plus \$35,000 for alterations.

The district says it will end the 2017-18 fiscal year with \$26.3 million in its capital improvements reserve fund: \$9.1 million for rebuilding its Middlefield Road fire station in Menlo Park, \$12.7 million for its Alameda de las Pulgas station in unincorporated Menlo Park, and \$2.8 million for the Chilco Street station. The fund for the downtown station will be \$1 million in the hole by the end of the fiscal year, the budget shows.

The process

The district’s budget was approved unanimously, with no discussion, at the June 20 meeting. No one appeared to speak at the public hearing on the budget.

The board also considered the budget at its May 16 meeting, spending about 10 minutes in discussion. The budget was also discussed by two board members, Peter Carpenter and Chuck Bernstein, at Finance Committee meetings. ■

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Ex-assemblyman Gordon to head California Forestry Association

By **Dave Boyce**
Almanac Staff Writer

Rich Gordon, a former member of the state Assembly and the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, has dropped plans to run for another elective office, a seat on a state tax board.

Mr. Gordon said he has accepted an offer to be president and chief executive of the California Forestry Association, a post he will take on July 17. He'll be leaving the government-relations position he's had since January with Caminar for Mental Health in San Mateo, he said in an interview.

As the forestry association's chief executive, Mr. Gordon will work four days a week in Sacramento and telecommute on the fifth. He will retain his home in Menlo Oaks, he said.

In the Assembly, Mr. Gordon was a reliable voice in defense of the environment. He did not seek out the trade group for a job, he said. They found him. "It was like a call out of the blue," he said. After some "very candid and frank conversations, I came to the conclusion that this would be a very interesting assignment, and they came to the conclusion that they wanted me to take that assignment," he said.

The profit-driven approach of the forestry industry, which includes forest owners and harvesters, saw mills and makers of forest-based products, has been at odds with the environmental community, Mr. Gordon said.

It's a puzzle. Healthy forests are "really critical to the sustainability of the planet," he said. "How do you juggle these things to make sure we have sustainability? ... I feel very strongly that we human beings are the stewards of this planet. Forest stewardship is a very critical function."

His first six months will be spent meeting with association members and key people in the environmental community, he said. "In this job, clearly I represent the interests of the members and the industry," he said. "I think the challenge will be trying to work with the industry and the members to highlight what they do that benefits the environment, and to work with the environmental community to figure out how to do all of that better."

Why he's not running

It's been a restless six months for Mr. Gordon. Not long after

he was termed out of the Assembly in December 2016, and after he joined Caminar, he made known his plans to run in 2018 for a seat on the state Board of Equalization.

The board's responsibilities have executive, quasi-legislative and quasi-judicial components, according to the Legislative Analyst's Office. Board members are individually elected and oversee the property tax assessment practices of all 58 counties and the collection of over \$60 billion in tax revenues — about 30 percent of the state's income.

The board also hears appeals from taxpayers objecting to board decisions on property, business and income tax assessments.



Former assemblyman Rich Gordon says ethical concerns lead him to drop plans to run for state tax board.

After researching the job, Mr. Gordon decided he no longer wants it. It's too easy, he said, for a board member to sidestep a rule to not participate in decisions affecting individuals or corporations who donate more than \$250 to that member's election campaign fund.

And board members can talk in private with appellants about matters before the board without having to disclose to whom they talked or what they talked about, he said. Administrative law judges should be hearing these appeals, Mr. Gordon said.

"This does not fit my ethics," he told the Almanac. "How do you run for something that you don't think should be an elected office in the first place?"

Reform ahead?

Others are also looking askance. The state Legislative Analyst's Office, in a June 7 report, said it considers the board's situation to be "extremely difficult — if not impossible — for a single entity to perform all of these functions effectively."

The five-member board, commissioned in 1879, has been an

issue for the Analyst's Office since at least 1949. A budget analysis from that year refers to the board's efficiency as "below maximum" due in part to board members' feelings of personal responsibility for administering tax matters in their districts, and a resulting lack of uniformity among districts in policy, organization, staffing and facilities.

The Sacramento Bee used the term "unseemly hijinks" to refer to the board's "mysterious" staff salary increases, a lavish office redecoration and the firing and immediate rehiring (to a board member's staff) of the board's executive director.

A recent Department of Finance analysis notes that some board members as well as

state legislators have "expressed concerns" about aspects of the board's use of resources for outreach and communications, vacancies, executive pay, furniture and office space.

The Legislature has acted. AB 102, the Taxpayer Transparency and Fairness Act of 2017, is headed to the governor's office, approved largely along party lines in the Assembly and state Senate. The bill would have the board "stripped of power except for three or four constitutional powers," Mr. Gordon said.

Ninety percent of the staff would be moved out from under the board, and tax appeals would be heard by administrative law judges, he said. "Many of the things that I thought were wrong, this corrects," Mr. Gordon said.

Trade group

At the forestry association, Mr. Gordon will have a staff of five, including one registered lobbyist to the state Legislature and two people following rule-making at the state and federal levels.

Mr. Gordon said he will be

See **GORDON**, page 8

MONTHLY REAL ESTATE UPDATE WITH MANDY MONTOYA



June 2017

June typically marks the beginning of the summer slowdown of activity as many buyers turn their attention to summer plans. Woodside currently has more inventory than typical for this time of year but Atherton, Portola Valley and Menlo Park numbers reflect the typical summer hiatus. For serious buyers, this is a very good time to be in the market as there is less competition. Contact me for more information.

	June 2016		June 2017	
	# of Active Homes for Sale	# of Closed Sales	# of Active Homes for Sale	# of Closed Sales
Atherton	39	5	28	10
Woodside	39	5	46	6
Portola Valley	15	7	15	6
Menlo Park	48	47	38	32

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PUBLIC NOTICE WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT

Notice is hereby given that the preliminary budget of Woodside Fire Protection District, for the FY 2017-2018 has been adopted by the Directors of said District, and is available at the Fire Department, 3111 Woodside Road in Woodside for inspection during the week commencing Monday, June 26, 2017. That on Monday, August 28, 2017 at 7 o'clock p.m. of said day at the Woodside Fire Station in Woodside, the Board of Directors will meet for the purpose of finalizing the final budget, and any person may appear and be heard regarding the increase, decrease, or omission of any item of the budget, or for the inclusion of any addition items.

Woodside Fire Protection District
by Fire Chief Daniel J. Ghiorso

County OKs \$1 million for airport noise solutions

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

More than \$1 million in spending over three years has been approved by the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors as part of a multi-pronged plan crafted in response to a wave of complaints about noisy aircraft at the San Carlos Airport since Surf Air began using the airport in 2013.

"We're trying to fix a severe problem caused by Surf Air operations," Supervisor Dave Pine said. Before Surf Air began using the airport for regularly scheduled flights, the airport was considered "a good neighbor" by the community, he said.

A 'considerable issue'

Supervisor Don Horsley said county officials have met with thousands of people affected by the noise from Surf Air's turbo-prop PC-12 planes over the four years since Surf Air began using the airport. "We're not talking about a handful of people," he said. "This is a considerable issue."

The Board of Supervisors on June 27 unanimously approved funding for: an airport communications specialist to work with the public and pilots; hiring a contractor to investigate new air routes that avoid residences; and putting in place an automated flight tracking system tied to the noise complaint system.

All are funded for three years, with a total cost, including authorizations to adjust the contracts, of \$1.03 million.

County Public Works Director Jim Porter said that while he hasn't added up how much money the county has spent responding to Surf Air-related problems at the airport, it is "several hundred thousand dollars."

No curfew

Mr. Porter outlined a proposed noise-management program for the airport. Conspicuously absent from the plan is the curfew earlier proposed by the county, which would have limited flights at night and early mornings. Many residents and the Atherton City Council had supported the curfew.

"There is a curfew on the table that the county believes will hold up in court," North Fair Oaks resident and longtime Surf Air opponent Adam Ullman told the supervisors. "Please put the curfew in place," he said. "We need relief now. Take a look at those other options concurrently."

All Atherton's City Council members signed a June 23 letter

asking the county to take these immediate actions: submit to the Federal Aviation Administration proposed county ordinances that would create a curfew on flights and limit the number of scheduled flights per operator at the San Carlos Airport; and adopt a resolution declaring that the airport has a "noise problem" and send the resolution to the California Department of Transportation.

Atherton Mayor Mike Lempres said the council asked that the proposed ordinances be submitted to the FAA because council members understand such regulations must be approved by that agency. However, "the town would be happy to be wrong on that one," he said.

Surf Air actions

In the meantime, Surf Air spokeswoman Angela Vargo says the airline is making a number of changes to reduce noise from its planes, including flying over the Bay whenever possible to avoid homes on the Midpeninsula.

The company is also seeking permission to increase the flying altitude over neighborhoods such as Sunnyvale and Cupertino, which planes pass over when using the Bay route. Surf Air has asked to increase the altitude up to 6,000 feet, from the current 3,000 feet, when conditions allow.

Surf Air pilots have also been told to use minimum engine power as they arrive at the San Carlos Airport, she said.

Fake news?

There appears to have been a political campaign against a flight curfew, even though a proposal for a curfew wasn't on the supervisors' agenda. A group called "Keep San Mateo Flying" recently bought Facebook ads urging people to go to a website that sends automated emails to the supervisors.

"A recent county ordinance is singling out one locally owned business! Act now!" the ad says.

Clicking on the ad took readers to a page asking them to oppose "the county proposal that would shut down air service at San Carlos Airport." The message said that the "San Mateo Board of Supervisors is considering restricting Surf Air's aircraft operations at the San Carlos Airport," although nothing on the supervisors' agenda would have had that effect.

The website appeared to have no requirement that actual names, addresses, phone numbers or email addresses be used in order to send the automated message.



Photo courtesy Experimental Aircraft Association, Chapter 20

The San Carlos Airport holds community events such as its annual Airport Day, shown here in 2016. This year's free event will be held Sept. 30 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Supervisor Horsley said his office had received about 350 of the auto-generated emails by June 27.

The work plan

Mr. Porter, the county public works director, said that within the next six months, the county wants consultants Hughes Aerospace to look at new flight paths "that minimize flights over residential neighborhoods" for all aircraft, even under conditions that require instrument flights, such as fog or rain.

'We're trying to fix a severe problem caused by Surf Air operations.'

SUPERVISOR DAVE PINE

Within six months, the county also wants to: develop new procedures that could minimize noisy arrivals and departures; expand voluntary noise procedures for helicopters (which residents have also been complaining about); hire the communications specialist and put the tracking system into place; and come up with incentives for pilots who comply with a voluntary curfew.

It could take more than a year, however, to get FAA approval of new flight paths, Mr. Porter said.

'A tortuous process'

"In my experience, working with the FAA is a tortuous process," said Supervisor David Canepa, who previously served on the San Francisco International Airport Roundtable

working on SFO-related noise issues.

Mr. Canepa predicted it could be two or three years before new routes could be approved, but Mr. Porter said the county hopes to "fast track" the proposals and get FAA authorization within 18 months.

The county is also considering charging landing fees on charter operators (which include Surf Air) and purchasing mobile noise monitors that could be placed in residents' yards, Mr. Porter said.

The new communications specialist will help relieve other county employees who have been dealing with the complaints about Surf Air.

"We have been overwhelmed with complaints," Mr. Porter said.

Sunnyvale's complaints

One issue the consultants examining new routes for the airport will have to consider is the complaints that have been made about Surf Air from residents of Sunnyvale and Cupertino.

When Surf Air uses an alternative route that takes it over the Bay, avoiding most Midpeninsula homes, flights go over parts

of Sunnyvale and Cupertino.

The flights are at between 3,500 and 4,000 feet in altitude when they pass over those communities, while they are about 1,200 feet when they pass over Menlo Park, Deputy Director of Airports Rochelle Kiner said.

The new flight tracking system should help the airport quickly know exactly which flights and operators are responsible for noise complaints.

How many flights?

Ms. Kiner said Surf Air has 19 round trips on weekdays, but Surf Air spokeswoman Angela Vargo said in a press release on June 27 that the airline has 22 round trips on weekdays.

On June 29, however, Ms. Vargo provided July flight numbers for the San Carlos Airport. She said Surf Air will have 20 round trips each weekday, five on Saturday and nine on Sunday, for a total of 114 round trips (or 228 flights) each week.

Ms. Vargo said additional flights will be added "based on demand."

She said the earliest scheduled departure from San Carlos is at 6 a.m. and the latest arrival is at 10 p.m. ▀

qualify," he said.

Asked about his salary, he replied that it will be public information, given the non-profit status of the association. "I will be well compensated," he said. His husband is excited about his new job, he said. "He's retired, so I'm not sure he wanted me at home all the time," he added. ▀

GORDON

continued from page 8

talking with legislators, but not until the year-long lobbying prohibition for former legislators expires. Whether he registers as a lobbyist will depend on how much time he spends talking with legislators, he said. "It may well be that I won't

Kepler's Literary Foundation is launched

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

In the age of e-books and Amazon, how can a community bookstore thrive?

The community of Menlo Park staved off this question in 2005, when it rallied to save Kepler's Books by forming a board of investors or "patron circle;" and again in 2012, when owner Clark Kepler announced his retirement and a team of dedicated locals rallied to develop a plan for a sustainable bookstore business model.

Now, after years of effort, Kepler's Books announced it has taken the final steps of that plan and launched the Kepler's Literary Foundation, a tax-exempt nonprofit connected in vision with, though separate in purpose from, the brick-and-mortar bookseller located at 1010 El Camino Real in Menlo Park.

The foundation has been incubated as a project of the Silicon Valley Community Foundation and is expected to attain independent nonprofit status by the end of the year, according to Praveen Madan, Kepler's community engagement officer and board member.

Jean Forstner, who previously ran programming and operations at Kepler's events, will be executive director. She graduated from Stanford and worked as California state director for U.S. Senator Alan Cranston before working for Kepler's.

Chairing the board of the nonprofit will be Patrick Corman, a marketing and communications consultant. Also on the board will be Vice Chair Dan Gilbert, a technology entrepreneur and investor; Secretary and Treasurer Beth Morgan, entrepreneur and chief operating officer of Twine; Mr. Madan; and Anne Dimock, a creative writer and nonprofit executive.

The nonprofit will have an annual budget of about \$500,000 and a staff of about five people, according to Ms. Forstner. About 20 percent of the budget comes from ticket revenues to premier events: discussions featuring intellectual and literary headliners such as Bill Nye, Roxane Gay and Khaled Hosseini, to name several from recent months. The rest of the revenue comes from tax-exempt individual and community donations and some small grants, she said.

The organization sees itself as "the premier producer of literary and cultural programs in Silicon Valley," according to a press statement.

The nonprofit hosts a quarterly

literary seminar series with Kimberly Ford, a former adjunct professor at U.C. Berkeley; a number of reading and discussion groups that are free and open to the public; the weekly recording of radio show "In Deep" with Angie Coiro; and an event series called "Story is the Thing" for up-and-coming local writers to talk about writing and storytelling.

School programs

The foundation also runs a program started two years ago to bring children's book authors to meet with and do readings for students in the Ravenswood City School District, where many lower-income families reside. So far, 6,500 students have participated in the program and 1,300 books have been donated to the district, the foundation says.

The foundation, incubated by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, is expected to attain independent nonprofit status by the end of the year.

"We are bringing the best of the best in youth authors into those schools," Ms. Forstner said.

Katherine Applegate, a Newbery Award-winning writer, did a reading event at Brentwood Elementary in East Palo Alto in March 2016. Of the program, she wrote: "There are events that celebrate the written word, and then there are events that change lives. Kepler's Literary Foundation is a life-changer. ... This is a program that helps students fall in love with literature. This is a program that turns reluctant readers into joyful ones. And most importantly, this is a program that reaches children who otherwise might not be reached. ... I'm already begging to return next year."

After the first year of the program, the feedback was so overwhelmingly positive that the scope of the program doubled the next year, Ms. Forstner said. Now, the goal is to have each child in the school district get to meet two children's authors each year.

Dark clouds

Splitting the bookstore's mission into for-profit and nonprofit entities has been years in the works. Prior to the full spin-out of the literary foundation, the event-organizing side of the bookstore's business model was called Peninsula Arts and Letters.

According to Mr. Madan, in 2012, when the Kepler's 2020 plan was developed over a six-month period, there were "dark clouds on the horizon for bookstores." Borders had declared bankruptcy in 2011 and e-book sales were taking off.

To answer the question — what's the future of Kepler's? — a series of workshops, exercises and surveys were conducted, followed by a two-and-a-half-day planning session.

The solution was developed by an eight-person team, Mr. Madan said. Bookstore staff would bifurcate the business so that there would be a retail bookstore with a social purpose, and a separate nonprofit that would focus on organizing literary and cultural programs.

Both benefit

According to Ms. Forstner, having a separate organization focused on event programs means that employees aren't being pressured to sell books and plan events at the same time.

"It also lets us involve the community," she said. The program at the Ravenswood City School District is one clear example, she noted. "We can seek grant funding and do programs of benefit to the entire community — things that would be difficult to do as a for-profit."

The shift has also helped the bookstore, Mr. Madan said. Though the bookstore, founded in 1955, maintains a social purpose, splitting the responsibilities has helped bookstore staff focus on improving the store's inventory. Between a quarter and a third of the bookstore's staff have master's degrees, many in literature, he said, which allows for excellent customer service.

The bookstore now has a starting salary of \$15 per hour for its employees, and is, to Mr.

Madan's knowledge, the first bookstore in the U.S. to develop a plan to raise staff compensation and achieve such results. Since 2012, he said, the bookstore has raised its starting wage from \$9 an hour to \$15 per hour plus about \$1.44 an hour from a profit-sharing program, an 82 percent increase over five years.

The foundation is having success in drawing big literary names to town and curating high-attendance events. "There's no way a bookstore could run as high-caliber a program as we have," Mr. Madan said.

"Silicon Valley is a really important market for anyone who's writing something or saying something important," Ms. Forstner said.

Mr. Madan added that Kepler's events can attract a broad audience, from all across the Bay Area and beyond, and inclusive of business and tech folks who are interested in literature. Increased outreach and marketing efforts help fill seats too, noted Ms. Forstner.

"We can bring in a Nobel physicist and pack the room," Mr. Madan said. "Not everywhere can do that. We've really learned what our community wants."

People in this area are busy and are more likely to attend events when they know they won't be able to get the experience anywhere else, Ms. Forstner said. "We want to be producing events that people think are worth their time," she added.

Because of that, Mr. Madan said, the event team has pivoted from a more traditional literary event format — the author reading a few passages and answers some questions — to hosting conversations with authors.

Some authors say that during their book tours, they get the best audience questions at Kepler's, he said.

The fastest-growing part of Kepler's business, Mr. Madan said, is its online Giftlit program. The website, bequeathed to the bookstore, rounds out the reconstructed business model by offering books online via a subscription service, in which people can order a curated set of books to be delivered monthly in three-, six- or 12-month packages.

Go to keplers.com for more information about the bookstore, keplers.org for more about the literary foundation and giftlit.com for the GiftLit program. ■

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Farmers' Market celebrates 25th anniversary

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

In recognition of the 25th anniversary of the Menlo Park Farmers' Market, the Menlo Park Lions Club will host a celebration at 9 a.m. Sunday, July 9, at the weekly market in downtown Menlo Park.

Remarks will be given and coffee and cake provided to vendors, according to Jim Bigelow, chapter secretary of the Menlo Park Live Oak Lions Club, which has sponsored the market since its start in 1992.

The market idea came from a group of women looking for something to enliven downtown Menlo Park on Sundays, Mr. Bigelow said. At the time, there were few farmers' markets in the area.

The women, several of whom are still involved, asked the City Council to start a market in Menlo Park. The council asked them to get a nonprofit



Photo by Jitze Couperus.

Members of the Menlo Park Live Oak Lions Club, including some who volunteer regularly at the Menlo Park Farmers' Market, received a proclamation from the Menlo Park City Council on June 20. From left, they are Tina Morris, Jim Bigelow, Nancy Couperus, Bobbie McDonald and John Hickson.

sponsor, and the women joined forces with the local Lions Club chapter.

Nineteen of the current 26 vendors have been coming to the market since its start,

according to market spokesperson Jitze Couperus.

In some cases, the vendors'

children who used to tag along with their parents to the market have taken over their parents' spots selling products of the family's farm or business, Mr. Couperus said.

The Lions Club collects leftover produce and distributes it to local food service agencies for low-income people. Revenue from booth fees go to the club's charity efforts.

According to Mr. Bigelow, since its start, the farmers' market has donated more than 875,000 pounds of produce to local nonprofits such as St. Anthony's Padua Dining Room, Coastside Hope and Little House. About \$810,000 has been donated to Lions Club philanthropy, including efforts to provide sight and hearing assistance to low-income people of all ages.

The market is held each Sunday from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the downtown parking area bounded by Santa Cruz Avenue, Chestnut Street, Menlo Avenue and Crane Street. ▀

Menlo loses city clerk to Redwood City

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

For the better part of the past decade, Pam Aguilar has been the behind-the-scenes workhorse keeping Menlo Park going smoothly.

As deputy city clerk and then city clerk, she's organized agenda packets, overseen elections, reviewed commission reports, responded to public records requests and — perhaps most impressively — managed to stay awake, friendly and helpful after Menlo Park City Council deliberations conclude, often well past midnight.

On June 12, Ms. Aguilar was appointed to the same job in Redwood City by its council. She left the Menlo Park post on June 22 and plans to start in Redwood City on July 5.

Redwood City Mayor John Seybert cited her "extensive regional experience, commitment to public service, strong customer service orientation and collaborative approach."

She has worked for the city of Menlo Park for eight years, four as deputy city clerk and four as city clerk. Previously, she was a deputy city clerk in Belmont for two and a half years, she said.

"She has a quiet yet strong



City of Menlo Park

"It was a hard opportunity to pass up," says Pam Aguilar, who served four years as deputy city clerk and then four as city clerk in Menlo Park.

influence on the team," City Manager Alex McIntyre said of Ms. Aguilar. "She will be hard to replace."

Ms. Aguilar said in an interview that she loves the concept of the city clerk role. She sees her mission as being a "facilitator of the legislative process," helping people to understand and participate in local government.

As someone who's been told she's "too nice" to be in politics, she said she likes that she is required to stay neutral as a city clerk, even while being privy to the political dynamics

that swirl around the local law-making process.

The highlight of her work in Menlo Park, she said, has been the last nine or 10 months, during which the City Council has made some big decisions including updating the city's general plan, approving the Facebook expansion project, and discussing housing affordability and how to protect the city's immigrant community.

"It's been grueling but interesting to be part of the process and to see the community come out for what's important to them," she said. "It shows hope that the whole process works."

She said the switch will be a "bittersweet move," noting that she's enjoyed working with Menlo Park staff, council members and commissioners. Redwood City, she said, has diversity, a lot going on and a reputation for being innovative and collaborative. "It was a hard opportunity to pass up," she said.

She and City Manager McIntyre are working on a transition plan but have no details to announce yet, she said.

A Fremont resident who's seen her daily commute time balloon from its original 20 minutes eight years ago, she added, "I will not be sorry to leave that Willow Road traffic at all." ▀

Celebration of life of Daniel Norman Chappellear

OBITUARY

Obituaries are based on information provided by the family.

— Ocean Systems in 1967.

His family says he helped to research and design offshore drilling barges and platforms, vessels, deep submergence search vehicles, ocean mining machinery, and robotic maintenance for satellites and undersea vehicles. He retired from Lockheed Martin in 1998.

His family says he was referred to as a "mellow fellow" who was curious, quiet and caring, and enjoyed sailing, snow and water skiing, tennis, horseback riding, reading, lively political discussions and spending time outside with friends and family.

He is survived by his wife Katherine and many nieces and nephews.

Memorial donations may be sent to: Michigan Engineering Fund, Scholarships, Office of University Development, University of Michigan, Dept. CH 10189, Palatine, IL; or a charity of the donor's choice.

A celebration of life of Daniel Norman Chappellear, a Naval architect and marine engineer who lived for 40 years in Emerald Hills, is planned for this summer. He died May 4 at age 82.

Born in Dayton, Ohio, he grew up in West Hartford, Connecticut, where he graduated from Loomis School in 1952.

He attended the Colorado School of Mining where he studied metallurgy before transferring to the University of Michigan. There, he earned a bachelor's degree in naval architecture and marine engineering.

He met Katherine in San Francisco and the couple married in Palo Alto. They were married for 40 years.

Mr. Chappellear worked at Humble Oil, Miami Shipbuilding, Sparkman & Stephens, Boeing Company and Rosenblatt & Son before joining Lockheed Missiles & Space Company



Photo by Michelle Le
Daniel Chappellear

*Lasting
Memories*

An online directory of obituaries and remembrances.
Go to: AlmanacNews.com/obituaries

Town steps up capital improvement spending

By Dave Boyce
Almanac Staff Writer

WOODSIDE

Woodside's five-year capital improvement program, begun in 2016, reaches its height in the next 12 months, with spending of \$2.7 million, around half of which will come from the town's own coffers and the rest from federal and state grants and the county's transportation tax, Measure A.

The town's budget earmarks about \$385,000 for the four principle bridges in town, including \$185,000 for engineering and design plans to replace two bridges: on Old La Honda Road over Dennis Martin Creek and on Portola Road over Alambique Creek.

Both are multi-year projects.

To repair two bridges — on Kings Mountain Road at Union Creek and on Mountain Home Road at Bear Gulch Creek — the budget allocates \$100,000 each.

The final phase for the pedestrian path along Woodside Road between the elementary school and Roberts Market, a three-year project paid for by transportation tax revenues, begins this year with \$70,000 for engineering and design of the path.

A five-year plan for storm drain repair and replacement continues, this year with local spending of \$388,000. The Town Center pump station for the

sewer system, begun in 2015 and funded this fiscal year with a \$902,000 loan from the general fund, is in its final stages of completion.

The town will install a bicycle lane on southbound Alameda de las Pulgas between Fernside and Woodside roads, paid for with a grant and county transportation tax revenues.

And about \$170,000 is set aside to design a pedestrian path along Hillside Drive between Alta Mesa Road and Glenwood Avenue in the Woodside Glens neighborhood.

Budget passes

On a unanimous vote June 27, the Town Council agreed to a plan to spend a total of \$8.1

million in the fiscal year starting July 1, including \$7 million for operations, an increase of 5.5 percent.

Reserves in the general fund are expected to total \$6.2 million when the fiscal year ends on June 30, 2018. That amounts to 85 percent of the town's annual operating expenses. The council requires reserves of at least 30 percent.

In five years, the reserves should be down to \$4.6 million, the result of long-term capital improvement spending for storm drain and road repairs.

Surveying residents

In other business at its June 27 meeting, the council reviewed and critiqued a proposed survey

of residents' opinions about town government. The survey idea stemmed from a proposal to ask residents for their thoughts about term limits for council members.

Among the topics in the draft survey: accessibility of council members to the public, satisfaction with the way the town is handling its duties and obligations, the sense of public safety in town, and setting up electric-vehicle charging stations at Town Hall.

A revised draft, based on council member comments, is in the works. Responding to the survey is likely to be an online process, but notices of the survey may come by post cards and through NextDoor Woodside. ▣

Problem solvers: Woodland School places third in state

Woodland School's Future Problem Solvers team of fifth- and sixth-graders — made up of Ella Aspinall, Zachary Sayyah, Ryan Su and Nikhil Chand — placed third in the state in a recent global issues problem-solving competition.

The event was held at Nueva School in Hillsborough and organized by Future Problem Solving Program International.

The private Woodland School is based in Ladera.

Woodland's was among 19 teams in the junior division

given two hours to complete an evaluation and propose an action plan based on the theme of identity theft.

The Woodland team's action plan focused on a multi-level security device called the Quadruple Mummy Scanner

(QMS), which would scan a person's fingerprint, iris, voice and DNA. They proposed the government-sponsored program would first be implemented in cities with the most fraud and be rolled out across the United States over a five-year period.

Woodland seventh-grader Emily Harris was on a team made up of students from

around the state that also took third place.

Nikhil Chand, a student who participated in the international competition in La Crosse, Wisconsin, in June, competed with a team of three other students from three other states. The team won third place in the scenario writing junior competition. ▣



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Photo: Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health/Douglas Peck

The Uytensu family recently took a hardhat tour of the new Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford, where they donated money for a new children's surgery center. They are, from left, Michael Uytensu, Candice Hamilton, Bonnie Uytensu, Fred Uytensu and Kerri Uytensu. **About the cover:** Bonnie Brooks Uytensu in her Atherton garden. (Photo by Michelle Le /The Almanac.)

THE NAME ON THE DOOR

Atherton's Bonnie Uytensu gives \$10 million for new children's hospital surgery center

By **Barbara Wood**
Almanac Staff Writer

Bonnie Brooks Uytensu says she should have become a doctor.

But during the 1950s, when she might have been enrolled in pre-med classes, studying anatomy and chemistry, she did what many young women of her era did — she got married, at

the age of 21.

"I've always been very fascinated by medicine," the long-time Atherton resident says. "If I was (part of) this generation, I'd try to get into med school."

Instead, Ms. Uytensu found another way to help advance medical knowledge. For decades, she has donated generously to causes that support medical research, including annual

donations to the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford.

When Ms. Uytensu heard the children's hospital needed even more help — for an ambitious project to double the size of the hospital — she was on board, giving \$10 million to help pay for a new high-tech surgery center.

In December, when the new facility opens, the doors leading to the new surgery suites will say "Bonnie Uytensu and Family" as part of their name.

LATEST TECHNOLOGY

The facility will add six surgical suites, bringing the hospital's total to 13, more than any other children's hospital in Northern California. The state-of-the-art center will include an operating suite known as a "neuro hybrid-OR," which includes, in addition to the operating room, equipment for magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) and angiography (blood flow) imaging, allowing for less invasive surgery.

Surgeons will be able to look at updated images during surgery, allowing them to make sure, for example, that they have removed all of a tumor.

The hospital's planners hope the new technology will mean young patients will need fewer operations and spend less time under anesthesia.

THE NAME ON THE DOOR

But who is Bonnie Uytensu? Bonnie Brooks spent her childhood in Washington, D.C. Her father, worked for the State Department during the

administrations of Franklin Roosevelt and Harry Truman.

She remembers growing up in Washington, D.C., during the 1930s and 1940s as idyllic, with field trips to the Smithsonian and the White House. She went to Union Station with her mother and grandmother to see President Truman off at the

See **BONNIE UYTENSU**, next page



Photo: Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health/Douglas Peck

Michael Lane shows Bonnie Uytensu what the new annex to the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford will look like when it's completed late this year. Dr. Dennis Lund is at left.



Photo courtesy Bonnie Uytensu

Family portrait: Seated, from left are Sean Uytensu, Christian Hamilton, Candice Hamilton, Fred Uytensu, Kayla Uytensu and Kerri Uytensu. Standing, from left, are Ashton Uytensu, Wilfred (Fred) Uytensu, Bonnie Uytensu and Michael Uytensu.

BONNIE UYTENGUSU

continued from previous page

end of his term, and no one in her neighborhood locked their doors.

Before she had graduated from her Catholic high school, Bonnie was recruited by a government agency (the name of which she says she still can't reveal). After graduating, she was trained for an assignment abroad, and sent, with her widowed mother as a chaperone, to the American embassy in Manila, the capital of the Philippines.

At an embassy party, she met Wilfred Uytengsu, a young Filipino engineer and a Stanford University engineering graduate who was opening a flour mill in the Philippines.

After just a few dates — all of them including her mother — Mr. Uytengsu proposed, after first seeking her mother's permission. "He didn't want people to get the wrong impression," she says of the chaperoned dates.

Mr. Uytengsu, who died about seven years ago, founded several successful companies, including the Alaska Milk Corporation and General Milling Corporation.

"He's one of the few geniuses I think I've ever met," Ms. Uytengsu says.

The couple had three children and lived in the Philippines, in Cebu City and Manila, but spent summers in a home they owned in Menlo Park's Sharon Heights neighborhood. "I felt at home in both places," she says, adding that "the friends you make when you are living out of the country are lasting friends."

In the 1980s, however, when the uprisings that led to the ouster of Ferdinand Marcos began, Bonnie Uytengsu moved to Atherton with the couple's three children while Wilfred Uytengsu continued working in the Philippines.

Wilfred Jr., Candice and Michael attended Sacred Heart and Menlo schools and all are successful business people. Wilfred Jr. oversees the family interests in the Philippines, while Michael and Candice are involved in investments in the U.S. and the family's foundation.

The family owned the Sunshine Biscuit Company, maker of Cheez-its, Hydrox cookies and Krispy Crackers saltines, until it was sold to the Keebler Company in 1996.

Ms. Uytengsu says much of her giving was inspired by her husband. "He was a great one for wanting to give things back," she says. He gave substantial gifts to most of the schools he attended, in the Philippines and the U.S., where he graduated from Indiana Tech as well as Stanford.

"I just want to continue on in



Photo: Lucile Packard Foundation for Children's Health/Douglas Peck

Bonnie Uytengsu signs her name to the last beam placed atop the new annex at the Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford at a January "topping off" ceremony.

his pattern of helping people," she says. "He could never say no."

In addition to donating to the children's hospital, Ms. Uytengsu has endowed a program, led by Dr. Maria Grazia Roncarlo, to study finding cures for genetic immune diseases that strike children. Ms. Uytengsu says she was inspired after hearing Dr. Roncarlo speak.

"I listened to her speech and I said, that woman is going to make a difference in the world. She's going to change something," Ms. Uytengsu says. "So, I donated her laboratory."

She also donated money to

create a bioengineering and chemical engineering center at Stanford, named after her husband.

Her children have also been generous in supporting many causes, including the Uytengsu Aquatics Center at the University of Southern California, which was renovated with the support of Wilfred Jr., and an endowed scholarship at the USC Marshall School of Business that came from Michael.

Something else that Bonnie Uytengsu supports? "I'm a 49er Faithful and I love the Warriors," she says. "That's my one vice — to yell at ball games!" ■



Photo by Michelle Le /The Almanac

Wedding day photo of Bonnie Uytengsu and Wilfred "Fred" Uytengsu.

Fiona interrogates police chief

Steven McCulley, Atherton's new police chief, answers Fiona's questions

Our correspondent, Fiona Lempres, a second-grader at Sacred Heart Schools Lower School in Atherton, recently interviewed Atherton's new police chief, Steven McCulley, asking him about everything from the weather to sports team loyalties. Here's a transcript of the interview.

Fiona: Congratulations on your swearing-in, Chief McCulley.

Chief McCulley: Thank you, Fiona.

Q. What has it been like to move from Washington state to California?

A. Well, the last six months in Seattle, it has been literally raining and cold every day. So since I've been here, I feel like I'm on vacation. I'm really excited to be here and my wife is going to move down in a few months and she's really excited to come down, too.

Q. Do you think you will become a San Francisco Giants fan and/or a Forty Niners fan?

A. I think I'm going to have to be! I'm really not a Mariners fan -- they don't do much. But the Seahawks are a pretty good team.

Q. Did you always want to be a police officer even when you were a kid?

A. That's a good question because I did. In high school I wanted to be a Washington State Patrol trooper. When I was a senior, the Kiwanis, which is a service club, sent me to a law enforcement camp, the State Patrol Academy, and I spent a week there. Then I really knew I wanted to be a police officer.

Then in college, I worked summers and put myself through school. I was a pizza driver to earn money, which was a good place to work because I got free pizza. I went to Washington State University and got a degree in criminal justice and sociology.

Q. What do you think is the best thing about the Atherton Police Department?

A. Lots of things. The people that work here, which is why I wanted to come here, are very professional, very friendly. I think they understand that the people that live here really like their police, which is important. So I'm happy to come here and provide them leadership, give them some experience and put our team together. It's kind of like I'm the coach and they are the players but we are working all together.



Photo by Stephanie Lempres

Among questions Fiona Lempres asked Steven McCulley, Atherton's new police chief, was: "Did you always want to be a police officer, even when you were a kid?" His answer: "I did."

Eventually, I'm going to come around to all the schools and meet all of your principals. I had a program back where I lived, "Lunch with the Police Chief," and I went around to all the grade schools (but first I looked at the hot lunch menu) and I would go around and have lunch with kids.

Q. Did you go to your girls' schools?

A. Yes, my favorite part was going to the school when my girls were there and coming in uniform and embarrassing them and having lunch with them.

Q. What does "No call too small" mean?

A. Where I came from we coined that phrase because regardless of what people called for, we would go. Whatever the call is, it gives a chance to talk with people and see what's really going on. I'll give you an example. In my last community, one of my sergeants said he was going down to help a lady start her lawnmower — he said every spring she needs help starting her lawnmower so she called the police and we would go down there and start the lawnmower. Really small, but she appreciated it. It is important for us to make contacts with all the people that live here.

Q. What's your favorite book?

A. Well, I really enjoy reading mysteries, but right now I am reading the history book about Atherton; it is really interesting.

Q. Thank you for your time, Chief McCulley.

Fiona lives in Atherton and is a second-grade student at Sacred Heart. Her dad, Mike Lempres, is the mayor of Atherton.

Anne Flegel, former teacher, community volunteer, dies at 74

Anne Hartwig Flegel, a former first-grade teacher at St. Joseph's School in Atherton, an active member of Peninsula Volunteers, and a longtime Atherton resident, died June 26 at age 74.

Ms. Flegel suffered from dementia since 2011, and spent several years at the Sequoias Memory Center in Portola Valley, said her husband, Mark Flegel, owner of Flegel's Home Furnishings and Interior Design in downtown Menlo Park.

A native of Peekskill, New York, Ms. Flegel earned a bachelor's degree in government from Smith College. She migrated west to San Francisco in 1964, immediately falling in love with that city, Mr. Flegel said. She earned her teaching credential from California State University, San Francisco.

Ms. Flegel "loved teaching

OBITUARY

Obituaries are based on information provided by the family.

first grade," her husband said. She taught first in San Jose, and then San Carlos before arriving at St. Joseph's. "Her warm heart was full of compassion and understanding for her students, and she loved learning of their successes in life," Mr. Flegel wrote in a statement about his wife's passing.

It was 1981 when Anne and Mark married, merging their families: Anne's sons from a previous marriage, Ian and Eric; and Mark's children, Christina and Brian. Mr. Flegel said he and his wife "spent many happy years" raising their children and traveling

throughout Europe and in the United States.

As a Peninsula Volunteers member, Anne Flegel served on the board of the organization's Rosener House, an adult day care facility in Menlo Park. An avid reader, she co-chaired the Peninsula Volunteers Authors' Salon, relishing the chance to meet the guest writers, Mr. Flegel said.

In addition to her husband, Mark, Ms. Flegel is survived by four children, Ian, Eric, Christina and Brian; six grandchildren; and her sister, Jane Mandel.

A memorial service is scheduled for 2 p.m. on Aug. 4 at Menlo Church. The family prefers that memorial donations be made to the Menlo Park-based Peninsula Volunteers or the Music@Menlo music festival based in Atherton.

Astronomy talk for kids on total eclipse of sun

BRIEFS

Andrew Fraknoi, chair of the Foothill College astronomy department and co-author of a kids' book about eclipses called "When the Sun Goes Dark," will give a free talk at the main Menlo Park library (800 Alma St.) on Thursday, July 13, from 7 to 8:30 p.m.

A total solar eclipse will be visible at various points across the United States on Monday, Aug. 21.

Mr. Fraknoi will talk about how eclipses work, when and where the eclipse will be visible, and how to view the eclipse and sun safely.

Copies of the book will be available for purchase, via Kepler's Books, and a book signing will be held after the event.

Coffee with mayor, assemblyman

The public is invited to bring questions and concerns and have coffee and a chat with Portola

Valley Mayor Craig Hughes and Assemblyman Marc Berman on Friday morning, July 14, at Rorberts Market in Portola Valley.

The coffee will be free at the 90-minute event, starting at 8 a.m. The market is at 4420 Alpine Road, at the intersection with Portola Road.

Mr. Berman plans a number of similar events in the future, including in Menlo Park.

Kids & firefighters

A fire crew with the Menlo Park Fire Protection District will make an appearance outside Menlo Park's main library on Thursday, July 6, from 10:30 to 11:15 a.m., giving children the chance to meet firefighters, explore a fire vehicle and take pictures.

The event is free. The library is at 800 Alma St. in the Menlo Park Civic Center.

Goodbye, Plantation Deli Cafe

Plantation Deli Cafe, a West Menlo Park deli and cafe, has closed, according to a note

displayed on the inside of the restaurant.

The note said: "It is with heavy

heart to inform you after almost 18 years in business, Plantation will be closing its doors on June 8th, 2017. We would like to thank all of our customers,

especially those whom have been with us since our beginning. We'll continue to serve your favorites until our last day. Thank you again for years of

wonderful memory. - Plantation Family"

Have a favorite memory from the cafe? Send an email to kbradshaw@almanacnews.com.



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Food & Drink

Perfectly unpretentious

Michelin-starred Madera offers top-notch cuisine in relaxed surroundings

By Dale F. Bentson

■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

‘Sometimes you forget just how good food can taste,’ said my dining companion, who was halfway through her appetizer of kampachi yellowtail, kumquat, cherry bomb radish, yuzu, avocado and buttermilk (\$21).

The presentation offered by the kitchen at Madera, the Rosewood Sand Hill Hotel’s restaurant, was a work of art, like an ancient Roman grass crown, but edible, more colorful and with a blissful combination of ingredients. My companion stared at the dish for a long moment, then sighed before digging in.

“It was so beautiful, I almost didn’t want to eat it,” she said, “but I’m so glad I did.”

I started with the foie gras terrine (\$23) with rhubarb, strawberry and a walnut-and-esspresso financier. It wasn’t exactly a terrine, rather a deconstructed extract of what it would have been in the terrine. It looked more like dessert than I had expected. Where was the duck liver?

The chunks of rhubarb held a nice balance of bitter and sweet. The tiny strawberries, I was convinced, had been flown in from France. I was surprised to learn they were grown in Palo Alto. The financier was a small, flavorful almond cake and the tiny pieces of walnut added crunch.

But, where was the foie gras?

The only other ingredient on the plate looked like dollops of whipped cream. That was the foie gras, cleverly whipped into the cream. The flavors were more subdued than if the liver had been seared — subtle, but not lost. Definitely rich, definitely foie gras, definitely delicious.

Madera, which occupies one wing of the Rosewood Sand Hill hotel in Menlo Park, is bouncing back after losing its Michelin star in 2015. It regained the coveted star last year. Earning a Michelin star is very subjective — especially in the United States — but suffice it to say, it is a mark of distinction but not a guarantee.

Madera is a large airy space with an open kitchen on the left, just beyond hotel reception. The kitchen was strategically placed so the dining room and terrace could maximize sweeping views of the foothills as well as the open sky above. That evening, at dusk, the expansive sky was the color of an iridescent, purplish-pink Easter egg. Breathtaking.

Besides the open kitchen and terrace, Madera boasts a glowing fireplace, well-spaced tables, a vaulted ceiling, upholstered banquettes with comfortable pillows and an ever-buzzing waitstaff. The Rosewood bar is located

elsewhere on the property.

I would define the restaurant as elegant-casual. Elegant in its ambiance and fare, casual in the range of attire of the guests. Male dress ranged from sports coats to shabby blue jeans with untucked shirts. Women, by and large, were in dresses and business attire.

In the kitchen is California native and California Culinary Academy graduate Reylon Agustin, whose career has taken him to Michelin-starred restaurants in London working under Gordon Ramsay and in the Bay Area, working under renowned chef and restaurateur Traci Des Jardins. He was appointed Madera’s executive chef earlier this year.

Our waiter greeted us by name. He was knowledgeable, friendly and professional, paced the meal perfectly and attended to all the amenities that define a Michelin-starred restaurant.

Soon after we ordered, an amuse-bouche of chilled vichyssoise with drops of mustard oil arrived. It was a nice touch while the sommelier uncorked the wine.

The wine list contains 99 pages of the greatest labels on the planet. Paul Mekis, who made his mark at Plumed Horse in Saratoga, has assembled one of the best wine lists on the Peninsula. Awarded Wine Spectator’s Best of Excellence 2016, it’s an oenophile’s dream.

The prices, though, caused heart palpitations. Many of the



Michelle Le/The Almanac

Madera chef Il Hoon Kang pours a lamb jus reduction over the Schmitz Ranch lamb loin with tiny braised artichoke hearts, eggplant, morels and sea beans, seasoned with Lebanese seven spice.

reds ran into the hundreds, sometimes thousands of dollars per bottle. Fear not; a sommelier does more than build a wine cellar. He or she is expert in finding the perfect pairing that will please both the palate and the pocketbook.

For entrees, the Yukon gold potato gnocchi (\$30) was served with green garlic, Sicilian pistachios, black truffle and parmesan — and other ingredients, as no plate was as simple as the menu indicated. There was chard and hedgehog mushrooms, yellow edible flowers and chives. The gnocchi had been sauteed, which turned the Yukon golds more golden and gave the pasta a welcome firmness and texture to match the woody shaved truffles.

The presentation was beautiful

in a black earthenware bowl. Surprisingly, flavors didn’t leap from the bowl. Despite the Perigord truffles, the dish was mellow and refined, but each ingredient was evident, central to creating a harmonious whole.

The Schmitz Ranch lamb loin (\$41) featured several generous pieces of rare lamb with tiny braised artichoke hearts, eggplant, morels and sea beans, seasoned with Lebanese seven spice. The seared meat was firm but tender, savory but not gamey, and spiced just enough to add a dimension of flavor.

One dessert was crazy good. The kung fu tea chocolate (\$12) was served inside a glass filled with soft chocolate ganache, tea

See **MADERA**, page 17

BRITISH BANKERS CLUB

has visual appeal but food is astray

By Dale F. Bentson

Palo Alto Weekly

■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

Dining at the new British Bankers Club in Menlo Park was like finally getting a date with the prom queen. You looked forward to it and when you drove up, she looked enchanting, but within a few minutes you realized she had nothing interesting to offer. She was a superficial beauty, all glam and no depth.

Rob Fischer, who owns Peninsula Creamery, Reposado and Gravity Wine Bar in Palo Alto and Scratch in Mountain View, put loads of money and nearly three years into refurbishing the

British Bankers Club. The result is visually inviting.

The handsome brick building, constructed in 1925, has housed a bank, the Menlo Park City Hall, the police department and jail, with the public library upstairs. Most recently, it was a busy bar and restaurant of the same name that closed several years ago after two employees were arrested for sexually assaulting two women in an upstairs room and its liquor license was suspended.

In the spacious main dining

room, the huge windows have been accentuated and a long wood bar highlights an opposite wall. The kitchen is glassed in so it’s visible, but you can’t yell at the chef. The space is decidedly minimalist, with a black-and-white tile floor, a mesh divider that separates the bar from a grill, wood-top tables, upholstered chairs and a long upholstered banquette that lines the two walls under the windows.

The space’s mezzanine has been expanded, an ideal space for gatherings. Best of all is the rooftop bar and grill, a snazzy spot that

See **BRITISH BANKERS**, page 17



Photo by Veronica Weber

The new British Bankers Club restaurant in Menlo Park reopened in December. The former restaurant closed in January 2012.

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Menlo Park BREAD MAKER RISING

By Andrea Gemmet

Tian Mayimin's days revolve around bread. During the workday, she bakes naturally leavened bread in her kitchen in Menlo Park's Willows neighborhood. In the evening, she drives around Menlo Park and Palo Alto delivering freshly baked loaves and rolls ordered through her Little Sky Bakery website.

While she uses a starter that has reportedly been nurtured by monks for more than a hundred years, she's relatively new to baking.

She started her career as a criminal defense attorney in Washington, D.C., then moved to Shanghai and became an entrepreneur, spending five years introducing cold-pressed juice to the Chinese market, she said.

Her bakery business evolved after she and her new husband, after years of a long-distance courtship, decided to move to

California a year and a half ago.

"It's totally unexpected for me that I am now a baker," she said. "I couldn't have imagined it even several months ago."

Wanting to stay in the food business, she began exploring concepts. She had experience baking with her grandmother, who hailed from the wheat-loving northern China city of Xi'an, but wasn't very familiar with naturally leavened breads. Baking every day for houseguests led her to realize that she loved making bread and wanted to turn it into a business.

"Baked goods are fascinating as a product. A lot of them look good, but don't taste good," she said.

She saw an opening in the local market for high-quality, naturally leavened bread, and decided to fill it. She fine-tuned her recipes, got certified by San Mateo County's health department and opened Little Sky Bakery.

Only a few months old, the bakery has grown by



Photo by Michelle Le/The Almanac

Little Sky Bakery founder Tian Mayimin slices her walnut raisin bread in her Menlo Park kitchen.

word-of-mouth and in response to the 800 postcards she distributed around town. She offers free delivery in time for dinner, and in May, she started selling her bread at Palo Alto's seasonal downtown farmers market.

"Showing up on a person's doorstep and handing them a loaf is one of my favorite parts (of the job)," she said.

Little Sky's offerings range from a brioche-like challah made with olive oil and fresh-squeezed orange juice to a decadent chocolate-cherry-pecan loaf and to a country bread with a slight tang and satisfyingly chewy crust. The country bread and her raisin-walnut loaves are the most popular, she said. The black sesame bread is the loaf she

wishes more people would try.

Ms. Mayimin continues to experiment with new recipes that aren't yet on the menu, such as saffron bread, avocado bread and a spicy bread using Chinese lazi peppers.

She said her recipes are the result of "micro-innovation," experimenting and improving on what already works, and incorporating new ingredients.

"I think there's a surprising amount of this that can still be done in the bread area, even though bread has been around for thousands of years," she said. "I find myself thinking a lot about new flavors, and then it's really fun to try them out and see what works." (The chocolate-cherry-pecan bread, for example, went through several iterations, to the delight of her husband.)

She credits her rapid entry into artisan bread-making to a combination of factors — the expert advice and detailed instruction borne of centuries of experience that's readily available in cookbooks, and modern technology like thermometers that make it easy to be precise.

"I could not have accomplished this in several months if I had not been standing on the shoulders of giants," she said. ■

Go to littleskybakery.com for more information.

BRITISH BANKERS

continued from page 15

opens to the public at 4 p.m. and is also available for private parties. If that isn't enough, there is patio dining in the plaza shared with Cafe Borrone and Kepler's Books.

The menu had me salivating: 10 starters, a half-dozen soups and salads, 10 entrees, a half-dozen tempting desserts, and a solid list of libations from beer and wine to tequilas and single malt scotches. All of the elements were there. Alas, the food was not.

Cornmeal fried oysters (\$16) was a concoction of deviled egg gribiche sauce (made of capers, egg, Dijon, olive oil and vinegar), pancetta jerky and frisee salad. Why the pancetta was made into a jerky is a mystery, because it was unchewable. The vinaigrette over the frisee was too salty,

a recurring problem on many dishes. The oysters were so over-fried, I didn't recognize them as oysters. They could have been clams, shrimp, mussels, anything. They were bone dry, over-breaded and underwhelming.

The smoked salmon deviled eggs (\$15), with salmon caviar, radish, frisee salad, sherry vinaigrette, fried capers and dill, simply needed something to breathe life into them. There were too many similar flavors and textures. It was a pretty dish but utterly bland.

The asparagus fries (\$15), breaded with parmesan and parsley, were a worthwhile appetizer. The spears were fat and crisp, neither over-breaded nor overcooked. The accompanying lemon mascarpone and Aleppo pepper dipping sauce was spicy, cool and creamy.

House-made ricotta gnocchi (\$16) swam in a cacio e pepe broth (black pepper and salty pecorino cheese) with charred onion and a pesto sauce that made the dish excessively salty. Globbs of salty pesto were dotted over the delicate gnocchi and broth. If that wasn't enough, more cheese had been grated over the top, adding still another layer of saltiness. It was difficult to know if the gnocchi were good. All I can report is that they were pillowy, not rubbery, and I drank a lot of water.

The slow-cooked Corvina sea bass (\$29) came with zucchini

noodles, white truffle oil and roasted tomato-lemon ragout. The ragout was the only item on the plate with flavor. The presentation was appealing, the portion generous, but the fish was overcooked, bone-dry, flavorless and not worth eating. The zucchini noodles were loads of fun, though.

Not every selection was off-target. The mushroom and foie gras agnolotti (\$25) was a hit. Agnolotti are small, stuffed pasta squares, like ravioli. At the British Bankers Club, they came as oversized rectangles filled with creamy mushrooms. The slice of foie gras was perfectly cooked and the truffle in the truffle-parmesan cream didn't stifle the other ingredients. It was a well-executed dish.

For dessert, the roasted pear gingerbread cake (\$8) was luscious, with a cap of cinnamon creme anglaise and whipped creme fraiche. The apple streusel buttermilk cake (\$8) was a lovely dish of frangipane, creme anglaise, kumquats and whipped cream.

The chai panna cotta (\$8) was served with baklava rollups and honey yogurt, drizzled with spiced vincotto (grapes slow-simmered until syrupy). The flavors were good but the panna cotta was more like thick yogurt than the light, silky custard it should have been.

Service was attentive if impersonal, though at lunch one day, I wasn't three bites into

MADERA

continued from page 15

ice cream, poached Asian pear and chocolate dacquoise cake. The dessert came on a small wood tray with a tea pot filled with liquefied chocolate that was then poured into the glass. Chocolate over chocolate over chocolate over pear, what's not to like? As a bonus, there was a white chocolate wafer imprinted with a kicking Bruce Lee at his kung fu best.

Another dessert, the fraise des bois (\$12), was a ring of white chocolate mousse, strawberry sorbet and a yogurt sponge cake surrounding a gentle basil coulis. The artistic presentation caused one to pause — but not for long.

The dinner tab for two, three-course meals with wine and tip was \$378.

I returned for lunch because I wanted to see what a \$20 hamburger was like. The oak-grilled Sand Hill burger with white

cheddar, lettuce and applewood bacon on a soft bun was about 4 inches thick. Only a starving python could have wrapped his jaws around that burger. It was really good though, and I didn't need dinner that night.

There was a bit of showmanship pulling into the Rosewood Sand Hill Hotel with Teslas, Porsches and Ferraris lined up, but there's no pretension inside Madera, just pleasant ambiance, great food and a staff eager to please. While prices were high, they were not absurdly so for Michelin-star quality. ■

MADERA

Rosewood Sand Hill Hotel,
2825 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park
(650) 561-1540 | maderasandhill.com
Hours: Breakfast daily, 6:30-10:30 a.m.; lunch, Mon-Sat, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.; dinner daily, 5:30-10 p.m.; brunch Sun, 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.
Reservations: yes | Credit cards: yes
Parking: valet and self-parking
Alcohol: full bar | Happy hour: no
Corkage: \$50 Children: yes
Takeout: n/a | Outdoor dining: terrace
Noise level: moderate
Bathroom cleanliness: excellent.

BRITISH BANKERS CLUB

555 Santa Cruz Ave.,
Menlo Park | (650) 382-3191
BritishBankersClub.com
Hours: Mon-Fri from 11:30 a.m., Sat and Sun from 10 a.m. Reservations: yes
Credit cards: yes
Parking: street
Alcohol: full bar
Happy hour: no
Corkage: \$25
Children: yes
Takeout: yes
Outdoor dining: yes
Noise level: high when busy
Bathroom cleanliness: excellent

my appetizer when the entree arrived. The waiter tried to slide it on the table despite seeing I was still eating the first course. I sent it back. There was no excuse, since there were but a half-dozen diners in the restaurant.

British Bankers Club has all the elements of a destination

restaurant, but the back of the house is a problem. It seems as if the kitchen is following recipes without any idea how the finished products should taste. It was food by rote rather than food with emotion.

Dinner for two, one glass of wine each, with tip, averaged \$175. ■

Portola Valley Soccer Club wins over-45 championship

For the second consecutive year, the Portola Valley Soccer Club has won the California International Soccer League championship in the over-45 age group.

The club clinched the title with a 6-0 victory over Britannia Arms at Rossotti's soccer field in Portola Valley.

"It was a great accomplishment, considering the team had started the campaign with a couple of tough losses, having sat in last place," said Bobby Lane of Atherton, one of the club's two goalkeepers.

The team, made up of men ranging in age from 45 to 57, most of whom are residents of Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley, and Woodside, finished the season with 15 wins, two losses, and one draw.

In the photo are club members (not including referees dressed



Photo: Chirs Conroy

Members of the Portola Valley Soccer Club that won the "over 45" division title in the California International Soccer League.

in green): front row, from left, Chris Conroy, Gerard Mitchell and Dan Barber; back row, from left, Mark Gardner, David Tuck, Tony Vertongen, Charlie Wilson,

Darko Dekovic, Chris Hens, Bobby Lane, Tim McAdams, Michael banks and Andres Claire.

Go to cisl.teamsnapsites.com/standings for league standings.

— Christian Wagner

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The Almanac

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More Info, call Tom: 650-575-2279 or email: TourdeMenlo@gmail.com



Photo by Kate Daly

Woodside-Atherton Garden Club members Sherry Perkins, left, and Sara Jorgensen present a national award to Cesar Zuniga for his dedication to Selby Lane Elementary School's garden and community.

Garden effort awarded at Selby Lane School

By **Kate Daly**
Special to the Almanac

Woodside-Atherton Garden Club members volunteer every week to cultivate local school gardens and were so impressed with one employee at Selby Lane Elementary School in Atherton, they surprised him with special recognition: a national award and a check for \$1,000.

Dozens of club members gathered in the school garden on June 13 as Sherry Perkins and Sara Jorgensen of Woodside presented Cesar Zuniga with the Garden Club of America's Elizabeth Abernathy Hull

Award to honor his inspirational work with the school's children, parents, teachers and staff.

As school coordinator for Redwood City's department of parks, recreation and community services, Mr. Zuniga has many responsibilities including running an after-school program where he uses the fruit, vegetable and flower garden as a teaching tool.

Garden club members, who have been volunteering in the school's garden since 2015, have recently added John Gill Elementary School in Redwood City to their project list, and plan to help out at Roosevelt Elementary soon. ■

Calendar

MEETINGS, MUSIC, THEATER, FAMILY ACTIVITIES AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Go to AlmanacNews.com/calendar to see more local calendar listings

Community Activities

Compost Giveaway The City of Menlo Park offers two ways to get free compost for those whose soil is in need of nutrient replenishment to support their gardens. Aug. 5, 6 a.m.-6 p.m. Free. Bedwell Bayfront Park, 1600 Marsh Road, Menlo Park. menlopark.org/bedwellbayfrontpark

Pokemon Scavenger Hunt Kids can search the library for the missing Pokemon and do their best to catch 'em all and earn a prize if they're successful. July 5, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Free. Woodside Library, 3140 Woodside Road, Woodside.

Theater

TheatreWorks: Hershey Felder, Beethoven TheatreWorks Silicon Valley completes its 2016/2017 season with the regional premiere of a newly-revised work by acclaimed performer/playwright Hershey Felder. Following his triumph as Irving Berlin at TheatreWorks, Felder will bring Ludwig van Beethoven to life through the eyes of a Viennese doctor who spent his boyhood by the Maestro's side in "Hershey Felder, Beethoven." June 7-July 9, times vary. \$45-\$105. Mountain View Center for Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. theatreworks.org/calendar/2016-2017-season/beethoven

'What You Will' Pear Theatre's season concludes with "What You Will," a "Shakespearean travesty" by Max Gutmann. Kidnapping, cross-dressing and adultery combine in this madcap comedy, written by rearranging thousands of snippets cut from the plays of William Shakespeare into a completely new plot. June 23-July 16, times vary. \$10, previews; \$35, opening; \$32, regular. The Pear Theatre, 1110 La Avenida, Mountain View. thepear.org

Concerts

Music on the Square 2017 Redwood City's Music on the Square features high-energy shows to get everyone off their feet dancing and having a great time. Courthouse Square is the community's "living room" and the summer weather can't be beat. Fridays, June 2-Sept. 1, 6-8 p.m. Free. Courthouse Square, 2200 Broadway St., Redwood City. redwoodcity.org/musiconthesquare

Music

31st Annual Summer Jazz Concert Series Stanford Shopping Center swings into summer with the return of Summer Jazz. International and local jazz legends will perform everything from swing to straight ahead jazz. Thursdays, ongoing from June 22 to Aug. 24, 6-7:30 p.m. Free. Stanford Shopping Center at The Plaza (near Neiman Marcus), 660 Stanford Shopping Center, Palo Alto.

Family

Cuentos Divertidos, a Bilingual Storytime During this one-hour weekly bilingual preschool storytime children will hear stories and sing funny songs in English and Spanish. Thursdays, ongoing, 10:30-11 a.m. Free. Atherton Library, 2 Dinkelspiel Station Lane, Atherton.

Friday Storytime Series The Friday Storytime Series is filled with stories and songs every Friday, as the foundation is laid for literacy through early learning and movement. The morning begins at the 10:30 a.m. storytime. Attendants are invited to the Stay & Play activity, which follows storytime. Attendants are asked to bring a snack or lunch. Friday, ongoing, 10:30 a.m.-1 p.m. Free. Atherton Library, 2 Dinkelspiel Station Lane, Atherton.

Live Action Fun Storytime Kids are invited to an interactive storytime filled with books, songs and games. Thursdays, ongoing, 11 a.m.-noon. Free. Woodside Library, 3140 Woodside Road, Woodside.

Wild Wacky Wednesdays During this all-age weekly program, children as well as adults are encouraged to learn, play and work together. Weekly themes alternate between art, science, cooking, special programming and holiday celebrations. All supplies will be provided while they last. Note that younger children may require adult assistance. Wednesdays, ongoing, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Free. Atherton Library, 2 Dinkelspiel Station Lane, Atherton.

Dance

Line Dancing Line dancing needs no partners, uses all kinds of music and is a great way to get exercise. One or two dances are taught each week, plus there's a review of previous weeks' lessons. By the end of the session, participants will have quite a few dances in their memory bank. Wednesday, May 24-July 26, 10-11 a.m. Details in the Event Description above. Little House, The Roslyn G. Morris Activity Center, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. penvol.org/littlehouse

Food & Drink

Morning Tea at the Library The library invites readers to drop in for a cup of tea, a tasty treat as they read one of its many magazines and gaze out at the beautiful garden. Fridays, ongoing, 11 a.m.-noon. Free. Woodside Library, 3140 Woodside Road, Woodside.

Portola Valley Farmers' Market This Weekly farmers' market offers local organic farm produce, berries, local farm eggs and honey, nuts & nut butters, jams, artisan breads & pastries, fresh seafood & farm meats, juices, beer, ready-to-eat and hot foods including crepes and Roli Roti hot rotisserie chicken. Thursdays, 2-6 p.m. Free. Portola Valley Town Center, 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley. pvfarmersmarket.com

Lessons & Classes

3-Day Sweet Adventures for Kids In this three-day camp, young chefs will explore baking and create an array of sweet treats. The instructor will introduce kids to the fundamentals of baking, and students will practice making from-scratch versions of favorites such as a classic summer tart and savory scones. July 5-7, noon-2 p.m. \$175. Sur la Table, 855 El Camino Real, Suite 57, Palo Alto. surlatable.com

Clay Sculpture for Teens and Adults In this class, students will create figurative and animal sculptures in clay using basic anatomy and construction methods. Students will construct a simple armature — a metal framework on which a sculpture is molded. Clay modeling, texturing, firing techniques and sculpture surface finishes will also be covered. This class is appropriate for both beginning students and those who wish to continue to grow their sculpture repertoire. Tuesdays, June 5-Aug. 1, 1-3 p.m. \$18-\$90. Little House Activity Center, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park.

Digital Photography Class Taun Reihan will give a "low-tech-hi fun" approach to taking pictures using framing and other formal art techniques that are easy to learn. Participants are asked to bring the instruction booklet for their camera and make sure batteries are charged and a memory card is in the camera. Wednesday, May 24-July 26, 2-3 p.m. \$10-\$45. Little House, The Roslyn G. Morris Activity Center, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. penvol.org/littlehouse

Evening Ceramics Whether ceramics is a new hobby or a long-time passion, the Little House studio is open to artists of all caliber. Potter's wheels, hand-building, sculpting and glazing await those interested in finding their artistic niche. Tuesdays and Thursdays, 5:30-8:30 p.m. \$20-\$155. Little House, The Roslyn G. Morris Activity Center, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. penvol.org/littlehouse

iPhone and iPad These classes will cover a variety of topics including settings, calls, messages and email. They continue with taking and sending photos and surfing the web. More advanced topics will include installing important apps, software updates, security and iCloud. Participants are asked to bring their own iPhone or iPad. Thursdays, 1-2 p.m. \$10-\$60. Little House, The Roslyn G. Morris Activity Center, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. penvol.org/littlehouse

Kids' Summer Ceramics In this class, an experienced and patient instructor will guide the students on the basics of hand building and sculpture. Students will even have a try at the potter's wheel and learn a variety of techniques to create their own work of art. June 6-Aug. 1, Tuesdays, 10 a.m.-noon. \$20-\$64. Little House, The Roslyn G. Morris Activity Center, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. penvol.org/littlehouse

Writing to Remember In this 6-week class, students will write a reflection based on an image or photograph from their past, exploring various strategies and tools for storytelling in

Band members, from left, are Ryan Breen, Andy O'Brien, Kyle McCabe and Henry Warde.



Photo courtesy of Ryan Breen

M-A alumni perform on bluegrass show

By Christian Wagner
Special to the Almanac

The "Menlo-Atherton Bears Alumni Bluegrass Band" — made up of banjoist Ryan Breen, guitarist Henry Warde, double bassist Kyle McCabe and mandolinist Andy O'Brien — will perform Saturday, July 15, at Club Fox in Redwood City.

Doors open at 8 p.m. with a 9 p.m. showtime. Tickets can be purchased online for \$10 in advance or for \$15 at the door, with a \$5 discount for M-A alumni. A lineup of musical guests, exclusively M-A alumni, will accompany the band.

"We're really excited about getting together," Ryan Breen said. In the years since the musicians graduated from M-A in 2004 and 2005, they have formed two highly respected Bay Area bluegrass bands, Windy Hill and Steep Ravine.

"There were a few years when we were playing full time ... touring and making ends meet," Mr. Breen said, but since then each band member has taken on full-time jobs, everything from farming in Santa Cruz to marketing in San Francisco.

Even so, he describes a "musical chemistry" within the band that he looks forward to feeling on stage.

The band is really made up of Windy Hill members, he said. Since he and Mr. Warde started Windy Hill in 2008, it has thrived in the Bay Area, he said. "Kyle and Andy and I are all currently in Windy Hill," he said.

From their discussions in woodshop class at M-A and by gaining exposure to bluegrass through the High Sierra Music Festival, the band members grew to appreciate "the authentic style of music" and "the accessibility and face value" that bluegrass brings to the table, he said.

With a completely acoustic instrumentation, as Mr. Breen put it, "the music sounds the same on and off the stage." ■

Ghysels performs at Cafe Zoe

By Christian Wagner
Special to the Almanac

Maurice Ghysels, who is just ending his tenure as superintendent of the Menlo Park City School District, performed live music with musicians Les Bloch and Greg Kennedy at Cafe Zoe in Menlo Park on Saturday, June 17.

Mr. Ghysels, who will soon become chief innovations officer in the Ravenswood City School District, was the band's lead vocalist, in addition to playing acoustic guitar.

Mr. Kennedy played the acoustic guitar and sang backup vocals,

and Mr. Bloch switched between playing electric guitar and holding down the beat on the cajon (a Peruvian percussion instrument), singing backup vocals as well.

In addition to playing rock-and-roll classics and a few pop tunes, the band showcased two original songs, "Blue Pill" and "What You Wanted," that will appear on Mr. Bloch and Mr. Kennedy's new album later this year.

Mr. Bloch and Mr. Kennedy, both residents of Danville, California, recently finished a studio recording session with their band, Ksay Baby, unaffiliated with Mr. Ghysels. Although the two have played together for more than 20

years, appearing on numerous professional recordings, this will be the first time they have written and recorded their own music.

Mr. Bloch and Mr. Kennedy are longtime friends with Mr. Ghysels, even performing music at Ghysels' wedding. The three have played as a band for about a year, Cafe Zoe serving as one of their main venues.

During a short intermission, Kathleen Daly, the owner of Cafe Zoe, thanked Mr. Ghysels for all of his work in the community and with local schools. Mr. Ghysels thanked the people at Cafe Zoe for all of their support. "It's really been a great ride and I did not expect this at all," Mr. Ghysels said. ■

a warm, safe reflective environment. Inspired by short passages and exercises from writers like Natalie Goldberg, students will enjoy a structured hour dedicated to their writing practice and learn from other memoirists as they share their pasts in myriad ways. June 21-July 26, 7:30-8:30 p.m. Drop-in or 6-week series, \$20 per session. Cubberley Community Center, 4000 Middlefield Road Studio E5, Palo Alto. arc-hive.org

Health & Wellness

Food Addicts In Recovery Meeting Food Addicts in Recovery Anonymous (FA)

is a free twelve-step recovery program for anyone suffering from food obsession, overeating, under-eating or bulimia. For more information visit their website at foodaddicts.org. Saturdays, ongoing, 9-10:30 a.m. Free. First Presbyterian Church, 1140 Cowper St., Palo Alto. eventbrite.com

Guided Meditation & Intro to the Happiness Program This class will include some light chair yoga and a meditation. Those interested are invited to explore how the breath has the power to transform the state of the mind. This is an introduction to

the Happiness Program by the Art of Living. Wednesdays, 7-8 p.m. Free. Art of Living Center, Cubberley Community Center, Room D7, Palo Alto. eventbrite.com

Lifetime Fitness This class is designed to strengthen, stretch and tone specific muscle groups of the body, helping build strong bones and accelerate metabolism with hand weights. Body mechanics is taught, and participants should bring their mat and hand weights. Monday, Wednesday, Friday, 8:30-9:30 a.m. \$12-\$15. Little House Activity Center, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. penvol.org/littlehouse



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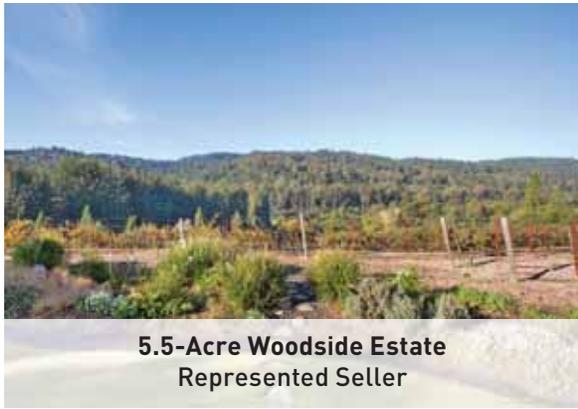
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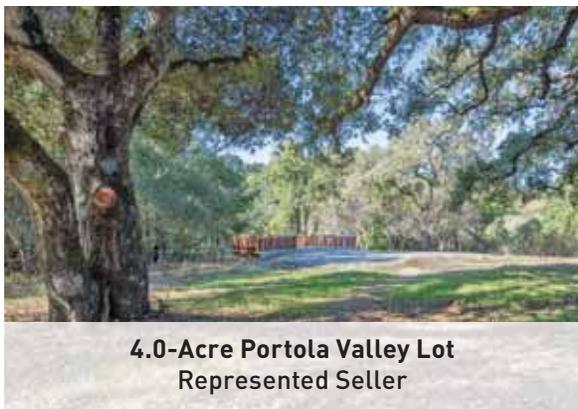
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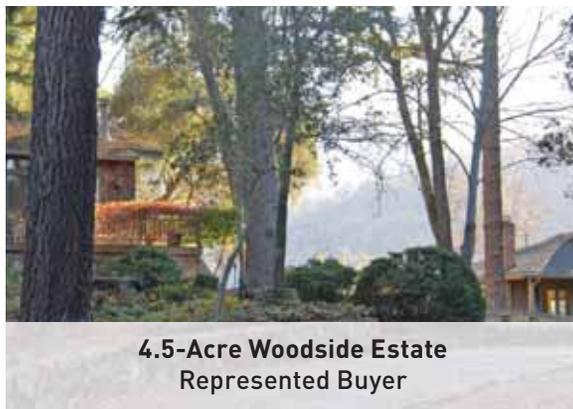
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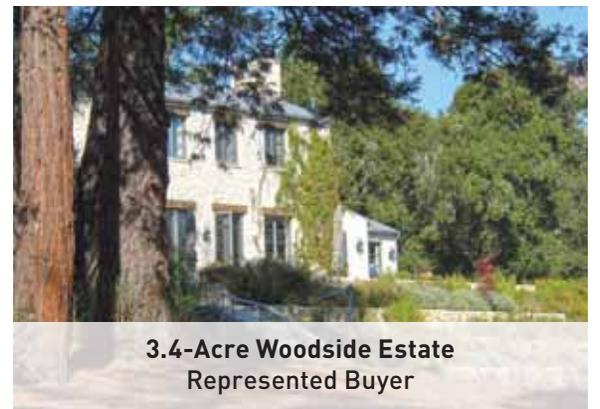
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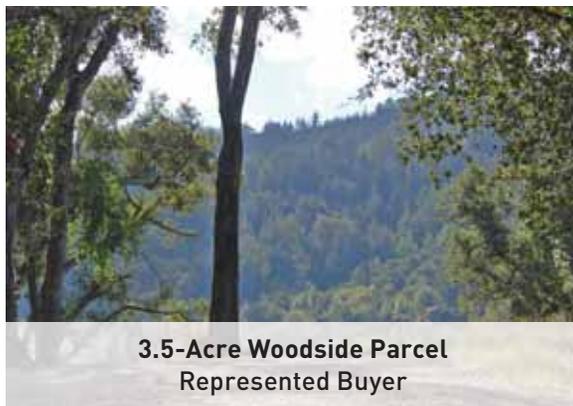
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Public Notices

995 Fictitious Name Statement

UNITECM CHEMICALS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 273802
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Unitecm Chemicals, located at 1371 Sevier Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
SONGYUAN XIE
1371 Sevier Ave.
Menlo Park, CA 94025
This business is conducted by: An Individual.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 8/24/2009. This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 1, 2017.
(ALM June 14, 21, 28, July 5, 2017)

E Y L CLEANING
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 273677
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
E y L Cleaning, located at 216 S. Canal St. #B, Merced, CA 95341.
Registered owner(s):
LUZ M. VILLA
216 S. Canal St. #B
Merced, CA 95341
This business is conducted by: An Individual.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 5-22-17. This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on May 22, 2017.
(ALM June 21, 28, July 5, 12, 2017)

BUTTON ELECTRIC
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 273830
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Button Electric, located at 1956 Menalto Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
KEVIN R. BUTTON
1956 Menalto Ave.
Menlo Park, CA 94025
This business is conducted by: An Individual.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 5/20/17. This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 5, 2017.
(ALM June 28, July 5, 12, 19, 2017)

CANNASPREAD
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 274030
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Cannaspread, located at 301 Alta Mesa Dr., SSF CA 94080, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
ALONZO DOMINIQUE MACK
301 Alta Mesa Dr.
SSF CA 94080
This business is conducted by: An Individual.
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 22, 2017.
(ALM July 5, 12, 19, 26, 2017)

ALL CITY FILTERS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 274031
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
All City Filters, located at 301 Alta Mesa Drive, South San Francisco, CA 94080, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
NANCY FIAME
301 Alta Mesa Drive
South San Francisco, CA 94080
FA'AGAOI T. FIAME JR.
301 Alta Mesa Dr.
South San Francisco, CA 94080
PABLO RICHARDS
41 Guadalupe Ave.
Daly City, CA 94014
This business is conducted by: A General Partnership.
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 22, 2017.
(ALM July 5, 12, 19, 26, 2017)

997 All Other Legals

APN: 055-342-520 TS No: CA08000247-17-1 TO No: 170028283 NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE (The above statement is made pursuant to CA Civil Code Section 2923.3(d)(1). The Summary will be provided to Trustor(s) and/or vested owner(s) only, pursuant to CA Civil Code Section 2923.3(d)(2).) YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST DATED December 17, 2003. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDINGS AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER. On July 25, 2017 at 01:00 PM, Marshall St. Entrance, San Mateo County Courthouse, Southern Branch Hall of Justice & Records, 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063, MTC Financial Inc. dba Trustee Corps, as the duly Appointed Trustee, under and pursuant to the power of sale contained in that certain Deed of Trust recorded on December 30, 2003 as Instrument No. 2003-354932, of official records in the Office of the Recorder of San Mateo County, California, executed by JOSE LUIS GUZMAN RIVAS, AN UNMARRIED MAN, as Trustor(s), in favor of WASHINGTON MUTUAL BANK, FA, A FEDERAL ASSOCIATION as Beneficiary, WILL SELL AT PUBLIC AUCTION TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER, in lawful money of the United States, all payable at the time of sale, that certain property situated in said County, California describing the land therein as: AS MORE FULLY DESCRIBED IN SAID DEED OF TRUST The property heretofore described is being sold "as is". The street address and other common designation, if any, of the real property described above is purported to be: 1326 CHILCO STREET, MENLO PARK, CA 94025 The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address and other common designation, if any, shown herein. Said sale will be made without covenant or warranty, express or implied, regarding title, possession, or encumbrances, to pay the remaining principal sum of the Note(s) secured by said Deed of Trust, with interest thereon, as provided in said Note(s), advances if any, under the terms of the Deed of Trust, estimated fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee and of the trusts created by said Deed of Trust. The total amount of the unpaid balance of the obligations secured by the property to be sold and reasonable estimated costs, expenses and advances at the time of the initial publication of this Notice of Trustee's Sale is estimated to be \$254,821.50 (Estimated). However, prepayment premiums, accrued interest and advances will increase this figure prior to sale. Beneficiary's bid at said sale may include all or part of said amount. In addition to cash, the Trustee will accept a cashier's check drawn on a state or national bank, a check drawn by a state or federal credit union or a check drawn by a state or federal savings and loan association, savings association or savings bank specified in Section 5102 of the California Financial Code and authorized to do business in California, or other such funds as may be acceptable to the Trustee. In the event tender other than cash is accepted, the Trustee may withhold the issuance of the Trustee's Deed Upon Sale until funds become available to the payee or endorsee as a matter of right. The property offered for sale excludes all funds held on account by the property receiver, if applicable. If the Trustee is unable to convey title for any reason, the successful bidder's sole and exclusive remedy shall be the return of monies paid to the Trustee and the successful bidder shall have no further recourse. Notice to Potential Bidders If you are considering bidding on this property lien, you should understand that there are risks involved in bidding at a Trustee auction. You will be bidding on a lien, not on the property itself. Placing the highest bid at a Trustee auction does not automatically entitle you to free and clear ownership of the property. You should also be aware that the lien being auctioned off may be a junior lien. If you are the highest bidder at the auction, you are or may be responsible for paying off all liens senior to the lien being auctioned off, before you can receive clear title to the property. You are encouraged to investigate the existence, priority, and size of outstanding liens that may exist on this property by contacting the county recorder's office or a

title insurance company, either of which may charge you a fee for this information. If you consult either of these resources, you should be aware that the same Lender may hold more than one mortgage or Deed of Trust on the property. Notice to Property Owner The sale date shown on this Notice of Sale may be postponed one or more times by the Mortgagee, Beneficiary, Trustee, or a court, pursuant to Section 2924 of the California Civil Code. The law requires that information about Trustee Sale postponements be made available to you and to the public, as a courtesy to those not present at the sale. If you wish to learn whether your sale date has been postponed, and, if applicable, the rescheduled time and date for the sale of this property, you may call Auction.com at 800.280.2832 for information regarding the Trustee's Sale or visit the Internet Web site address www.Auction.com for information regarding the sale of this property, using the file number assigned to this case, CA08000247-17-1. Information about postponements that are very short in duration or that occur close in time to the scheduled sale may not immediately be reflected in the telephone information or on the Internet Web site. The best way to verify postponement information is to attend the scheduled sale. Date: June 12, 2017 MTC Financial Inc. dba Trustee Corps TS No. CA08000247-17-1 17100 Gillette Ave Irvine, CA 92614 Phone:949-252-8300 TDD: 866-660-4288 Myron Ravelo, Authorized Signatory SALE INFORMATION CAN BE OBTAINED ONLINE AT www.Auction.com FOR AUTOMATED SALES INFORMATION PLEASE CALL: Auction.com at 800.280.2832 Trustee Corps may be acting as a debt collector attempting to collect a debt. Any information obtained may be used for that purpose.ISL Number 32149, Pub Dates: 06/21/2017, 06/28/2017, 07/05/2017, THE ALMANAC

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF:
JOHN REILAND, aka JOHN CLIFFE REILAND, Deceased
Case No.: 17-PRO-00151-A
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of JOHN REILAND, aka JOHN CLIFFE REILAND, Deceased.
A Petition for Probate has been filed by: PATRICIA MUELLER-VOLLMER in the Superior Court of California, County of SAN MATEO.
The Petition for Probate requests that: PATRICIA MUELLER-VOLLMER be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent. The petition requests the decedent's will and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The will and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court.
The petition requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.
A HEARING on the petition will be held on July 25, 2017 at 9:00 a.m. in Dept.: 28, of the Superior Court of California, County of San Mateo, located at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063. If you object to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney. If you are a creditor or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58 (b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.
You may examine the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory

and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.
Petitioner:
Patricia Mueller-Vollmer
774 Seneca Street,
Palo Alto, CA 94301
(650)321-3632
(ALM June 28; July 5, 12, 2017)

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