

The Almanac

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

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Page 14



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Grand jury to cities: Prepare for crushing pension costs | Page 5

Atherton cracks down on scofflaw bicyclists | Page 7

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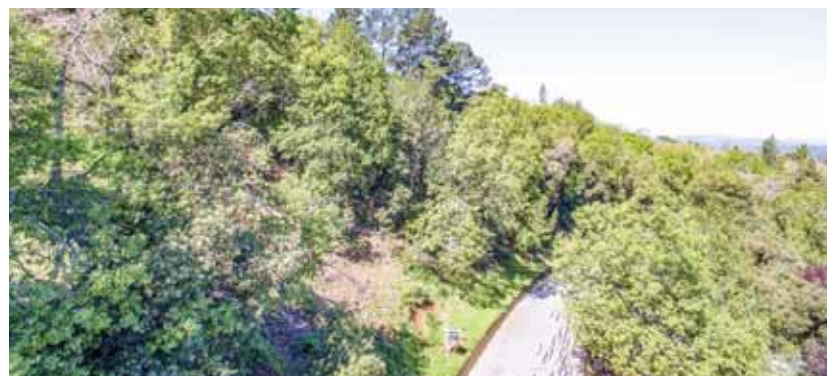
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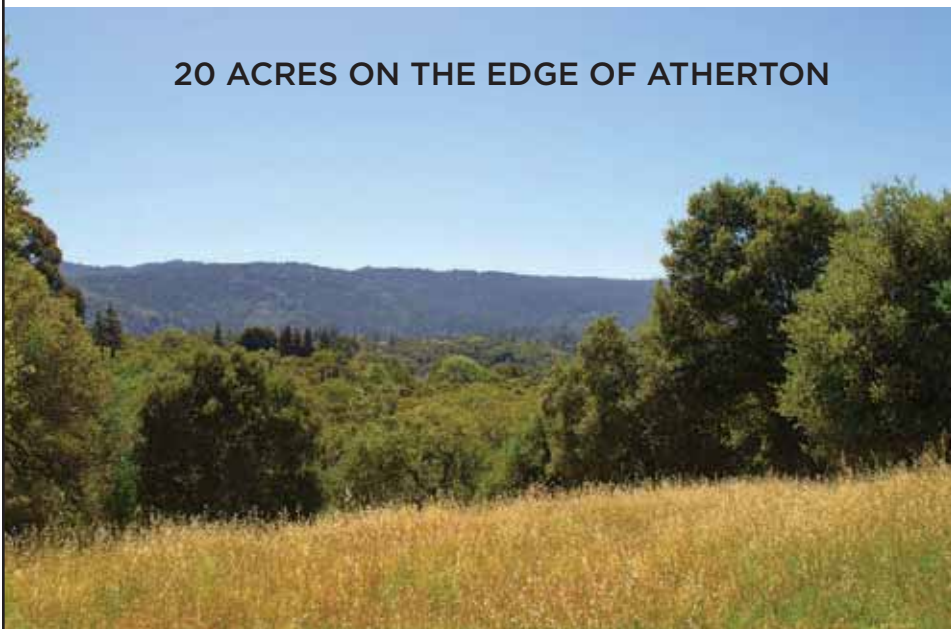
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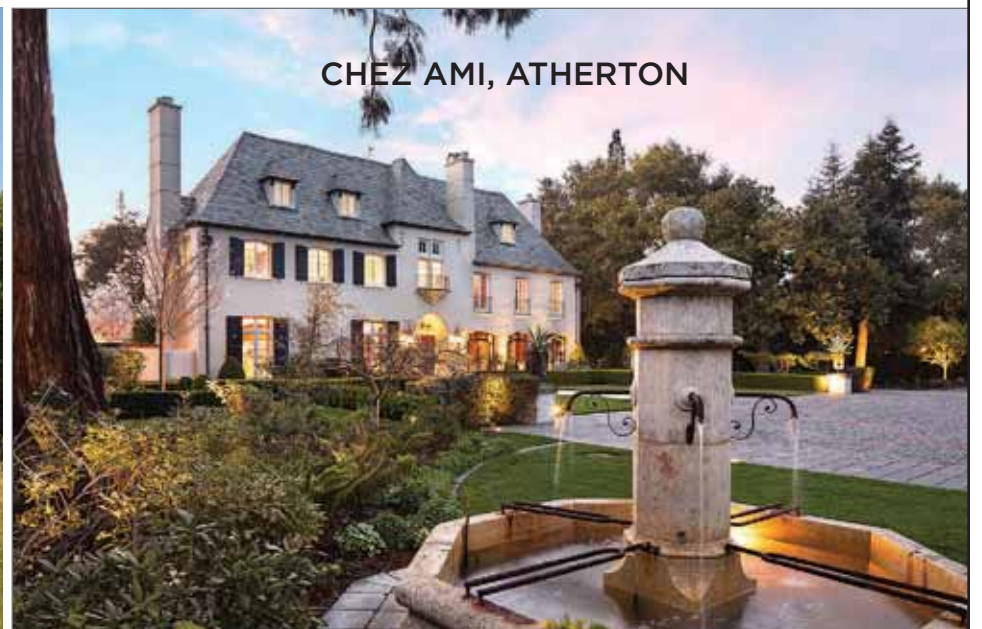
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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY



Photo by Robert Most

A force of nature

The grounds and playing fields of Flood Park, on Bay Road in unincorporated Menlo Park, are enjoyed by young and old of the human species on any given day. But a look skyward might reveal that people and other ground mammals aren't the only creatures to take in the pleasures of an urban park. Photographer Robert Most spotted this hawk on a recent visit to Flood Park, and did what photographers are inclined to do.

Tech pilot initiative aims to smooth traffic on Bayfront Expressway

By **Kate Bradshaw**
Almanac Staff Writer

As part of an effort to minimize idling and smooth traffic along Bayfront Expressway in Menlo Park, people will be able to download an app starting this fall that will tell them how fast they should go through a set of selected traffic signals.

Menlo Park was chosen to be part of a pilot project, called OUT (short for “Optimizing Urban Traffic”), that is intended to improve traffic flow along the highly congested area near Facebook’s headquarters and the Dumbarton Bridge.

While the initiative won’t change roadway infrastructure, Menlo Park’s Assistant Public Works Director Nikki Nagaya says that minimizing the frequency of quick braking and smoothing the flow of traffic can improve capacity through the system. The intent of the project is to smooth traffic flow, make driving speeds safer, and decrease idling time in order to boost pedestrian, cyclist and driver safety and decrease carbon emissions and air pollution.

“Part of the pilot will be testing how effective the system is and evaluating the results,” she said.

The pilot program will cover nine key traffic signals along and near Bayfront Expressway on the approach to the Dumbarton

Bridge, including Marsh Road and Willow Road between U.S. 101 and Bayfront Expressway.

The initiative is an early model for technology that connects vehicles to traffic signals and comes from Sustainable Silicon Valley, a nonprofit that deals with environmental sustainability issues in the region, and the software consulting company Urban Institute. According to a report by the City and County Association of Governments in San Mateo County (C/CAG), those two groups approached the association about testing the project in San Mateo County, and in subsequent talks the groups decided to pilot the program in Menlo Park on traffic corridors that are heavily congested.

There are three steps to the project, according to the report:

■ First, project leaders will create a “traffic light assistant” app, which will give drivers information about when the traffic lights will change and advice about how fast to go when approaching them.

■ Next, a dashboard on the app will be created to give information about road capacity and traffic incidents at specific intersections in Menlo Park along and near Bayfront Expressway.

■ Finally, a “citizen app” will be created for people who live or work in Menlo Park and special groups that provides relevant open traffic

data. It could help develop future services to assist local employees with their commutes.

Partner agencies on the project include Caltrans, the city of Menlo Park, C/CAG, Sustainable Silicon Valley, Urban Integrated and Kimley-Horn. Project leaders are also in talks with Facebook, according to the report.

The project, estimated to carry a price tag of \$417,900, is funded with a \$236,700 grant from C/CAG, which is directed by representatives from the county and each city in the county. The initiative is also expected to receive \$176,200 in in-kind contributions from Urban Integrated and about \$5,000 from Sustainable Silicon Valley.

Only minimal staff time is expected to be required from the city of Menlo Park and Caltrans, according to Nagaya.

According to an announcement from the city of Menlo Park, there is a special interest in getting people who commute to Facebook to participate in the pilot program.

The initiative is part of an ongoing countywide effort to create a “smart corridor” through San Mateo County that would connect traffic signals with fiber so they can communicate with each other, set signal timing to ease traffic flow and provide Caltrans with the power to control traffic in a major emergency, Nagaya said. ■

Grand jury urges county cities to prepare for crushing pension costs

By **Kate Bradshaw**
Almanac Staff Writer

Few budget-eating monsters weigh as heavily on the financial futures of California cities as a notably unsexy pest: pension costs. And, according to the findings of a new civil grand jury report, San Mateo County’s cities are not doing enough to incapacitate that pest before it becomes capable of wreaking Godzilla-like levels of havoc on city finances.

Pension primer

According to the report, San Mateo County’s cities offer their employees pension plans through CalPERS, the state’s public employee retirement system. Pensions are funded with a set of sources: employer contributions, which make up about 26 percent of pension money and come from cities, and by extension, taxpayers; employee contributions, which make up about 13 percent of pension money, in some cases; and CalPERS.

The bulk of pension money, about 61 percent, comes from CalPERS’ returns on its investments. The agency invests employer and employee contributions, and operates with a series of assumptions about how much it will earn back each year, plus considerations like expected inflation, salary growth, and pension recipient longevity.

When the agency’s assumptions are wrong, though, the burden falls on cities to pay for the difference, which is considered an “unfunded pension liability.”

In the past, CalPERS has assumed that its investments yield a 7.5 percent return on investment, a number some experts say is overly optimistic.

In the past three years, the agency’s net return on investment has been only 4.6 percent. Over the past 20 years, that average annual return has been 6.6 percent.

To increase the accuracy of its projections, the CalPERS board in December 2016 voted to reduce its assumed rate of return from 7.5 percent to 7 percent in phases by the 2024-25 fiscal year. It may sound like a small change, but it’s expected to double pension costs

for many cities around the state.

And there’s no guarantee that CalPERS won’t reduce that assumed rate of return — called the “discount rate” — again. Consultants have told the CalPERS board it should expect a return on investment of only about 6.2 percent over the next decade, according to the report.

Unfunded pension liability is particularly hard on cities because they have to pay “amortization” costs on it, which is the principal of the amount plus interest accrued at high rates over long periods. Interest is generally set at the same percentage of CalPERS’ assumed return on investment, and repayment has generally been set over a 30-year period.

In February, the CalPERS board shortened future amortization periods to 20 years, which is expected to eventually decrease overall costs but increase annual funding requirements.

According to the report, cities already spend the majority of their pension dollars — about 60 percent — on amortization costs, of which a major part is interest, in addition to regular annual pension costs (though this breakdown varies widely in the county).

In the 2017-18 fiscal year, East Palo Alto paid a low of 38 percent of its total contribution costs for amortization, while Half Moon Bay paid a high of 79 percent. Menlo Park fell somewhere on the lower side among cities in the county, spending about 51 percent on amortization costs.

Preparing for the hit

So what can cities in the county do to prepare for soaring pension costs?

The report presents a range of policy tools cities can use to mitigate their pension obligations with a key directive: Don’t wait to make a plan.

“If cities do not address unfunded liabilities now, when will they ever be able to?” the report asks. “Now is the time for the Cities to engage their residents in the issue and, with the residents’ support, take the difficult actions necessary to secure a bright future for

See **PENSION COSTS**, page 12

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City Council District 4 has new potential contender

By **Kate Bradshaw**
Almanac Staff Writer

Come November, there could be competition for the City Council seat to represent Menlo Park's new District 4, which includes downtown Menlo Park, the Allied Arts neighborhood and a southern segment of El Camino Real.

Ron Shepherd, former board member of the West Bay Sanitary District and current member of Menlo Park's Finance and Audit Committee, has pulled papers to run for City Council, and could face off with Peter Ohtaki, current Menlo Park mayor and at-large council incumbent, if both follow through to collect the needed signatures, submit the required paperwork and qualify for the ballot.

While Ohtaki was elected at-large to represent the entire city in his previous two council terms, he lives in the new District 4 and would have to run to represent that district in this and future elections. He told The Almanac he plans to run and intends to pull papers on Aug. 1, when he returns from a family vacation.

Shepherd comes from a background in finance and works as founder and treasurer at Shepherd & Associates Insurance



Ron Shepherd

Services, Inc., according to the business' website. He previously sat on the West Bay Sanitary District board starting in 2000 for 16 years, during which time he also served as commissioner for Silicon Valley Clean Water.

For Shepherd, pulling papers initiates the fulfillment of a statement he made in fall 2015, when he announced he would not run for a fifth term on the sanitary district board.

At the time, he told a writer for the water district's newsletter: "What keeps coming on and going off the bucket list is running for the Menlo Park City Council. We'll see."

Shepherd was appointed last year to serve on Menlo Park's Finance and Audit Committee, with a term set to expire in April 2021. Now that he's served on the committee a little over a year, he said he's interested in taking a more policy-focused role.

"In sum, I think the council needs to think more outside the box," he said.

He said he opposes the city's consideration of building a new main library, and would prefer that the city build a new library in Belle Haven; that he thinks the city should sell its water district to a public utility; and that the city should be more aggressive in paying down its unfunded pension liability.

"I think the job of the city is to provide the services that a majority of citizens want," in a

See **COUNCIL**, page 7

Last term for Woodside councilwoman Kasten

Councilwoman Anne Kasten, a member of the Woodside Town Council since 2010, informed her colleagues at the end of the July 24 council meeting that she will not be running for a third term in November.

"I am not going to run again for office," she said. "I've given the town 18 years and I have some other things I want to look into."

Kasten first won election to the council in November 2009 and was re-elected in 2013. She came to the council after nine years on the town's Architectural and Site Review Board.

Kasten and her colleagues on the council added a year to their terms in 2016 in keeping with new state regulations that shift most local elections to even-numbered years.

She represents District 6,

neighborhoods east of Mountain Home Road and south of Woodside Road, including Woodside Heights east of Interstate 280.

Dick Brown, a resident currently sitting on the Architectural and Site Review Board, has taken out nomination papers for the District 6 seat.

Councilman Dave Tanner, who represents District 4 neighborhoods along Canada Road and north of Olive Hill Road and Arbor Court, has also announced he will not seek re-election. He will be moving to his house in Auburn after his term is up, he said. For now, he travels there on weekends to join his wife, he said.

The Woodside council has seven members, each of whom represents one of seven districts, but who are elected at large — by the entire community.

Atherton cracks down on cyclists' stop sign violations

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

In late May, Atherton's police chief, Steve McCulley, was helping to put on a bike safety event when he experienced first-hand what he says is the main thing Atherton residents complain about regarding bicyclists — they regularly ignore the stop signs at Alameda de las Pulgas at Atherton Avenue.

As officers and volunteers worked to educate the public about bicycle safety, "I witnessed three large cyclist groups blow through the stop sign on the Alameda at Atherton Avenue at high speed," McCulley said in an email.

So McCulley decided to do something about it. He sent a letter to local cycling clubs warning them that in addition to continuing to work to educate motorists and cyclists about safety, he plans "random traffic safety enforcement ... with a concentration on stop sign and right of way violations."

On July 21, McCulley and several Atherton patrol units returned to the Alameda/Atherton intersection, where in three hours they issued eight tickets and two warnings to bicyclists who ran the stop sign. McCulley said the fine for the



Photo courtesy Atherton Police Department

As Atherton police and volunteers recently worked to educate the public about bicycle safety, Police Chief Steve McCulley saw three large groups of cyclists "blow through the stop sign" at high speed, he said, so he decided to crack down on the violations.

violations is \$238.

"I will be asking patrol to continue to focus on this issue," he said in an email.

In the letter to the bicycling community, McCulley said the Atherton Police Department "always advocates and promotes bicycle safety to strongly encourage everyone to share the road safely, responsibly, and respectfully."

He reminded both drivers and cyclists: "Legislation and rules of the road require cyclists, like other roadway users, to pull over and let other

vehicles pass if five or more vehicles are lined up behind them. California motorists are required to give bicyclists three feet of clearance when possible. If it is not possible, motorists are required to slow down and pass safely."

"Motorists are reminded to expect bicyclists on the roadway, be patient on narrow roads, and to always share the road. Bicyclists are reminded to go with the traffic flow, ride in the same direction as other vehicles, and to obey all traffic laws," McCulley wrote. ■

Owners of fences encroaching on town's park property must apply for permits

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

Atherton has sent letters to Menlo Park property owners whose Felton Gables' backyards abut Holbrook-Palmer Park, informing them that their fences are on town property and they must apply for encroachment permits if they want to keep them there.

The letters also warn property owners who have gates into the park that they are a liability and the town recommends they be removed.

"The Town will not be liable for any loss, damage or injury associated with gates located along the perimeter fence. Should you intend to keep an access gate, please indicate so on your permit application," the letters say.

The usual \$191.50 charge for an encroachment permit is being waived for property

owners who respond by Sept. 15, but the letter warns that if an encroachment permit is not applied for, the homeowners may have to pay to move the fences to the property line.

The usual \$191.50 charge for an encroachment permit is being waived for property owners who respond by Sept. 15.

The letters say that when fences are repaired or replaced they will have to be moved.

Property owners who have gates are also being asked to name the town as an insured party on their homeowner's insurance.

A report to the City Council about the matter says 21 private residences border the park, four

in Atherton along Lane Place and 17 in Menlo Park in the Felton Gables neighborhood.

A recent boundary survey of the park showed that 16 of the Felton Gables homes' fences are on Atherton property, but also that the fences bounding the Lane Place homes are actually five feet inside the homeowners' yards.

Council members and town officials said they feared the situation could be a liability problem for the town.

The town is also letting the Lane Place homeowners know that the town will support any applications to move their fences to the property line.

Town officials said the letters would be sent as registered mail to be sure they are received, and homeowners who need encroachment permits but don't apply for them will be subjected to the town's code enforcement procedures. ■

Damaged statue will find new home in Lindenwood

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

Diana will soon have a new home.

After a historic statue of the Roman goddess of the hunt that was in Holbrook-Palmer Park since the 1960s was damaged while being moved, Atherton City Council members decided the \$45,000 repair bill was too much and Diana and her hound were exiled to the town's corporation yard.

But members of the Lindenwood Homeowners Association received permission from the council on July 18 to raise the money to repair the statue and move it into the town right of way at Flood Circle and Linden Avenue.

The statue had been in Holbrook-Palmer since the park was given to the town in the 1960s, and was meant to be in the park's new event garden. But things went wrong during the attempt to move the statue. "As staff carried the bubble-wrapped statue from the park vehicle to the new pedestal, the Statue literally crumbled apart from its own weight in their hands," a town report says.

Lindenwood resident and history buff Marion Oster said the homeowners' group will take care of the statue once it is repaired, as the group does with the other historic artifacts from the Flood estate in Lindenwood.

Oster said the statue came from JW Fiske, a New York iron foundry that issued catalogs of the statues it made. An identical statue appears in



Courtesy Marion Oster

Roman goddess Diana and her hound, who once held a place of honor in Atherton's Holbrook-Palmer Park, have been relegated to the town's corporation yard since the statue was damaged during a move.

historic photos of the Flood estate, she said.

"We don't know if this Diana statue was purchased from the Flood estate, or if it was given by the Floods, (or if) it's a duplicate statue," said Oster, who heads the Atherton Heritage Association.

Oster said the statue of Diana had already been repaired in the late 1990s, after the Heritage Association raised \$10,000 to pay for the work.

"It's a shame to just leave it over in the corporation yard," said Betsy Colby, the president of the Lindenwood homeowners group. "I think Marion is the right person to do this."

Council members unanimously agreed to the plan. ■

COUNCIL

continued from page 6

way that is long-term and cost effective, he said.

He said he thinks members of the current council "kowtow a little to special interests."

"I wouldn't," he said, "because I'm too ornery to do that."

More challengers

As of Monday, July 30, two more people had pulled papers to run for the Menlo Park City Council: Drew Combs, for District 2, and Mike Dunn, for District 1. Cecilia Taylor and George Yang have also taken out candidate papers for the District 1 seat.

Combs recently moved to the Flood Park neighborhood, which is part of District 2.

Kirsten Keith is the current council member for that district. ■



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Local students form club to give back to community through tech

Sarah Lehman
Special to The Almanac

If you were to hear about a local group called the Ramen Club, you might picture a passel of people gathered together to sample different kinds of noodle soup.

In reality, this club is a team of high school students who met through the robotics program at Woodside Priory School in Portola Valley.

They formed the Ramen Club early this summer because they wanted to continue working after the school year ended to extend their work in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) into the broader community. Their name is a nod to their favorite ramen shop, where they frequently meet.

The students quickly found a project: After visiting the Vista Center for the Blind and Visually Impaired, members of the club were inspired to create a device to help, ultimately designing a glove that has buttons in the fingertips to act as a remote for those who could not see.

Club leader Viansa Schmulbach noted that she and fellow club members try to determine the actual needs of those they hope to help, “because if it’s not something that they actually want, then what’s the point of making it?”

“We decided to create this glove that can help them open emails, navigate through web pages, that sort of thing, and then we also added on another part of it that helps them cook by pouring all the ingredients for them.”



Photo by Robert Most

Ramen Club members, from left, Esha Umbarkar, Viansa Schmulbach and Dimitri Saliba, were three of the organizers of the club’s three-day hackathon event in July.

This is the kind of work Ramen Club members hope to do more of, she says. The students were inspired to host a three-day hackathon earlier this month, during which participants attempted to create programs or devices to improve the quality of life of people living with cognitive disabilities.

Any product created is the intellectual property of the creator, she says, but the club aims to give the creators opportunities to market or share their work.

Inspired by the hackathon, Ramen Club members decided to commit to one private club project and one outreach

project every season of the year except winter, when they are occupied building their own robot for competition.

After talking with a friend who wanted to attend coding camps but couldn’t afford it, Schmulbach was inspired to further reach out to the STEM community. Soon after the hackathon, she held a free, week-long coding camp for students in first through sixth grade.

She says she believes that more diversity is needed in STEM fields and hopes to share her coding experience with eager students of all experience levels. The Branching Out

camp progressed from basic coding platforms and skills to a final project and awards ceremony at the end of the week. She brought in a panel of high school students to talk to her campers at the beginning of the week, and arranged a Computer History Museum tour. Museum officials opened the doors at no charge because Schmulbach ran the camp as a nonprofit.

Early interest

Ever since she was in elementary school, Schmulbach has been interested in computer science, but as for the future, she is torn between pursuing a career in the technology world

or becoming a doctor. She is even considering pursuing a double major in order to study medicine and tech.

“I’m super into computer science now,” she says, “especially since we’ve talked about some of the other things we can do with [it]. This year I also joined a mentorship program where we used AI to rank ambulance calls, which is natural voice recognition, something that I’ll be teaching at a workshop later this summer.”

Though the tech world is slowly becoming more accepting of women and minorities, Schmulbach acknowledges that it can be intimidating for those groups to get involved in STEM because they’re often told they don’t belong. Her advice to those who are interested: Form community groups and make sure to get your voice heard.

“I formed this club because I know it’s a group of people (who) will listen to me,” she says. “There are lots of Facebook groups for women in tech, so there are always people who are available to support your mission ... and you just have to surround yourself with them.”

In addition to Schmulbach, who is president of the group, club members are Esha Umbarkar, Ryan Schackel, Bobby Youstra, Dimitri Saliba and Matthew Cirimele.

Ramen Club members are working hard to make sure everyone gets the opportunities they deserve to explore robotics, coding, and more. As for the future, they hope to welcome new members in the coming months and continue pushing the boundaries of what their robots can do. ▣

Atherton council wants meeting with Menlo fire board

By Barbara Wood
Almanac Staff Writer

One thing has been conspicuously absent since a consultant hired by Atherton came out with a report in January showing that the Menlo Park Fire Protection District spends less than half its Atherton-generated property tax revenues providing fire services in the town: any public comment from the district about the report and its conclusions.

The fire board had Atherton’s report on its Feb. 20 agenda but voted to table the item.

At a July 18 Atherton City Council meeting about the latest Matrix Consulting report, council members said the town’s next step should be getting the fire district to agree to discuss the

report publicly with the town.

After the release of the first report showing the town providing a nearly \$7 million annual operating subsidy to the fire district, council members asked Matrix to return with more information showing what the town could do about the disparity.

That report, discussing the steps Atherton would need to take to detach from the fire district or push to have property taxes generated in the town reallocated, was on the July 18 agenda.

Atherton resident Bob Polito, a member of the town’s Audit and Finance Committee, summarized the issue: “This situation we have with the fire district, which is a very affluent fire district, is one of the unintended consequences of Proposition 13.”

Polito said that because Atherton has close to zero growth combined with high property tax revenue growth, “the problem’s not going to go away. It’s growing at an astronomical rate.”

Atherton has no businesses or multifamily residential zoning.

His research showed that by 2025, the annual subsidy to the fire district generated within Atherton could approach \$20 million, Polito said.

A bigger portion of each property tax dollar generated in Atherton goes to the fire district than to the town. While the exact percentage varies by neighborhood, in the largest tax rate area in Atherton the fire district gets nearly 16 percent of each property tax dollar while the town gets less than 11 percent.

Council member Elizabeth Lewis said the Matrix report has “opened a lot of the residents’ eyes to what has really been happening.”

“It’s just not sustainable; something has to be done,” she said. “There’s no way that I want to take money away from levels of services to any of the other entities in our district,” she said, but “what would be reduced is the growth of the slush fund.”

Mayor Cary Wiest, who is the town’s liaison to the fire district, said he thinks the town should “start the process of at least opening a conversation” with the fire district.

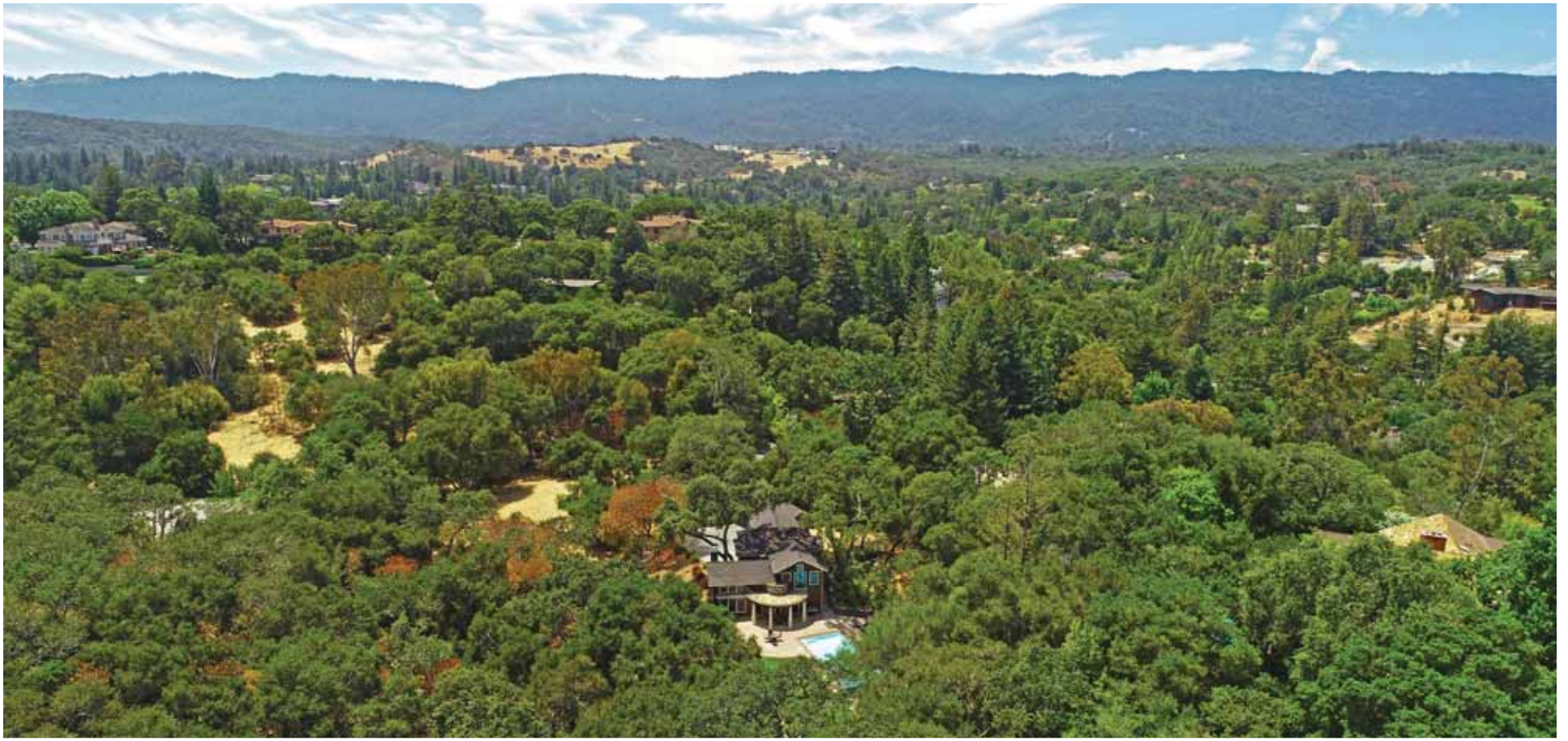
“It’s disappointing at this point that there is no clear path. What is clear is there is a need for reform,” he said. “We’re not talking a little money, we’re

talking a lot of money.”

Wiest said he also has concerns about how the fire district is spending its funds. “I have some extreme concerns,” he said. “The cost of services from the district are escalating beyond even their control.”

“Can the district survive without Atherton’s funds? Absolutely they can,” he said.

The most recent Matrix report explored options including going through the San Mateo County Local Agency Formation Commission (LAFCO) to detach from the fire district, negotiating directly with the fire district to reallocate some of the property tax dollars that come from Atherton property owners, or asking the state Legislature to reallocate the property tax revenues. ▣



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Whether pedaling or water paddling, safety training crucial for kids

Introducing *Street Smarts*, a new column dedicated to transportation-related issues in and around Menlo Park. *Street Smarts* is written by Katie Behroozi and Jen Wolosin, Menlo Park residents actively involved in making Menlo Park streets safer for all. Have a traffic- or transportation-related question or issue you'd like to see covered in an upcoming *Street Smarts* column? Email streetsmartsm@gmail.com.

To kick-off the column, *Street Smarts* discusses how bike safety skills warrant the same attention as water safety skills. Written by Katie Behroozi, an avid bike commuter who serves on the Menlo Park Complete Streets Commission and the leadership team of Parents for Safe Routes.

By Katie Behroozi

It's high summer and families and kids are in vacation mode: going to camp, hitting the beach, hanging out at the pool.

Amidst all the summer fun, parents take water safety very seriously. We share articles like "Drowning Doesn't Look Like Drowning," ferry our kids back and forth to lessons for years, and watch them like hawks at the pool until we are confident that they are strong swimmers. Even then we typically don't let them swim alone in the ocean.

I sometimes wonder why more families don't take a similar approach to biking and road safety.

On the streets of Menlo Park there seem to be two extremes. On one hand, parental risk-aversion manifests in the form of streets clogged with minivans and endless school drop-off lines (even when the commutes can be measured in

blocks, not miles). On the other hand, kids of all ages bike around town, seemingly unaware of basic safety skills and oblivious to the traffic and pedestrians around them.

What would it look like if we trained our kids to bike as we train them to swim?

We'd start in the shallow end: a controlled environment such as a cul-de-sac, soccer field, or driveway.

We'd take tire pressure, brake function, helmet fit and visibility (lights, reflective wear, etc.) as seriously as we do sun protection.

In addition to swim school, we'd send our budding riders to camps like Avid4 Adventure and WheelKids, where they'd learn more advanced skills, rules of the road, and group riding techniques from expert instructors.

Perhaps we'd even pressure our schools to make cycling safety a core part of the PE curriculum, as it is in Palo Alto.



Menlo Park residents Jen Wolosin and Katie Behroozi will address transportation-related questions and issues in this periodic column in *The Almanac*.

Public swimming pools are controlled environments with lifeguards and physical boundaries. Street ecosystems, like the ocean, are more complicated and less predictable. Given the lack of lifeguards on the open roads of Menlo Park, we would accompany kids long after they have mastered the basic cycling skills, teaching and reinforcing basic traffic laws, pointing out potential dangers and talking through challenging situations as they arise.

Pools often require kids to take a swim test before they can use the deep end. Similarly, we should require our kids to master a fundamental set of safety skills and demonstrate consistent adherence to traffic laws before setting them loose to ride around town by themselves. (Think of this as the learner's permit phase.)

Then comes the hardest part: letting

go. How will you know when your kid is ready? Of course every child is different, as is each family's situation, but experts suggest that around age 10, children start to develop the cognitive maturity to ride on the road unsupervised.

Grant independence in phases. Start with your immediate neighborhood before permitting your child to head to school or Burgess Park alone. Reverting to my water metaphor, the waves are bigger and the sharks more plentiful on streets such as Willow, Middlefield, Ravenswood, and Santa Cruz, so take these challenges into account when considering a route.

Continue to check in on your kids from time to time — especially if they are riding with groups of friends. (Peer pressure can have a strange amnesiac effect on a kid's road manners!)

Eventually your diligence will yield fruit. You'll be proud to know that your child can safely ride to water polo practice, violin lessons, or the grocery store. Your days of sitting in car lines or looking for parking at Burgess may be over, but more importantly, you'll have given your kid a leg up on the driving lessons that are just around the corner — and, if you're lucky, a lifelong appreciation for the unique convenience, freedom, and joy of cruising along on a bicycle.

Rick Longyear, M-A teacher and coach, dies at 57

Rick Longyear, a longtime teacher at Menlo-Atherton High School and, for decades, a coach and official in competitive water sports at M-A and on the Peninsula, was of the strong opinion that sports and other extracurricular activities present students with opportunities for important life lessons, a fellow coach said in remembering him.

OBITUARY

This obituary is based on information from Rick Longyear's colleagues.

Longyear, who was recently inducted into the M-A Athletic Hall of Fame, died July 17 after a "short battle with cancer," M-A principal Simone Rick-Kennel said in a midsummer

newsletter. He was 57.

"We will miss Rick," Rick-Kennel wrote in an email. "A big loss for our M-A community."

His wife Sally Longyear said in a recent Facebook post that she'll be running the Relay for Life in Burgess Park in Menlo Park on Saturday, Aug. 11, and asks for contributions in her husband's memory. Go to main.acevents.org/goto/Sally to make a contribution.

Longyear is survived by his wife and his son CJ.

Longyear was officially inducted into the M-A Hall of Fame on July 20, but will be honored posthumously at the 10th annual M-A Hall of Fame banquet on Saturday, Oct. 13.

Coaching was a passion for Longyear, M-A Athletic Director Paul Snow wrote in an email. "He was never NOT involved in coaching in his entire 36 years at M-A," he said.

Longyear taught biology for 36 years, mostly 10th-graders seeking a lab-science credit for the University of California system, fellow science teacher Lance Powell wrote in an email. Longyear's blended-biology course served students of all academic levels and challenged them to opt for more rigorous coursework and earn an "advanced" designation on their transcripts.

"Rick loved teaching, and loved teaching Biology especially," Patrick Roisen, an advanced-placement biology teacher at M-A, wrote in an email. Longyear helped pilot labs for a biotechnology group that now provides equipment and logistical support for DNA engineering and testing in classrooms around the Bay Area, Roisen said.

A field of study that came to be known as "sewer science" in Bay Area and Southern California

schools, ranging from ecology to microbiology, is also a result of Longyear's initiative, Roisen said.

"His enthusiasm for learning new concepts and ideas was infectious," he said. "As a colleague, Rick was a consummate team player in the Science Department, doing anything and everything asked of him, and was the person I could always depend on for a helping hand."

"He was dedicated to his students, staying in at lunch to help them get caught up and even sometimes swinging through my classroom to check in on former students and see how they were doing," Roisen said. "As a teacher and a person, Rick epitomized one of his favorite words — 'Outstanding!'"

A native of Alaska, Longyear moved to Southern California while in middle school and graduated from Villa Park High School in Orange County.

Longyear had a bachelor's degree from Stanford University as well as a master's degree in education. He also played water polo for the school.

He joined the M-A faculty in 1982 and coached the girls water polo team until about 2006. He then volunteered as an assistant coach and ran all the school's home swim meets, Snow said.

As head of sports for the Peninsula Athletic League, he ran all preseason and postseason meetings with swimming coaches, and directed the league's swimming championship meets for more than 30 years, Snow said.

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Chow wins promotion

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

■ MENLO BRIEFS

Longtime Menlo Park city planner Deanna Chow has been promoted to assistant community development director, effective July 23. Most recently, she worked as principal planner for the city, and was involved with the city's multi-year process to update the general plan and housing element.



Photo courtesy city of Menlo Park
Deanna Chow

City Manager Alex McIntyre said in a written statement, "She is well respected by her colleagues and I am confident that she, and her team, can accomplish great things for the community."

Chow has a bachelor's degree in development studies from UC Berkeley, a master's degree in urban planning from UCLA and more than 18 years of experience in planning, having worked for the city of San Jose before coming to Menlo Park.

She fills the position recently vacated when new Community Services Director Mark Muenzer was promoted to the position. The department has recently expanded to include the city's housing and economic development office, which was previously part of the city manager's office.

Community police academy

The Menlo Park Police Department is offering a community academy for adults who want to learn more about criminal law,

forensics and investigations, or wish to get a glimpse into the day-to-day life of police officers and public safety staff. People who are interested in participating in the academy can apply for the eight-week program, which will run Wednesdays 6:30 to 9:30 p.m., between Sept. 5 and Oct. 24. The deadline to apply is Friday, Aug. 10.

Go to is.gd/police432 to access the application.

Parks master plan

What should be done to improve or maintain Menlo Park's parks over the next 25 years? The Menlo Park City Council is scheduled to have a study session on a master plan in development aiming to answer that question at its next meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 6. According to Todd Zeo, recreation supervisor, the session will start around 6 p.m. and consultants from Gates & Associates will be there to present their preliminary

findings and answer questions. The Menlo Park City Council meets at the council chambers at 701 Laurel St. in the Civic Center.

County commission to review Flood Park proposal

After being postponed earlier this summer, a proposed master plan for Flood Park is scheduled for review by the San Mateo County Parks & Recreation Commission at its meeting scheduled for 4 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 2, in the Board of Supervisors' chambers at 455 County Center in Redwood City.

Among the proposed changes in the county's "preferred" project plan is the replacement of the existing baseball field and the addition of a new soccer and lacrosse field, a bicycle pump track, two bocce courts, a basketball court and a demonstration garden.

Preliminary cost estimates indicate the changes will add up

to about \$14 million. The proposed project has drawn concern from some nearby residents who worry that a new ballfield would increase noise and traffic in the area. According to county staff, the park was last renovated in the 1980s.

Go to almanacnews.com for the latest updates.

Victorian days walk

The Menlo Park Historical Association will host a two-mile history walk on Saturday, Aug. 4, from 11 a.m. to 12:30 p.m., set to start in front of the MacArthur Park restaurant at 27 University Ave. in Palo Alto. The building was designed by Julia Morgan and first operated as a "hostess house" for women and children here to visit soldiers training for World War I.

Other points of the interest on the walk are the El Palo Alto tree, the Stanford Park subdivision, and the former Oasis pub, which is also a historical building.

PENSION COSTS

continued from page 5

their communities."

The reports cites options cities can pursue to reduce pension obligations: increase contributions to CalPERS beyond the minimum required payments, develop a

pension reserve, negotiate to share pension costs with employees, shorten the "amortization" periods over which unfunded liability is paid back, make sure salary increases don't surpass what CalPERS has assumed they will be, reduce operating costs, or find new revenue sources.

Shortening the amortization period from 30 years to 20 years could result in savings for Redwood City of \$55 million — or, if shortened further to a 15-year amortization period, \$134 million. But cities aren't allowed to reverse their decisions once they decide to shorten it.

Menlo Park

According to Nick Pegueros, the city's financial and administrative services director, Menlo Park has already taken a series of proactive steps to mitigate its future pension costs.

But costs are still expected to rise substantially, with projections indicating the city can expect to pay \$11.2 million for pension costs by the 2024-25 fiscal year, up from \$5.7 million in 2017-18. That's an increase in average cost of about 13.7 percent a year between now and then.

Pegueros explained that the city has negotiated a cost-sharing program with nonsafety city employees, or everyone except the police department, which requires the employees to pay half of the city's future pension cost increases. For nonsafety personnel, after employee cost sharing, the city's contribution is projected to be approximately 25 percent of employee payroll in the 2027-28 fiscal year, up from approximately 18 percent in the 2016-17 fiscal year.

For safety personnel, the expected contribution will be higher, and is currently projected to be 57.5 percent of safety payroll in 2027-28, up from 29.3 percent in 2016-17.

The city has also created a strategic pension reserve fund. Since the time the grand jury report was compiled earlier this year, the City Council has added \$1 million to that fund, bringing its total to about \$4.2 million, or a reserve of about nine months' worth of current pension costs.

Other cities have put pension reserve dollars into a restricted pension trust, called a "Section

115 trust," which could boost the city's rate of return on investment from its current 1 percent to 4 percent but would limit how the funds can be used. Redwood City, Burlingame and Brisbane have Section 115 trusts to address pension costs.

Changes ahead?

Some statewide pension reform has occurred in recent years, and more could be on the way.

A 2013 state law called the California Public Employees Pension Act, or PEPRA, curbed pension benefits for public employees hired after 2013, created salary caps used to calculate pensions, and disallowed certain loopholes that enabled public employees to boost their pension incomes, such as "spiking" their salaries by reporting overtime, bonuses, severance or unused vacation or sick leave. Whether some of those provisions can apply to people hired before PEPRA passed is pending review in a couple of cases brought to the California Supreme Court.

CalPERS has also promised to lower the amortization period to 20 years, from 30 years.

Other things that could be done to ease pension burdens on cities appear not to be options right now, the report says; they include renegotiating pension formulas for employees, creating a defined contribution pension plan — such as a 401(k) program for new employees — or withdrawing from the pension system altogether.

The Menlo Park City Council is expected to discuss and respond to the report in August or September.

Go to is.gd/pensions726 to access the report. ■



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EASY LIVING?

You get what you pay for with smart home devices, but some say they're nobody's friend



STORY BY DAVE BOYCE | PHOTOS BY NATALIA NAZAROVA

Peter Carpenter looks out from the door of his Atherton home, which is equipped with seven cameras and 12 Amazon Echo digital servants to help with shopping lists and music selections, and to answer Carpenter's occasional questions.

From finding shelter in caves, tents and huts, to making do in medieval villages and Dickensian metropolises, to taking it comparatively easy in modern suburbia, for millennia we have been crafting the dwellings we call home.

There have been constants: Most have a roof, a doorway and some capacity for getting

and staying warm. There have been innovations, some that merit exclamation points: electricity, flush toilets, automatic dishwashers, automatic garage door openers, screened-in porches, hot tubs, towel warmers, wood-fired pizza ovens. It's a long list. What's next?

Some say the smart house. Already, computerized devices can set a mood with nuanced

lighting and music; make coffee; add detergent to a load of laundry; tell you when your refrigerated food is nearing its use-by date; track the electricity your appliances use; and maintain a home's climate by opening and closing windows, raising and lowering shades, and controlling heating and cooling systems. It, too, is a long list, and it's growing.

Skeptics don't dispute that smart houses are here, but say they're not ready for prime time and, perhaps more important, that they're not for everyone. They're best suited, they say, for people who either have an informed understanding of internet technology or have the resources to hire people who do.

'INVITING A WIRE TAP'

Launched in the 1970s, before hackers had arrived on the scene, the internet is blessed — and cursed — with a design that is open to both innovation and infiltration.

Infiltration by hackers is, of course, a big problem and

serious enough to warrant concerns about privacy at home when you connect to the so-called internet of things — smart appliances and other systems that can be controlled from a remote computer, including smart phones and tablets.

To use the internet of things you are required to connect your house to the internet, or "the cloud." But in making that connection, "you are very much inviting a wire tap," said Gennie Gebhart, a researcher for the Electronic Frontier Foundation, a San Francisco-based nonprofit that defends digital privacy rights.

These smart devices collect data that is stored on servers that the device owners have very little control over, she said. This data has the potential to expose a person's habits, "painting a very revealing and intimate portrait of your life," she said.

Smart machines also accustom us to surveillance, she added. Given that they're governed

'If you start having machines that learn your habits, where does that lead? Is it the Trojan horse in our house?'

FIRE CHIEF
HAROLD SCHAPELHOUMAN

by algorithms that track your behavior, you come to expect your appliances to be watching you and come to think it's normal for a machine to log your daily habits "in a place that, by law and social norms, is the most private and sacred space in your life," she said.

If you want to make a smart home a hobby and have the time and skills, "then maybe this is a great thing for you," Gebhart said. Smart devices can be of real benefit to people with disabilities, she added, but they've also been used for domestic abuse by former



A camera, one of five that monitor activity outside Carpenter's home, is mature enough as a product to be included in Carpenter's limited use of smart devices at home.

spouses who move out yet still have remote access.

“The perils of this technology, we are just starting to see the tip of the iceberg,” Gebhart said. As a concept, “complexity is the enemy of security (and) the internet of things and smart-home devices are the picture of that concept,” she said. “The complexity of securing smart-home devices remains an unsolved challenge.”

EASE OF USE IS KEY

Peter Carpenter, longtime Atherton resident and member of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District governing board, said he has five cameras outside his home and two inside, all of which he can access remotely.

Inside, Carpenter has 12 Echo devices — Amazon’s voice-activated digital servant. He said he uses Echo as an intercom, to answer general questions he poses, and to choose music. He had been using it to control the house lights, but said his wife objected because she could not override it — a bug, which is not uncommon with new products, he said.

He said he won’t consider any new product that’s not easy to

use and that receives fewer than four stars in reviews. “It’s always been buyer beware. If we behave in ways that make us vulnerable, then we have to accept the fact that that could have consequences,” he said. “No matter what anybody tells you, you are vulnerable to hacking.”

That vulnerability includes him, but he said he wonders who would bother. “What’s the worst thing that could happen?” he asked. Hacked credit card? Banks and credit card companies absorb the losses. Identity theft? He’s aware of it, but not particularly concerned, he said.

“Worst case,” he said, “somebody could look at my Kindle (e-book reader) right now and see that I have 5,208 books on it, and look at what I’m reading. ... The question is: ‘Do I care?’ I am not an exceedingly private person. If I were, I would not be in public life.”

Carpenter said he installs every device himself. “If I have to hire somebody, that’s a signal to me that it’s not plug-and-play,” he said. “I worry that people invest too much in both money and trust in systems that have not been well-proven.”

A Woodside man who

invested some \$623,000 in smart systems in building a new home of more than 7,000 square feet spoke with *The Almanac* on condition that he not be identified.

Among the notable features of the house: automated control of windows, lights, audio and video systems, and climate control for 10 different parts of the house.

In Woodside, he said, you need to build a house commensurate with the property value. “You’re either going to go all-in or not. If you choose to go all-in, you are signing up for a big bill,” he said.

He has an ongoing relationship with an expert who advised him on building his systems and monitors them remotely. This homeowner doesn’t store sensitive data in the cloud. He uses encryption.

“Everything is alarmed,” he said, adding that they have several dogs and cameras in the garages, all of which have manual doors.

“When everything works, it’s wonderful,” he said. “Has it proved to be ... resilient? Absolutely. I don’t worry about hackers. There are much bigger things to worry about.”

WORTH DOING?

John Richards, an architect and member of the Portola Valley Town Council, said he hasn’t looked for architectural jobs that involve smart-home technology. “It’s a moving target and changing pretty fast,” he said.

Richards said he has a smart thermostat. “It’s not really as smart as (it’s) made out to be,” he said. As for his smart irrigation system, “I turn that off a lot of the time because it’s not very smart either,” he said.

Dave Tanner, a member of the Woodside Town Council and a builder and general contractor, is also skeptical.

Smart devices get on the

market before they’re mature, Tanner said. “It’s the future, but actually it’s a disaster looking for a place to happen,” he said. “It’s the epitome of laziness. Why can’t you get up and move a light switch?”

Smart interior climate control seems reasonable, he said, but “once you tie it in to the smart-home stuff and the smart-home stuff fouls up, then you have an issue. ... Somebody goes in and hacks your account and then what? It’s not well-protected, and that’s the part that gets to me. If your house shuts down, how are you going to operate it?”

See **SMART HOUSES**, page 18



Top: A control panel for Peter Carpenter’s music system at home gives him a comprehensive view of what is playing where. **Above:** Some of the many voice-controlled devices that Peter Carpenter uses to simplify his home life through the use of artificially intelligent technology.

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Photo:
Scott Lasky

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Photo by Natalia Nazarova

Junyan Xie re-creates some of the community spirit she says she felt in her native China at her mother's tea shop by hosting tea-tasting events in her Menlo Park home.

Steeped in tradition

Expats build community with Chinese tea-tasting events in Menlo Park

By Christine Lee

Junyan Xie reminisced about her nights in China with a warm smile. After dinner, she used to sit in her mother's tea shop and neighborhood friends would drop by, coming and going as they wished. It was a nightly routine — sitting around a table, sipping cup after cup of tea, talking about their lives.

"That was interesting," she said. "I love to hear people's stories."

This social bonding over tea is what she sought to bring to her new home in Silicon Valley. Xie, who moved to the United States to attend graduate school at Northwestern University and is now working in tech, started hosting tea tastings to introduce others to traditional pu'er tea from China and share the experience of connecting through an ancient tradition.

Pu'er tea, a special variety of fermented tea from the Yunnan province, is aged and has a long

history in China, much like wine and whiskey in the West. It's also extremely popular for social events in China. The idea is to "bring the new and old together," Xie said.

Xie invites anyone interested in traditional tea to step into her modern, Scandinavian-style Menlo Park home for an intimate tea tasting experience.

Over the course of two hours, guests sip tea out of small glass cups, seated at a communal table set with clay teapots and light snacks. (Traditionally, pu'er is regarded as a luxury tea and is not paired with food.) Xie offers four types of pu'er tea from over 150-year-old tea trees.

The session begins with a 12-hour cold-brewed white pu'er tea, which Xie serves from a large glass jug. The jug can be refilled with water to keep the tea going for about a week.

During the hot pu'er tea tasting, Xie carefully brews four types: white, black, raw and babe lime with ripe pu'er tea. Each has a distinctive color, taste and smell. The more a tea is processed, the darker its color, she says. The quality increases when the pu'er teas are aged properly. Unlike commonly seen loose tea leaves, pu'er teas are dried and

pressed into a ball shape to facilitate fermentation and storage.

To brew each tea, she places the leaves in a yixing clay teapot, which is small with a purple-brownish hue. The specific type of porcelain it's made from is ideal for brewing pu'er tea; it retains heat, prevents burning, and the density of the clay helps air flow better, Xie says. She then pours boiling water through the tea for about 30 seconds and throws out the first batch of water to "wake up the tea."

"Clean the tea," she instructs. "Even if it's organic, it will have dust and all that."

Afterward, she pours another batch of hot water into the teapot and steeps the tea for 15 seconds. Using wooden tea tongs, she places thin, white tea cups onto wooden tea coasters embellished with intricate flower designs and gently pours out the freshly-brewed tea, filling about three quarters of the cup.

The tea can be brewed around 20 times, she says.

While the white tea has a refreshing scent and subtle taste, the raw pu'er tastes slightly bitter due to fermentation. The bitterness is followed by a hint of "sweetness in the throat," Xie says.

"Like caffeine, it gets rid of (a)

tired feeling (and) makes you very refreshed," she adds.

Then there's the ripe pu'er in babe lime tea, in which the pu'er tea is placed inside of a premature lime, picked in Xinhui at six months old.

Throughout the tasting, Xie talks about the history of Chinese tea, how to evaluate quality and brew tea properly, and what draws her to tea. She's especially touched by the way ethnic minorities in the Yunnan province have tended religiously to the tea trees for thousands of years.

In the two months since Xie has started the tea tastings, her guests have included a diverse range of people, from startup employees to doctors and to couples who share stories about how they met. One husband booked a recent tasting as a surprise for his wife.

Although the guests typically don't talk much initially, the tea eventually works its magic as everyone around the table gets to know one another better over cups of tea. ■

The tasting is \$28 per person. For more information, go to airbnb.com/experiences/93258. Christine Lee is a staff member of the Palo Alto Weekly, The Almanac's sister paper.



Photo by Natalia Nazarova

Pu'er tea leaves add an eye-catching flourish to the table during a recent tasting event.

Calendar

MEETINGS, MUSIC, THEATER, FAMILY ACTIVITIES AND SPECIAL EVENTS

Submitting items for the Calendar

Go to AlmanacNews.com and see the Community Calendar module at the top right side of the page. Click on "Add your event." If the event is of interest to a large number of people, also e-mail a press release to Editor@AlmanacNews.com.

Visit AlmanacNews.com/calendar to see more calendar listings

Theater

A staged reading of 'Every Day Alice'
"Every Day Alice" is a staged reading of a new play commissioned for Utopia Theatre Project's second season. "Every Day Alice" explores familiar characters from "Alice in Wonderland" and "Peter Pan," in a modern setting. Aug. 6, 7 p.m. \$5-\$20. Dragon Theatre, 2120 Broadway St., Redwood City.

'Equivocation' The Dragon Theatre stages Bill Cain's "Equivocation." Set in 1606 England, the play's main character, Shakespeare, deals with ethical issues surrounding his commission to write a play giving a fictional account of Guy Fawkes' Gunpowder Plot. Produced and directed by Jenny Hollingworth, the show is rated PG-13. Through Aug. 19, times vary. \$15-\$35. Dragon Theatre, 2120 Broadway St., Redwood City. dragonproductions.net

TheatreWorks Silicon Valley Presents 'Hold These Truths' TheatreWorks Silicon Valley kicks off its 2018/19 season with "Hold These Truths" by Jeanne Sakata, a true story following Gordon Hirabayashi, a Japanese-American student who fought internment to a relocation camp during WWII. Through Aug. 5, times vary. \$35-\$60. Lucie Stern Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. theatreworks.org/201819-season

Concerts

Andrea Motis Quintet with Wycliffe Gordon and the SJW 50/50 Jazz Orchestra Directed by Joan Chamorro, Spanish jazz singer and trumpeter Andrea Motis will return to Stanford Jazz Workshop accompanied by her own band, which will include founder of the famed Sant Andreu Jazz Band, Joan Chamorro. She will also be joined by SJW 50/50 Jazz Orchestra. Aug. 4, 8-10 p.m. \$25-\$98. Bing Concert Hall, 327 Lasuen St., Stanford. Search events.stanford.edu for more info.

Overture 2/2: Mozart and Mendelssohn, plus Meet-the-Artists Wine Reception Music@Menlo will inaugurate the new series of Overture Concerts, in which young International Program artists collaborate with established chamber musicians. The program will include Mozart's Piano Quartet in G minor and Mendelssohn's String Octet in E-flat major and feature artists like the M-Prize winning Calidore String Quartet. Aug. 1, 7:30-9:30 p.m. \$32. Menlo School, 50 Valparaiso Ave., Atherton. Search meet-up.com for more info.

SJW Jazz Institute Showcase Instrumentalists and vocalists will perform everything from cool jazz to bebop from standards to original songs. Aug. 2, 7 p.m. Free. Stanford University, 450 Serra Mall, Stanford. Search events.stanford.edu for more info.

Summer Concert Series: Haulin' Oats (Hall & Oats Tribute) The Summer Concert Series presented by Facebook features a variety of musical styles from jazz to country to hits of the past and today. Aug. 8, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Free. Fremont Park,

Santa Cruz Avenue at University Drive, Menlo Park. menlopark.org

Summer Concert Series: Kenya B Trio (Funk/R&B) The Kenya B Trio will play jazzy blues, funk originals and original arrangement of blues, jazz, funk and soul from 20th century artists as part of the Summer Concert Series. Aug. 1, 6:30-8 p.m. Free. Fremont Park, Santa Cruz Avenue at University Drive, Menlo Park. menlopark.org

Summer Jazz 32nd Anniversary Concert Series Stanford Shopping Center hosts weekly rhythm and blues concerts showcasing a variety of jazz musicians and local favorites in the courtyard between Nordstrom and Crate & Barrel. Through August 23, 6-7:30 p.m. Free. Stanford Shopping Center, 660 Stanford Shopping Center, Palo Alto. simon.com/mall/stanford-shopping-center

Concert Program VII: Vienna The 2018 season's final Concert Program will pay homage to Vienna with works by Mozart, Brahms, Schubert, and Schoenberg. Aug. 2, 7:30-9:30 p.m. \$20-\$72. Menlo School, 50 Valparaiso Ave., Atherton. musicatmenlo.org

James Welch Organist James Welch will perform with Erin McOmber, soprano. Aug. 5, 7 p.m. Free. LDS Church, 1105 Valparaiso Ave., Menlo Park. welchorganist.com/pages/appearances.shtml

Larry Vuckovich Jazz/Latin Quartet Jazz pianist legend Larry Vuckovich will play at Portola Vineyards' SummerJazz and be joined by Jeff Chambers on bass, Jason Lewis on drums and Hector Lugo, percussion and vocals. Aug. 5, 6-7:30 p.m. \$12-\$24. Portola Vineyards, 850 Los Trancos Road, Portola Valley. Search eventbrite.com for more info.

Robert Huw Morgan, Organ Robert Huw Morgan, University Organist at Stanford University, will perform works by Johann Sebastian Bach. Aug. 1, 7:30 p.m. Free, \$10 donation recommended. Stanford University, 450 Serra Mall, Stanford. Search events.stanford.edu for more info.

Festivals & Fairs

SRT Film Festival: von Trotta's Marianne and Juliane Stanford Repertory Theater's 20th anniversary season, "Nevertheless They Persisted," features a six-week Monday night film festival. Professor of Theater & Performance Studies and Classics and SRT Artistic Director Rush Rehm will respond to the fifth film, "Margarethe von Trotta's Marianne and Juliane"(1981), a fictionalized account of Gudrun Esslin of the Baader-Meinhoff gang. Aug. 6, 7 p.m. Free. Stanford University, 450 Serra Mall, Stanford. Search events.stanford.edu for more info.

Portola Valley Farmers' Market Year-round Thursday farmers' market features fresh fruits and vegetables, berries, specialty foods, fresh artisan baked goods, farm meats and eggs, honey, jams, nuts and nut butters, prepared foods, hot rotisserie chickens, made-to-order crepes, tamales, crafts and body products. Thursdays, 2-6 p.m. Free. Portola Valley Town Center, 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley.



From the road to the gallery wall

Portola Art Gallery presents an exhibit of paintings by local artist Jerry Peters this month. The paintings in the show, "On the Road in Nova Scotia," are inspired by photos taken on a three-month road trip around the U.S. and Canada in 2005. A reception is set for Saturday, Aug. 4, from 1 to 4 p.m. Portola Art Gallery is at 75 Arbor Road in Menlo Park. Gallery hours are 10:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday. (650) 321-0220; portolaartgallery.com

Vote for Our Lives: First Time Voter Education Festival This event will draw first time voters (eligible to vote in the November 2018 election) and provide them with opportunity for voter registration, information about how to vote when away at college, and information on some main issues. There will be live music, food, and panels of speakers that include Stanford professors and politicians including senators. Aug. 4, 6-9 p.m. Free. Courthouse Square, 2200 Broadway St., Redwood City. redwoodcity.org

Talks & Lectures & Classes

Peninsula Ukulele Group (PUG) Jam Peninsula Ukulele Group will teach residents how to play the learn ukulele and play songs together. Aug. 4, 1:30-4 p.m. Free. Woodside Library, 3140 Woodside Road, Woodside.

Meg Mezeske at Books Inc. Mountain View Meg Mezeske shares her debut novel, "Red Tea." Jordan Howard moves to the Japanese countryside to become a high school English teacher, not an amateur detective. But when Jordan's students are murdered one after another, she resolves to

find the culprit, fueled by lingering guilt over her own brother's death. Aug. 8, 7-9 p.m. Free. Books Inc. Mountain View, 317 Castro St., Mountain View. booksinc.net/event

Algorithms of Oppression Author Safiya Noble sits down with the museum's Center for Software History Director David C. Brock to discuss her book on how negative biases are embedded in the world's largest search engines. Aug. 8, 6 p.m. Computer History Museum, 1401 N. Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View. computerhistory.org/events/upcoming

NYMBC Presents Bree Barton, Andrew Shvarts and Mark Walsh Not Your Mother's Book Club and Writous Writers presents "The Craft of Storytelling" with Bree Barton, debut author of the YA feminist fantasy Heart of Thorns, and Andrew Shvarts, critically acclaimed author of City of Bastards: Royal Bastards #2. Bree and Andrew will be in conversation with Mark Walsh, Animation Lead for Pixar's "Finding Nemo" and "Ratatouille." Aug. 6, 7-9 p.m. Free. Books Inc. Palo Alto, 855 El Camino Real, Palo Alto. booksinc.net/event

SRI Organon Toastmasters SRI Organon Toastmasters helps community members become better public speakers and leaders by providing a supportive, positive environment for practicing communication and leadership skills. Guests are welcome to visit and join. Tuesdays, year-round. Free. St. Patrick's Seminary & University, Redon Hall, 320 Middlefield Road, Menlo Park. sriorganon.com

Family

August Free First Friday The San Mateo County History Museum continues with its "Free First Fridays" offering on Aug. 3, 2018, which will include a preschool craft program at 11 a.m. and an adult tour at 2 p.m. Aug. 3, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. San Mateo County History Museum, 2200 Broadway, Redwood City. historysmc.org/free-first-fridays

Museums & Exhibits

We Shot the War: Overseas Weekly in Vietnam Rarely seen photographs will be shown at the Hoover Institution Library & Archives' exhibition "We Shot the War: Overseas Weekly in Vietnam." Exploring the interrelationships between art, journalism,

and politics, the exhibition features photographs submitted to the Overseas Weekly's Pacific edition--a military tabloid at once beloved by troops and reviled by the Pentagon for its controversial content. Through Dec. 8, times vary. Free. 550 Serra Mall, Stanford. Search events.stanford.edu for more info.

Portola Art Gallery Presents Jerry Peters' 'On the Road in Nova Scotia' The Portola Art Gallery will present "On the Road in Nova Scotia," paintings by Palo Alto artist Jerry Peters. The primary paintings in the show are inspired by photos taken on a three month road trip around the U.S. and Canada in 2005. A reception will be held Aug. 4, 1-4 p.m. Through Aug. 31, 10:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Portola Art Gallery, 75 Arbor Road, Menlo Park. portolaartgallery.com

Film

Stanford Summer Human Rights Series: Tomorrow The Stanford Summer Human Rights program will screen "Tomorrow," a documentary about already implemented solutions for global climate change. The film will be moderated by Jasmina Bojic, Camera as Witness program director and founder of the international documentary film festival, UNAFF. Aug. 2, 7-9 p.m. Free. Stanford University, 450 Serra Mall, Stanford. Search events.stanford.edu for more info.

Outdoor Recreation

Crystal Springs Trail Run Participants will run through the towering redwoods, lush ferns and trails through Huddart Park, King's Mountain and Bear Gulch. Aug. 4, 9 a.m. \$25. Woodside. trailrunner.com/event/crystal-springs-trail-run

Business

Break Through: Women in Silicon Valley, Womenomics in Japan The Break Through conference aims to create a dialogue that will spark innovative ideas for narrowing the gender gap by bringing together women thought leaders and entrepreneurs from Stanford, Silicon Valley and Japan to cultivate interpersonal support networks and collaboration. Aug. 9, 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Free. Arrillaga Alumni Center, 326 Galvez St., Stanford. aparc.fsi.stanford.edu/events

Cost of renting park Pavilion may skyrocket

The cost of renting the Jennings Pavilion in Atherton's Holbrook-Palmer Park, which can host dinners for as many as 130 people and seat 150, may soon go up — way up.

At the suggestion of the caterer the town contracts with to manage rentals in the park, Catering by Dana, the town will consider raising the cost of renting the pavilion to "market rates."

A public hearing on the proposed increases will have to be held before the town can adopt the new rates.

The proposed increases (which do not include administrative fees of 15 percent for Atherton

residents and 30 percent for non-Atherton residents) are:

■Mondays through Thursdays: half days would increase from \$700 to \$800 and full days and evenings from \$900 to \$1,200.

■Fridays until 4 p.m.: an increase from \$900 to \$1,500 and from 5 p.m. to midnight, from \$1,200 to \$4,000.

■Saturdays and Sundays: half days would go up from \$1,500 to \$2,250; full days from \$2,500 to \$4,000. The rental cost 5 p.m. to midnight would also increase from \$2,500 to \$4,000.

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For video tour & more photos, please visit:

www.1565Edgewood.com

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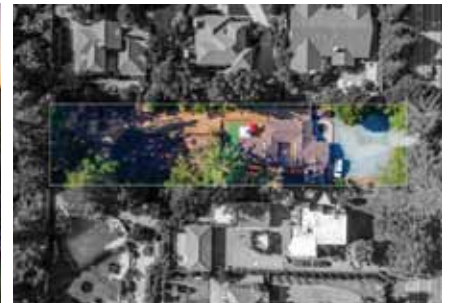
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INDEX

- BULLETIN BOARD 100-199
- FOR SALE 200-299
- KIDS STUFF 330-399
- MIND & BODY 400-499
- JOBS 500-599
- BUSINESS SERVICES 600-699
- HOME SERVICES 700-799
- FOR RENT/ FOR SALE REAL ESTATE 800-899
- PUBLIC/LEGAL NOTICES 995-997

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Bulletin Board

115 Announcements
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Thursday by 5 p.m. for Space Reservation.
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210 Garage/Estate Sales

Palo Alto, 1280 Pine Street, 8a-noonish

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Informatica LLC has the following position available in Redwood City, CA: Principal Software Engineer (VK-CA): Perform product design and developmental tasks of a moderate to high complexity which require research and analysis. Telecommuting permitted. Submit resume to: Informatica LLC, Attn: Global Mobility, 2100 Seaport Blvd., Redwood City, CA 94063. Must reference job title and job code: VK-CA.

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Public Notices

995 Fictitious Name Statement

COSMIC TURTLE FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 278173

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Cosmic Turtle, located at 301 Oak Avenue Apt. E, Redwood City, CA 94061, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s):
AARON NEMOYTEN
301 Oak Avenue, Apt. E Redwood City, CA 94061

This business is conducted by: An Individual.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 6/28/2018. This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 28, 2018.

(ALM July 11, 18, 25, Aug. 1, 2018)

FIRST - MATE SERVICES FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 278228

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:

First - Mate Services, located at 919 Flying Fish Street, Foster, CA 94404, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s):
JAMES MICHAEL RODRIGUEZ
919 Flying Fish St. Foster, CA 94404

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 July 5, 2018.

(ALM July 18, 25; Aug. 1, 8, 2018)

MR. CHIMNEY MR. CHIMNEY & DRYER VENTS R'US MR. CHIMNEY ANY VARIATION OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 278115

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:

1.) Mr. Chimney, 2.) Mr. Chimney & Dryer Vents R'us, 3.) Mr. Chimney any variation of, located at 4455 McKinnon Dr., San Jose, CA 95130, Santa Clara County.

Registered owner(s):

MASON MCCARTY
4455 McKinnon Dr. San Jose, CA 95130

This business is conducted by: An Individual.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 4/01/1989. This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 22, 2018.

(ALM July 18, 25; Aug. 1, 8, 2018)

PPS ENTERPRISES FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 278091

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:

PPS Enterprises, located at 1580 San Antonio Ave., Apt. B, Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s):
PERRY SHOURAIE
1580 San Antonio Ave. Apt. B 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 6/19/2018. This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 19, 2018.

(ALM July 18, 25; Aug. 1, 8, 2018)

ALL BAY VALUATION FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 278294

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:

All Bay Valuation, located at 286 Harbor Blvd., Belmont, CA 94002, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s):
LARRY LUMPKINS
1040 Parkwood Way Redwood City, CA 94061

JOHN EGAN
420 Kingston Drive Danville, CA 94506

This business is conducted by: A General Partnership.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 01/23/2013. This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 16, 2018.

(ALM July 25; Aug. 1, 8, 15, 2018)

REDWOOD FENCE FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 278171

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:

Redwood Fence, located at 1218 W. Selby Lane, Redwood City, CA 94061; Mailing address: PO Box 5055, Redwood City, CA 94061, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s):
ADONIAS ISAI CARRETO RAMIREZ
1218 W Selby Lane Redwood City, CA 94061

This business is conducted by: An Individual.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on May-29-18. This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 28, 2018.

(ALM July 25; Aug. 1, 8, 15, 2018)

KUATA'S DANCE GROUP FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 278359

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:

Kuata's Dance Group, located at 1919 Menalto Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s):
KUATA VAINIKOLO
1290 Garden St. East Palo Alto, CA 94303

This business is conducted by: An Individual.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on N/A. This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 20, 2018.

(ALM Aug. 1, 8, 15, 22, 2018)

RIVAS' CLEANING FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 278370

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:

Rivas' Cleaning, located at 1419 Camelia Dr., East Palo Alto, CA 94303, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s):
MARIELA RAMIREZ RODRIGUEZ
1419 Camelia East Palo Alto, CA 94303

RAMIRO ANTONIO RIVAS
1419 Camelia East Palo Alto, CA 94303

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 July 23, 2018.

(ALM Aug. 1, 8, 15, 22, 2018)

997 All Other Legals

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

Case No.: 18CIV03325
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner: RYAN MICHELETTI filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

ANALEIA ALICE MICHELETTI to ANNALeia ALICE MICHELETTI.

THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING: August 09, 2018, 9:00 a.m., Dept.: PJ of the Superior Court of California, County of San Mateo, located at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063.

A copy of this ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: THE ALMANAC

Date: July 5, 2018

/s/ Jonathan E. Karesh

JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT (ALM July 18, 25; Aug. 1, 8, 2018)

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

Case No.: 18CIV03731
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner: CATHERINE KWEI-SZETO and WAYNE SZETO filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

RONAN SHANE SZETO to RONAN SHANE KWEI SZETO.

THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING: August 09, 2018, 9:00 a.m., Dept.: PJ of the Superior Court of California, County of San Mateo, located at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063.

A copy of this ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: THE ALMANAC

Date: June 28, 2018

/s/ Susan Irene Etezadi

JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT (ALM July 18, 25; Aug. 1, 8, 2018)

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

Case No.: 18CIV03389
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner: DANA MARIE VAZ filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

DANA MARIE VAZ to DANA MARIE GEHRING.

THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is

scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING: August 17, 2018, 9:00 a.m., Dept.: PJ of the Superior Court of California, County of San Mateo, located at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063.

A copy of this ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: THE ALMANAC

Date: July 5, 2018

/s/ Jonathan E. Karesh

JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT (ALM July 18, 25; Aug. 1, 8, 2018)

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

Case No.: 18CIV03731
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner: CATHERINE KWEI-SZETO and WAYNE SZETO filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

RONAN SHANE SZETO to RONAN SHANE KWEI SZETO.

THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING: August 29, 2018, 9:00 a.m., Dept.: PJ of the Superior Court of California, County of San Mateo, located at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063.

A copy of this ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: THE ALMANAC

Date: July 16, 2018

/s/ Jonathan E. Karesh

JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT (ALM July 25; Aug. 1, 8, 15, 2018)

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CalRE #00912143



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Hugh Cornish 650.324.4456
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CalRE #01178998



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Erika Demma 650.851.2666
CalRE #01230766



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Erika Demma / Judy Byrnes 650.851.2666
CalRE #01230766 / 01178998



Portola Valley | 5/3.5 | \$3,395,000
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Stunning views across SF Bay from Mt. Diablo to Black Mountain! www.900wayside.com
Jean Isaacson 650.851.2666
CalRE #00542342



Portola Valley | 4/3.5 | \$2,975,000
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Ginny Kavanaugh 650.851.1961
CalRE #00884747



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Nancy Goldcamp 650.325.6161
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Redwood City | 3/2 | \$1,850,000
132 Rutherford Ave
Charming hm close to Wds Plaza, downtown Woodside, Stanford, Downtown Menlo Park & more.
DiPali Shah 650.851.2666
CalRE #01249165



Mount Carmel | 3/2 | \$1,699,000
40 Grand St
Great home in Mount Carmel. 1560sf on a 6500sf lot. Charming 1920s Bungalow, near downtown
James Milton 650.324.4456
CalRE #01833221



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