

The Almanac

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

OCTOBER 23, 2019 | VOL. 55 NO. 8



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by training
and a computer
hardware and
software developer
by vocation,
but he's used
retirement
as a chance
to branch out

Page 14

Cities call on Stanford to “pay its fair share” | Page 5
Menlo Park council approves parks plan | Page 8
Students’ test scores remain stagnant | Page 10

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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY



Photo by Sammy Dallal

Preserving tradition

Lin Howery, a Menlo Park resident, runs a French-style gourmet jam business called J'aime Confiture — which, translated, means “I love jam” — from her Sharon Heights home. Read the story on Page 20.

San Mateo County cities fume as Stanford rebuffs their funding requests

Coalition of cities call on Stanford to ‘pay its fair share’ to address the impacts of proposed campus growth on housing, traffic

By Gennady Sheyner

In a stinging rebuke, a coalition of cities in San Mateo County issued a public statement Friday, Oct. 18, criticizing Stanford University for rejecting their requests for funding to address the impacts of its dramatic campus expansion on traffic and housing.

The letter from the Coalition for Stanford GUP Accountability — a group of elected representative and staff members from San Mateo County, Atherton, East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Portola Valley, Redwood City and Woodside — was released just days before the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors was scheduled to review Stanford’s application for a new general use permit. If approved, the GUP would allow Stanford to build 3.5 million square feet of new development by 2035, including 2,275 million square feet of academic space and 2,600 student beds. County staff are also recommending that Stanford be required to build at least 2,172 housing units for staff (Stanford’s application calls for 550 such units).

While Santa Clara County has the sole authority to approve or deny Stanford’s request, city and county officials in San Mateo County have been persistently arguing that the approval should also take into account Stanford’s impacts on the jurisdictions to

its north. They point at the environmental analysis for Stanford’s expansion, which concluded that about 27% of the new households associated with Stanford’s growth would be located in San Mateo County, requiring about 655 new housing units. As such, they requested that Stanford contribute \$196 million for an affordable-housing fund.

The cities had also requested \$4.62 million for roadway and intersection improvements, \$15 million for bike and pedestrian connections between Stanford and surrounding communities; \$5 million for stormwater management and flood prevention; and \$6.78 million in “in-lieu property taxes” to compensate communities where Stanford, which enjoys property-tax exemptions, owns properties.

In its Oct. 18 statement, the San Mateo County coalition reaffirms its concerns about the traffic and housing impacts of Stanford’s proposed expansion, which is expected to add 9,600 people to the campus population. Despite these impacts, Stanford “flatly refuses” to negotiate with the cities when it comes to mitigations, the letter states. The message also states that Stanford has informed the coalition that it would only negotiate if the coalition lobbies Santa Clara County to enter into a “development agreement” with Stanford.

Such an agreement would

upend the traditional relationship between the regulator (the county) and the project applicant (Stanford) and allow the two sides to negotiate a deal with additional benefits and exemptions. Earlier this month, the university suggested that it would not accept the county’s approval of its application unless it comes with a development agreement.

Robert Reidy, Stanford’s vice president for land, buildings and real estate, argued in an Oct. 7 letter to the Board of Supervisors that because Stanford is offering significant public benefits upfront, a development agreement is needed to assure the university that it would be able to proceed with its expansion.

“The university needs to be able to predict the costs associated with future regulations, and its ability to comply with those regulations, in order to commit land and financial resources toward housing, transportation, schools and other benefits,” Reidy wrote.

Santa Clara County staff and the majority of the Board of Supervisors have thus far maintained that a development agreement is unnecessary. After agreeing last fall to consider a development agreement, the board appointed a subcommittee to explore a possible deal. The committee, composed of board President Joe Simitian and Supervisor

See **STANFORD**, page 7

Menlo Park grapples with significance of new state housing law

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

As Menlo Park’s City Council continues to grapple with the challenges of unequal growth in different areas, recently passed state laws are complicating matters in new ways, as became evident at the council’s Oct. 15 meeting.

In June, the council considered passing a moratorium on some kinds of development in the city. However, council members ultimately decided to proceed by breaking into two subcommittees, with Mayor Ray Mueller and Vice Mayor Cecilia Taylor coming up with suggestions for potential zoning changes for District 1, which includes the Belle Haven neighborhood, and council members Betsy Nash and Drew Combs doing the same for Districts 2 through 5.

At the June discussion, the rough conclusions were that the ConnectMenlo Plan, which updated the city’s general plan, had overwhelmed District 1 with new commercial and housing growth potential, while the area in the El Camino Real/Downtown specific plan near the Caltrain station — as well as the rest of the city more broadly — could better handle more housing density because that area is near transit.

But, as Assistant City Attorney Cara Silver explained to the council in a study session to explore the subcommittees’ recommendations, starting on Jan. 1, it will be illegal to downzone any area designated for housing unless the city rezones another area to allow the exact same number of housing units. That’s according to the Housing Crisis Bill of 2019, or SB 330, which Gov. Gavin Newsom approved on Oct. 9.

The law bans cities from backtracking on already approved zoning for housing, so would prohibit moratoriums on housing projects.

According to Silver, the law will also ban cities from conducting more than five hearings on a proposed housing project, so long as it complies with the city’s general plan and zoning standards.

Silver and Mueller also talked about the expected new Regional Housing Needs Assessment cycle,

which will have major implications for how the city proceeds with its plan for housing growth.

Those numbers haven’t been made public yet: The City Council is expected to take up the matter at its next meeting.

However, Mueller and Councilwoman Catherine Carlton said they expect that the number of housing units the assessment will require Menlo Park to plan for in the new cycle will be substantially higher than in previous cycles.

“We are going to have to embark on a new housing element very shortly,” Mueller said.

With that question mark of just how many housing units the city will be expected to plan for under the state mandate, the council decided to wait before determining whether District 1 should simply be excluded from the next cycle, or whether the area should be actively downzoned with zoning moved elsewhere in the city.

(Menlo Park last updated that element in 2013 as part of a lawsuit settlement after failing to update it since 1992.)

The District 1 subcommittee recommended identifying immediate infrastructure improvements to alleviate traffic; updating the city’s general plan elements for housing, land use and environmental justice; updating its “community amenities list,” laying out what big-project developers should provide to the community; teaching people in the community about how the development process works; holding a meeting with the Menlo Park Fire Protection District to evaluate and plan for emergency vehicle access to the district; and monitoring air quality.

The subcommittee for Districts 2 through 5 recommended that the city stimulate the construction of new multifamily housing units by streamlining the permitting process for the remaining 180 housing units permitted under the downtown specific plan, and change the zoning code to allow more multifamily units and permit residential mixed-use development in new areas near basic services and transit. It also suggested that the city identify city-owned land for affordable housing and partners

See **HOUSING LAW**, page 7

Council removes penalty cap on projects that exceed time limit

Town also approves community outreach on traffic calming measures

By Angela Swartz
Almanac Staff Writer

The Atherton City Council voted on Oct. 16 to eliminate a \$250,000 penalty cap on building projects that violate the town's construction time-limit provision, given the size and value of homes covered by the rule, according to City Manager George Rodericks.

In September, the council asked town staff to draft an amendment to a time-limit ordinance that eliminates the cap on penalties for projects that exceed the time permitted for construction. A harsher penalty, town officials have said, might help speed up projects, which create noise and more traffic from construction vehicles.

According to the ordinance, after a 30-day grace period, daily fines are imposed starting at \$200; they increase to \$400 after two months. The fines escalate to \$1,000 a day when projects go 121 days beyond the time limit, up to the \$250,000 cap.

Since 2015, 13 projects have exceeded the time limit; deposits were forfeited and collected by the town, totaling \$538,800, according to a town staff report.

The council voted to amend fees on town services — such as building and planning permit and facilities rental fees, according to a staff report. The fees were last updated in 2013, and town staff recommends that the council implement a fee adjustment based on new hourly pay rates for staff.

Staff recommended that fees that have a labor component be increased by 19.5%. It also recommends a 5% adjustment to planning fees followed by a subsequent adjustment in January 2020 once that amount is determined. This adjustment could net the town between \$180,000 and \$210,000 annually, according to the staff report.

The staff is proposing to do a master study of fees for town services during the 2020-21 fiscal year, when the town will have a better idea of its potential overhead costs associated with the new civic center. There will be no changes to the valuation-driven fees at this time until a new cost study is performed, according to the staff report.

Town staff studied the possibility of imposing penalties for doing construction work without a building permit. It

recommended, and the council agreed, that a penalty with an escalator for successive violations would be an effective approach.

But there was some concern that, because the responsibility for the permit lies with the property owner, an escalated penalty may not be directed at the culpable party. For example, a contractor may get caught working without a permit and the property owner would be charged twice the permit fee. If the contractor does more work without a permit on another property, the second property owner would then have to pay three times the permit fee since the contractor has a repeat violation.

The second property owner may not have known that the contractor had a prior violation, but is now paying three times the permit fee because he or she innocently hired the contractor, Rodericks explained.

Staff recommends adopting a penalty of twice the cost of the building permit and incorporating that penalty into the town's fee schedule. But it will investigate ways to address charging the proper party for the penalty.

At the same meeting, the council delayed voting on amending a contract with transportation consulting firm TJKM to include an additional fee of up to \$166,220 for community outreach efforts related to traffic calming in town, according to a staff report. The council asked staff to refine the proposal for the work by reducing, and/or combining, neighborhoods for outreach and return the proposal to the council at a future meeting, according to Rodericks.

The proposal includes hosting community workshops to hear concerns, gather feedback on traffic calming solutions and prioritize projects.

In July, the council asked staff to study priority projects to keep traffic moving on the most heavily used streets. Council members, who received a traffic report in April from TJKM, said in July that they prefer a strategy of moving traffic smoothly through town on major roadways such as El Camino Real and Marsh Road, rather than trying to discourage drivers from traveling through town on residential and secondary streets. ▣

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The Almanac is published
every Wednesday at
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Menlo Park, CA 94025**

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The Almanac (ISSN 1097-3095 and USPS 459370) is published every Wednesday by Embarcadero Media, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558. Periodicals Postage Paid at Menlo Park, CA and at additional mailing offices. Adjudicated a newspaper of general circulation for San Mateo County, The Almanac is delivered free to homes in Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Almanac, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558. Copyright ©2019 by Embarcadero Media, All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited.

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11:30am - 1:30pm

November 9, 2019

Upper Campus
26800 Fremont Road
Los Altos Hills, CA 94022
10:00am - 12:15pm

Register online at www.pinewood.edu

HOUSING LAW*continued from page 5*

to help build it; revise its accessory dwelling unit ordinance to encourage more secondary units at single-family properties, and update the general plan to meet new numbers set forth by the state-mandated Regional Housing Needs Allocation.

"There's been so much development and not enough infrastructure and transit," Taylor said.

Cap-and-trade, but for jobs and housing?

During the council's study session to talk about the subcommittees' recommendations, Mueller presented an idea to the council about the concept of a type of cap-and-trade system, but for jobs and housing, as one way to force business developers to match the job growth expected from their building projects with new housing units in the region.

Under such a system, a developer or employer would have to identify how many jobs the proposed project is expected to generate, then would be expected to identify the same number of housing units being created in the area, and claim those units as "housing credits" that couldn't be claimed by other commercial developers.

"I think if we did it in Menlo Park, other jurisdictions would be forced to do it," Mueller said. If

you had a system like that, other cities (would have to) keep track of their jobs-housing balance. That's been the difficulty as we do this in a vacuum."

In theory, he argued, a city could prevent occupancy of a new office building until the developer comes up with the needed housing "credits." Just what a credit would count for and how much it would be worth would be up to further discussion, as well as market forces, he added.

He said wants to hear from academics first before moving forward with the idea.

Appeal process

The council also voted Tuesday on the conditions under which it can appeal Planning Commission decisions. Over the last few months, there have been several long discussions about whether the council should automatically be expected to take on certain Planning Commission decisions, or if it should just be notified by staff when the Planning Commission makes decisions about significant projects. Ultimately, council members voted 4-1, with Combs opposed, to allow the Planning Commission to make decisions for projects of a certain size.

The council defined those projects triggering notification as: any commercial bonus level development in the Bayfront area or in the El Camino Real/Downtown

specific plan area; any commercial project exceeding 10,000 net new square feet; or any mixed-use project meeting one of the first two criteria and that has less than two-thirds of the project's square footage dedicated to housing.

In addition, at Councilwoman Nash's request, the council will also be notified when the Planning Commission approves a "statement of overriding considerations" for an environmental impact review — a document indicating that the commission accepts the claim that a project has environmental effects that can't be mitigated. It would also be alerted when a notice of preparation is released for any development project, indicating the start of the environmental review process, through the council's public email inbox.

Combs, a former planning commissioner, said he favors more direct involvement of the City Council in taking on decisions delegated to the Planning Commission. Even a discussion about the possibility of a moratorium, he argued, indicates "things have gone wrong."

"More than two dozen people spoke in favor of a moratorium," he said. "They were speaking about something ... a sense that the city had gone in the wrong direction. ... It became clear that one way to respond to that concern ... was to make sure the City Council was having the final say." ■

STANFORD*continued from page 5*

Cindy Chavez, abruptly halted the negotiations in April, after Stanford entered into a side deal with the Palo Alto Unified School District — an agreement that was contingent on a development agreement with the county.

The San Mateo County coalition letter states that the cities have urged Stanford to address San Mateo County impacts as part of the standard development approval, but there has been no response from the university.

"Here's what every resident in San Mateo County needs to know: Stanford — with its \$26.5 billion endowment — expects to reap all the rewards while leaving local taxpayers grappling with the resulting traffic gridlock, spiraling housing prices, impacted schools and environmental consequences," the coalition's statement reads.

The letter from the San Mateo County cities also emphasizes Stanford's tax-exempt status. Nearly 70% of Stanford's property in San Mateo County (an estimated \$1.2 billion in holdings) is tax-free, according to the coalition. Even without Stanford's expansion, San Mateo County public agencies stand to lose \$200

million in property taxes over the 18-year life of the proposed GUP.

Melissa Stevenson Diaz, city manager of Redwood City, told the Board of Supervisors earlier this month that property taxes are the top revenue source in her city. She said Stanford officials had informed her that the university intends to buy a newly built apartment building in Redwood City. Because of its property-tax exemption, Redwood City stands to lose about \$100,000 in tax revenues from that building in the first year alone.

The letter from the coalition of cities calls it "a bit ironic that one of the top universities in the world cannot support our local schools that educate the children of Stanford employees."

"The roads, bridges and pathways Stanford employees use daily receive no funds for repairs or upgrades from Stanford. Likewise, nothing for parks, 9-1-1 dispatch and first responders. Nothing," the letter states. "The time has come for Stanford to pay its fair share. As representatives of local communities that would be impacted by Stanford's development, we call on the university to work on a deal that would fully compensate our communities for the impacts of Stanford's growth."

The letter from the coalition

follows repeated calls from San Mateo County elected officials and staff members that Stanford provide "full mitigation" for its expansion, which includes commitments to cities for housing and transportation funding. Menlo Park Vice Mayor Cecilia Taylor and Councilwoman Betsy Nash both urged the county at the Oct. 8 Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors meeting to require Stanford to mitigate its impacts. Nash said the city already suffers from "inadequate housing availability, housing affordability and traffic congestion."

Stanford's obligations to address its impacts on surrounding communities were expected to be a key theme at the Tuesday, Oct. 22, meeting of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors at 6 p.m. in Palo Alto, after The Almanac went to press. Visit almanacnews.com for updates.

The final of four scheduled public hearings on Stanford's proposed expansion is set for 1:30 p.m. on Nov. 5 in the Board of Supervisors' Chambers at the County Government Center, 70 W. Hedding St., San Jose. ■

Gennady Sheyner is a staff writer with the Palo Alto Weekly, The Almanac's sister paper.

Menlo Park murder suspect appears in court for preliminary hearing

Francis Wolke

Francis Wolke, the 27-year-old Cincinnati man charged with killing former Atherton town arborist Kathy Hughes Anderson in her Menlo Park home last year, appeared at a preliminary hearing in San Mateo County Superior Court on Oct. 17, according to San Mateo County District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe.

At the hearing, the judge heard from Menlo Park police officers and Daniel Baggett, who came on the scene after Hughes Anderson was stabbed to death and who held Wolke at knifepoint until police arrived, according to the DA's office.

The defense presented no evidence, Wagstaffe said.

Wagstaffe said he expects Wolke to re-enter his plea of not guilty

before Judge Joseph Scott on Nov. 1, at which time the judge will set the date for a jury trial and a pre-trial conference.

According to the District Attorney's Office, Wolke had arrived in the Bay Area from Cincinnati just a few days before the killing on Dec. 12, and there is no known relationship or contact between Wolke and Hughes Anderson, nor a known motive for the crime.

Wolke remains in custody on \$10 million bail.

— Rick Radin

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Council approves long-term plan to revamp city parks

By **Kate Bradshaw**
Almanac Staff Writer

A new multigenerational community campus and library in Belle Haven. A new community fitness center. A renovated children's center. More dog parks.

These are just a few of the recommendations to come out of a new facilities master plan for Menlo Park's parks and recreation facilities, which the City Council approved unanimously on Oct. 15.

Menlo Park hasn't updated its facilities master plan since 1999, according to staff, and the city has grown substantially since then, especially compared to other Peninsula communities, the plan states. Menlo Park's population rose 6.5% between 2000 and 2010, compared with a 2% increase in the rest of San Mateo County over

the same time period, the master plan reports.

The city has dedicated just under 10% of its land to parks and recreation, and about 80% of residents live within a 10-minute walk of a park, greater than the national average of 55%, according to the plan.

All these facts point to the argument in the report that parks are a big part of life in Menlo Park, and it's about time to consider what changes should be made to improve them for residents moving forward.

The plan, put forward by staff and consultants from Gates + Associates and Blue Point Planning, lays out priorities for the city's parks and recreation facilities for the next 20 years or so. It is the product of feedback from about 2,500 people and contains 123 recommendations for the city's 17 parks and open spaces,

covering about 222 acres. Of those, staffers identified 44 recommendations as capital projects, which they then prioritized into three tiers. From there, the top priority projects were further narrowed to the following projects:

■ **In Belle Haven:** Complete a detailed feasibility study for a Belle Haven multigenerational community campus.

■ **At Kelly Park:** Make sure people can safely and directly access the park when a multi-use trail is installed along the Dumbarton Corridor.

■ **At Hamilton Park:** Add a barbecue area and shade structure.

■ **At Karl E. Clark Park:** Consider a picnic area or community garden.

■ **At Bedwell Bayfront Park:** Move forward with planned improvements. In 2017, the council approved a separate master plan for the park that calls for renewed maintenance; hiring a park ranger and building a ranger office; adding seating, dog bag dispensers and bike racks; and updating the former dump's system for collecting gas and leachates within the next few years, as well as longer-term improvements.

■ **At Burgess Park:** Reconfigure the baseball diamond so it can work with other sports; consider whether to install artificial turf for better year-round, all-weather play; renovate the existing playground; and consider expanding the snack shack and adding seating and shade facilities.

■ **At Burgess Pool:** Look into installing a permanent, retractable dome over the pool.

■ **At Willow Oaks Park:** Finish building restrooms and improving the dog park.

■ **At Sharon Park:** Upgrade the paths, landscaping, lighting and infrastructure.

■ **At the Menlo Children's Center:** Look into renovating the building and adding a kitchen and more storage space.

■ **At Nealon Park:** Look into moving the dog park from the sports field to another area of the park.

The report also includes many lower-priority recommendations, including general support for adding restrooms, where feasible, as well as trash enclosures, bike racks, green infrastructure opportunities, drinking fountains, educational storyboards and shade trees in all parks. Where dogs are allowed in the city, the report also recommends adding dog waste bag dispensers and drinking water areas.

At some parks it lays out specific recommendations for additions like demonstration gardens and more dog parks. The report also recommends, at a lower priority level, projects like installing field lighting at Burgess Park, as well as potentially adding lighting and a music system at the skate park.

While these proposals are not yet funded, the council also agreed to move forward with developing cost estimates for the top priority projects. One potential funding source is the voter-approved Measure T, which in 2001 authorized \$38 million in bonds for parks and recreation facilities. So far only two phases have been issued for about \$25 million in capital projects. An estimated \$13 million to \$14 million could be generated from a third phase of such bonds, according to staff.

Facebook offer

As The Almanac recently reported, Facebook on Oct. 2 announced an offer to fund a new multistory community center that would house a library, senior

center and youth center, gym and multipurpose room.

However, the specific terms of that offer have yet to be ironed out. The council on Oct. 15 voted 4-0, with Councilman Drew Combs recused (since he works at Facebook) to authorize City Manager Starla Jerome-Robinson and City Attorney Bill McClure to work with Facebook to get more clarity about the offer, and work through the "legal nuts and bolts" of how the city might accept it, said Mayor Ray Mueller.

Such a project combines the parks and recreation department's vision with the library department's ongoing project to envision a new Belle Haven Library. In June, the Menlo Park City Council approved a \$160,000 contract to develop concept designs for a new Belle Haven Library since the current library "is widely regarded as inadequate to meet community needs," according to city staff. The firm, Noll & Tam Architects, will also analyze potential site options and come up with preliminary cost estimates for a new library.

According to Fergus O'Shea, director of campus development at Facebook, the company expects to do community outreach and planning over the next six months to gather input about the new community center and library. When asked whether the project would include a new pool, he said he didn't yet have an answer. The pool at the Onetta Harris Community Center has been identified through a previous planning process as in need of significant repairs and refurbishing.

Go to is.gd/parksplan385 to access the facilities master plan. ▀

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Photo by Natalia Nazarova

Children play at Karl E. Clark Park, a small park in Belle Haven renamed last year to honor Karl E. Clark, a longtime resident of the neighborhood and World War II hero who died in 2017 at age 100.

Oracle CEO Mark Hurd dies at 62

Atherton resident was an innovator who led notable tech companies

By Sue Dremann

Silicon Valley tech executive Mark Hurd, who served as CEO for Redwood City-based Oracle and Palo Alto-based Hewlett-Packard, has died at the age of 62, according to a statement from co-founder Larry Ellison posted on Hurd's website.

A business visionary who turned around the fortunes of the corporations he helmed, Hurd, an Atherton resident, died of an unspecified illness on Friday, Oct. 18, Ellison said.

"Mark was my close and irreplaceable friend, and trusted colleague. Oracle has lost a brilliant and beloved leader who personally touched the lives of so many of us during his decade at Oracle," Ellison said.

Hurd was born on Jan. 1, 1957, in New York City. He grew up on Manhattan's Upper East Side and attended The Browning School, an all-boys college preparatory school. The family moved to Miami, Florida, where he attended Archbishop Curley-Notre Dame High School, according to his company biography.

Hurd began his business career in 1980 as a junior salesman

at the National Cash Register Corporation in San Antonio, Texas, which made ATMs and cash registers. In 1988, he moved to Dayton, Ohio on a temporary assignment and quickly rose through the ranks. He became the company president in 2001 and was promoted to CEO in 2003, according to his biography.

Hewlett-Packard took notice of his leadership skills and recruited him in 2005 as its CEO. At HP, Hurd saw the company's revenue rise 63% and its stock price double. HP became the top desktop- and laptop-computer seller under his tenure and increased its market share in 2008 in inkjet and laser printers to 46% and 50.5%, respectively, according to Fortune Magazine. He was also known for aggressive cost-cutting, laying off 15,200 workers, or 10%, shortly after his arrival. Hurd slashed other areas of the workforce and reduced



Photo courtesy Oracle PR obtained via Wikimedia Commons.
Mark Hurd

the company's number of software applications, according to Fortune.

Fortune named him one of its "Most Powerful People in Business" in 2007 and the San Francisco Chronicle recognized Hurd as "CEO of the Year" in 2008. In addition, Hurd was listed as one of Forbes' "Top Gun CEOs" in 2009.

But Hurd's tenure at HP was also marred by scandal after claims of sexual harassment by a female contractor. An internal investigation concluded that Hurd didn't violate HP's sexual harassment policy, but the company found that he submitted inaccurate expense reports, according to news reports, including from Reuters and the Wall Street Journal. He resigned from HP on Aug. 6, 2010.

Hurd was not unemployed for long, however. Oracle Corporation's then-CEO Larry Ellison tapped him one month later as co-president, sharing the position with Safra Catz. Ellison also appointed him to the board of directors, according to Hurd's biography. As president, Hurd reshaped the company's

sales force to create more than 4,000 salesperson-specialists, who focused on a single product, according to his company biography.

In 2014, Hurd and Catz shared the role of CEO after Ellison became chief technology officer. Hurd headed sales, marketing and services; Catz ran finance, operations and legal. The arrangement proved successful for the corporation: Oracle's stock rose to a high of \$51 in 2017, according to his biography.

Hurd was visionary on cloud computing, which he predicted would be the future of data storage. Under his leadership, Oracle's cloud-storage products became a dominant force in the industry, competing against industry giants such as Amazon and Microsoft and attracting clients such as AT&T, Bank of America, and Australian airline Qantas. He also engaged in acquisitions, purchasing Net-Suite, the "very first cloud company," for approximately \$9.3 billion. He oversaw other purchases that strengthened the company's position in providing cloud computing, according to

his biography.

He also co-authored a book in 2004, "The Value Factor: How Global Leaders Use Information for Growth and Competitive Advantage," with former National Cash Register Corporation CEO Lars Nyberg to share their views on the impact of information access for businesses.

Last month, Hurd announced he would go on leave for unspecified health reasons. He is survived by his wife of 29 years, Paula, and two daughters, Kathryn and Kelly, according to his online biography.

He remained a lifelong donor to his alma mater, Baylor University, including becoming vice chairman of its Board of Regents. He and his wife supported the national championship tennis program at Baylor, and they gave a financial gift to launch the public phase of a \$1.1 billion philanthropic campaign for the university's future growth. ■

Sue Dremann is a staff writer with the Palo Alto Weekly, The Almanac's sister paper.

Stanford University Development Project and the General Use Permit Application

County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors Meeting
Tuesday, November 5, 2019 at 1:30 pm

Board of Supervisors' Chambers, 70 West Hedding Street, San Jose, CA 95110

At this meeting, the Board of Supervisors may receive comments from the public and deliberate on the General Use Permit Application.

DID YOU KNOW?



Stanford University is proposing to add more than 3.5 million square feet of new development and 9,600 people to its campus. The project is the largest ever to be reviewed by the County of Santa Clara in its 169-year history.

The process of the County's consideration of the General Use Permit Application will be fair, transparent and open. The County is seeking input from the community on this General Use Permit Application.

The County Administration is committed to ensuring that this development, if approved, does not negatively impact the surrounding community by substantially worsening local traffic, escalating demand on housing - particularly affordable housing - or endangering our open spaces.

Share Your Views with the Board of Supervisors

For the latest updates, please visit: CountyStanford.Info

No significant movement in local students' test scores

Concerns growing about achievement gaps in the county

By Angela Swartz

Almanac Staff Writer

San Mateo County students' standardized test scores remained stagnant during the 2018-19 testing period, but they still outperformed students statewide, according to California Department of Education data released last week.

Countywide, 61.3% of students met or exceeded English language arts standards, while 53.4% met or exceeded math standards. The numbers are within half a percentage point of last year's results.

Schools in the The Almanac's coverage area maintained consistent test scores from the previous year's testing period.

In the Sequoia Union High School District, 70% of students met or exceeded English language arts standards, about a 7% increase from the 2017-18 testing period. Around 52% of students met or exceeded math standards, about a 4% increase.

In the Las Lomas district, about 86% of students met or exceeded English standards, the same as during the 2017-18 testing period. For math scores, 82% met or exceeded math standards, which is about the same as 2017-18. There were 1,202 students in the district as of Sept. 16.

"We are pleased to see that our students continue to do well on this state summative assessment," said Superintendent

Beth Polito in an email. "This tool is well used to assess the quality of the overall LLES (Las Lomas Elementary School District) program. We use local formative assessments in Reading, Writing and Math to inform daily instruction. We maintained the growth from the past few years on both ELA (English language arts) and Math." She noted that the district's socio-economically disadvantaged students improved their scores in both English language arts and math compared to 2017-18.

In the Menlo Park City School District, students performed similarly to how they did in 2017-18. About 84% met or exceeded English standards, about the same as during the 2017-18 testing period. About 83% met or exceeded math standards, a 2% increase over 2017-18. There are 2,932 students enrolled in the district this school year.

"Menlo Park City School District continues to show progress in academic achievement of our significant subgroups, which is a high priority of ours," said Superintendent Erik Burmeister in a prepared statement. "We are committed to addressing the needs of students from populations that are historically underachieving, especially our students from low income households. Schools must be joined by the private sector; local, state and

federal government; and the nonprofit world to address the far reaching impacts of economic inequality; our children are not immune. We believe we can defy the most powerful indicator of student achievement — family income — but

"We celebrate and seek to learn from the districts that are making progress; however, the persistent gaps are troubling ... It's clear we have to deepen our commitment to systemic change and sharpen our efforts to serve each and every student."

SAN MATEO COUNTY
SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS
NANCY MAGEE

it takes time, training, and resources with ongoing focus to do so."

In the Portola Valley School District, 87% of students met or exceeded English standards, a jump of 3% compared with 2017-18. About 83% of students met or exceeded math standards, a decrease of about

2%. There were 548 students enrolled in the district this school year, as of Sept. 16.

"Our students' academic performance is truly outstanding," said Superintendent Roberta Zarea in a prepared statement. "Regarding the slight variance in the district's Mathematics scores between this year and last, we are wondering why; and our instructional staff is already disaggregating and studying the data by specific subject matter strands within standards as well as by individual students, groups and grade levels to find answers, and plan accordingly."

In the Woodside Elementary School District, 87% of students met or exceeded English standards, up about 3% from the 2017-18 school year. About 85% met or exceeded math standards, a nearly 1% increase. There were 376 students enrolled in the district this school year as of Sept. 19.

"The Smarter Balanced assessments are only one indicator of student progress," said Superintendent Steve Frank in an email. "Woodside School students performed very well on the Smarter Balanced assessments, with the vast majority of students meeting and exceeding grade level standards. The Smarter Balanced data will be used by the staff as a tool to help individual students who may need more targeted instruction."

Achievement gap concerns

There are concerns that the gaps in scores between different student groups in the county are wider than the state averages, according to an Oct. 10 San Mateo County Office of Education press release. Statewide, the gap in scores between students who are considered economically disadvantaged and all other students is 12% for both English language arts and math standards. In San Mateo County, economically disadvantaged students' scores are 25% lower on English language arts tests and 27% lower on math tests compared with all other students.

"We celebrate and seek to learn from the districts that are making progress; however, the persistent gaps are troubling," said San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools Nancy Magee in a prepared statement. "It's clear we have to deepen our commitment to systemic change and sharpen our efforts to serve each and every student. The California Dashboard provides us with more readily accessible data than ever before; now we have to apply that information to improve instructional practices that can support every child's learning."

Some districts in the county made progress in closing gaps. Brisbane, Portola Valley, Millbrae, and Hillsborough school districts saw significant gains for students with disabilities, and English language learners and economically disadvantaged students in the Belmont-Redwood Shores and La Honda-Pescadero Unified districts made noticeable progress in mathematics, according to the Office of Education.

"PVSD (Portola Valley School District) students with disabilities made significant gains in both ELA (English language arts) and Mathematics," said Zarea.

Statewide, 51% of students met or exceeded English standards, a 1% increase from the 2017-18 testing period. Only 39.7% of students met or exceeded math standards, which was about a 1% increase.

The most widely used standardized tests statewide are the Smarter Balanced Assessments. They are administered to students in grades three through eight and in 11th grade. Students took the tests in spring 2019.

The state's full test results can be found at tinyurl.com/2019testscores. ■

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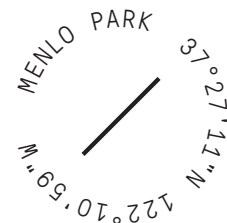
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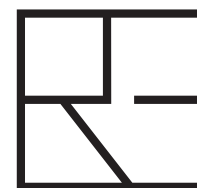
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NON-STOP *re-invention*

Woodside's Jerry Anderson is a physicist by training and a computer hardware and software developer by vocation, but he's used retirement as a chance to branch out

Story by Rick Radin
Photos by Sammy Dallal

At the peak of his career as a Silicon Valley entrepreneur, Jerry Anderson had a heart attack and decided to slow down. But the desire to stay active won out when he and his wife, Anne, bought land next door to their home in Woodside and started a vineyard called *Chaine d'Or*.

Anne Anderson had a background in wine sales and marketing in her native England, and Jerry knew about tractors and agriculture from his youth in a small town in Texas, so the division of labor was clear: Jerry would tend the vineyard and Anne would make the wine.

The Andersons were able to purchase the 2-acre vineyard property in foreclosure on the steps of the San Mateo County courthouse in Redwood City, said Jerry Anderson, 82.

After they bought the land, they began clearing it by removing the overgrown poison oak and weeds before plowing the hillside and planting a cover crop to improve the soil, he said.

After clearing the cover crop, they planted chardonnay and cabernet sauvignon grapes, as well as cabernet franc, merlot and petit verdot as blending grapes used to soften the cabernet, and built an addition to their house with a wine cellar underneath.

They bolstered their winemaking skills by taking courses at University of California at Davis, and received help and advice from other local vineyard owners.

The name *Chaine d'Or*, or Golden Chain, comes from the name local wine pioneers such as Paul Masson and Martin Ray gave to the region on the east side of the Santa Cruz Mountains.

"The old winemakers around the turn of the century thought that this was the best place in California to make wine, so they called the group of winemaking estates *Chaine d'Or*," Anderson said.

At about 350 cases a year, *Chaine d'Or* is one of the smaller wine growers in the area, compared with Portola Valley producers such as Thomas Fogarty Winery and Neely Wine.

"We've maintained a strong commitment to keeping prices moderate so that more people can enjoy our wines," Anderson said. "It's too big to be a hobby and too small to be a business."

Harvest and winemaking

Nicolas Vonderheyden, who was raised at Chateau Monbrison, his family's estate in Margaux in the Bordeaux region of France, has served as the winemaker and wine grower since



Above: Winemaker Nicolas Vonderheyden empties a bin of chardonnay grapes into the crusher at *Chaine d'Or* Vineyards in Woodside. **Top:** Jerry Anderson samples a cabernet sauvignon grape in advance of the cabernet harvest in October.

2015, Anderson said.

"I did it for 30 years, but now he's responsible for it all," Anderson said. "Mostly I sit around and try not to say 'I don't think I'd do it like that.'"

Chaine d'Or harvests the chardonnay grapes in September and the cabernet generally in October. In both cases, the grapes are picked in one day and then put in a crusher.

For the chardonnay, the grapes are put in a press that extracts the skins and seeds from the grape juice before the juice goes in a tank and ferments for a couple of weeks.

The next step is called "racking" the wine, which removes all the solid materials that are left in the juice.

After that, the chardonnay juice is put in French oak barrels, which are stored in the wine cellar for eight or nine months.

Chaine d'Or follows the same process for the cabernet, except that the skins and seeds are left in during the fermentation process, which gives the wine its red color. The cabernet ages in the barrels for about twice as long, 18 to 20 months.

"We just harvested the cabernet grapes on Monday (Oct. 14), so they're just crushed, and we're just starting the fermentation process now," Anderson said.

Once the wine is bottled and the bottles packed in cases on site using a mobile bottling service, the wine bottles are taken to an air conditioned storage warehouse in San Jose and distributed to retailers from there.

The Andersons' winemaking equipment, including their tank, crusher and press, were made in Italy, and the French oak barrels, which cost \$700 to \$800 apiece, come from a coo- perage in Napa, Anderson said.

The barrels affect the smell and taste of the wine because the oak contains compounds that leach into the juice, Anderson said.

"The newer the barrels, the more the oak affects the taste," Anderson said. "Some people only use the barrels for three or four years, while others use them longer."

The heavy oak style tends to be more European, while California chardonnay tends to have a crisper, fresher taste, Anderson said.

"Our wine is more on the crisp side," he said. "It does have oak, and we use oak barrels, but we try not to over-oak."

Local wine pioneers Bob and Jim Varner, who make wine under the Varner Wine and Foxglove labels, helped the Andersons get started by dispensing help and advice.

"Everyone back then tried to

help each other to benefit the (Chaine d'Or) appellation," Bob Varner said.

Although he hasn't tasted the wine recently, Bob Varner says that now that the vineyard is mature it should reflect "a combination of flavors and textures that are unique to that site."

"The vineyard is partway up the mountain and pretty far north in the appellation," he said. "I think it's similar both in both soil and exposure (to the sun) to Thomas Fogarty."

Chaine d'Or wines are sold through the Roberts markets in Woodside and Portola Valley.

Roberts wine buyer John Akeley said the wine is a great value, with the chardonnay priced at about \$20 and the cabernet under \$30.

"If (Anderson) needed to make a profit, it would be a different circumstance," Akeley said. "I've been here for 25 years, and we may have carried all of his vintages."

An enterprising life

Anderson has been coming up with new projects and products since he moved to California from Texas to get a doctorate in physics from University of California at Berkeley and did postdoctoral work with Luis Alvarez, the Berkeley professor who received the Nobel Prize in physics in 1968, at the Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory.

He worked on a major project with Alvarez in 1967 when he was a member of a team that used X-rays to try to find hidden chambers in one of the Egyptian pyramids.

Anderson later moved down to Silicon Valley and founded a string of startups in computer hardware and software, including Valid Logic Systems, which was bought out by San Jose-based Cadence Design Systems.

He's been a Woodside resident for about 40 years.

While in Silicon Valley in the 1980s, he invented and patented, along with a former Lawrence Lab colleague, a hybrid hearing aid that made use of both analogue and digital technology.

Ever the enterprising inventor, Anderson put on his thinking cap once again about five years ago after he became concerned about the vulnerability of his home and community from wildfires.

He said he stewed about the problem for about five years before the Northern California wildfires last year crystallized his thinking.

"So many homes where I live have swimming pools," Anderson thought. "Why not make use of the water in the pool to help protect the house?"

Anderson decided to put a

twist on an idea that he says has been around for a while: Take a sprinkler system, which is usually installed indoors, and put it on the roof.

Anderson's system, which he has mounted on the roof of his house, sucks water from his swimming pool through a 2-inch-wide pipe and then pumps it at high pressure through the sprinkler system, creating a kind of aerosol water fog that "envelopes" the house.

"A wildfire creates a blast of heat that is just enormous," Anderson said. "When tiny water droplets get hit with heat, they turn into steam and take the energy out of the heat."

"The droplets are swirling around the house, wetting everything all over the place."

A large swimming pool has about seven or eight hours worth of water in it, keeping the house wet and allowing for enough time for the wildfire to pass, he said.

The pump operates on a propane-powered generator that keeps working after PG&E lines shut down.

"You just turn the system on and then leave, and it keeps

operating until the water runs out in the pool," Anderson said. "I even talked with the pump people about installing an automatic shutoff, but my current view is to just let it run."

Jonathan Cox, the San Mateo County division chief with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (Cal Fire), said he is unable to endorse products he hasn't had a chance to look at closely.

However, he said, structures typically burn in a wildfire when embers fall on the roofs.

Jurisdictions have responded by enacting stricter building codes requiring roofs to be made of noncombustible materials, Cox said.

Cox said many new fire-suppression methods are unregulated, but "there is a lot of innovation out there" in developing them. ■



Above: Jerry Anderson developed a system to protect homes from wildfires by pumping water from swimming pools onto the roofs of homes.

Middle: Winemaker Nicolas Vonderheyden loads bins of chardonnay grapes en route to the crusher.

Top: Venus Perez helps with picking during the chardonnay harvest at Chaine d'Or Vineyards in Woodside.

Irene Griffith Schwab

February 25, 1919 - October 13, 2019

Irene Griffith Schwab passed away peacefully at home on October 13, 2019 surrounded by those whom she loved and who loved her. She was approaching the age of 101.

Irene was born at home in Scott City, Kansas on February 25, 1919. She had a sister and four brothers.

Her husband, Larry Schwab, died in 1994, after 45 years of marriage.

Irene is survived by her two children, Dede Barsotti of Atherton and Lawrence Schwab of Portola Valley, as well as their respective spouses Michael Barsotti and Pamela Schwab, with whom Irene shared a special relationship. She leaves three granddaughters, Melissa Perkovich and her husband Brano Perkovich of Menlo Park. Deidra Geraghty and her husband Joseph Geraghty, and Stephanie Schwab of San Carlos. She loved her four great grandchildren: Katarina Branka Perkovich 5, Emilia Diane Perkovich 3, Mackenzie Olivia Geraghty 2 1/2 and Clark Joseph Geraghty, 5 months. She was "Grammie" to her grandchildren and the great-grandchildren who loved her.

Her caregiver Ludy Railey, and Ludy's devoted and wonderful family, made Irene's advancing years pleasant. Smiles, singing and trips to the beach were regular parts of her lifestyle. Ludy and her family brought great comfort to Irene and the entire family.

Irene was part of the Greatest Generation. As a young girl, she studied by carbide light and remembered rural electrification; the dust bowl years in Southwestern Kansas were a part of her childhood; she knew the Great Depression; she married her high school sweetheart after he returned from World War II only to have him pass away shortly thereafter; she worked in the aircraft industry during World War II; she was in Time Square on VJ Day; she met her husband in Denver, Colorado and relocated to Atherton in 1953; she would never consider leaving the house without makeup; she never missed a Sunday with her children at the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church; she loved Yosemite and the Garden of the Gods; she had a passion for duplicate bridge; she loved playing golf—including a hole in one; she loved her home in Atherton, living there for sixty five years until her last breath; she devoted nearly 70 years to the love and care of her family; she leaves a family devoted to her memory and striving daily to emulate the kindness, good nature and love which she constantly shared.

Irene was part of the Greatest Generation. As a young girl, she studied by carbide light and remembered rural electrification; the dust bowl years in Southwestern Kansas were a part of her childhood; she knew the Great Depression; she married her high school sweetheart after he returned from World War II only to have him pass away shortly thereafter; she worked in the aircraft industry during World War II; she was in Time Square on VJ Day; she met her husband in Denver, Colorado and relocated to Atherton in 1953; she would never consider leaving the house without makeup; she never missed a Sunday with her children at the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church; she loved Yosemite and the Garden of the Gods; she had a passion for duplicate bridge; she loved playing golf—including a hole in one; she loved her home in Atherton, living there for sixty five years until her last breath; she devoted nearly 70 years to the love and care of her family; she leaves a family devoted to her memory and striving daily to emulate the kindness, good nature and love which she constantly shared.

Irene Griffith Schwab had an interesting and very full life.

A family service will be held.



PAID OBITUARY

Sequoia teachers receive 3.25% raise

By Angela Swartz

Almanac Staff Writer

The Sequoia Union High School District Board of Trustees approved a 3.25% pay increase and a new contract for members of the district's teachers union at its meeting on Wednesday, Oct. 16.

Trustees voted unanimously to approve salary increases for members of the Sequoia District Teachers Association, which represents teachers, librarians, counselors, nurses and others. They also approved a new yearlong contract with the association.

"Though it was an uncharacteristically long set of negotiations for re-openers on the contract, SDTA (Sequoia District Teachers Association) is pleased to have been able to reach this settlement and deliver a modest salary increase to our members," said Edith Salvatore, the association's president, in an email. "We look forward to continuing our discussion with the district of

counselor duties and workloads and also to working through our Insurance Committee to evaluate options to maintain our high level of health coverage to our members and their families while helping to contain costs for the District to ensure that our members do not bear the burden of crippling out of pocket expenses."

The pay increase will be retroactive to July 1, 2019, according to the agreement. The contract runs from July 1, 2019, to June 30, 2020. The union's previous contract ran from July 2018 through June 2019.

"As a district, we value our teachers and the tremendous contributions they make in our classrooms on a daily basis," said Superintendent Mary Streshly in an email. "The agreement was made possible because of the trust and respect that exists between the Board, my office, and our teacher's union. Together, we will continue educating the youth of our community, and in the process, provide them the tools

they need to make their dreams come true."

The new contract maintains benefits from the previous agreement, including full health care coverage for individuals, couples or families up to the cost of the highest HMO premium offered by the California Public Employees' Retirement System (CalPERS). CalPERS manages pension and health benefits for California public employees, retirees and their families.

Sequoia teachers made \$101,580 on average during the 2017-18 school year, according to California Department of Education data.

The district and teachers union have agreed to negotiate a successor collective bargaining agreement for the 2020-21 school year.

This is the third year in a row union members have received a raise. The board granted the union a 4% raise in May 2017 for the 2017-18 school year and a 3.5% raise in October 2018 for the 2018-19 school year. ■

Facebook donates \$25 million for Palo Alto teacher housing project

By Elena Kadvanly

A plan to build housing for teachers and school staff in Palo Alto has received a major boost: A \$25 million donation from social media giant Facebook.

Menlo Park-based Facebook and Santa Clara County

Supervisor and Board President Joe Simitian, who has spearheaded the project, announced the donation Thursday, Oct. 17. Simitian called it an "exceptional gift" for the future development at 231 Grant Ave.

"It helps our teachers. It helps our schools. And it helps our communities," Simitian said. "From the beginning, Facebook 'got it' ... the importance of affordable teacher housing in the communities where teachers teach."

The money will increase the number of homes the project can offer — between 90 and 120 homes, up from a previous minimum of 60 units — and include staff from two additional school districts, East Palo Alto and Menlo Park. The housing will be available to teachers and school staff from the Palo Alto Unified School District, Mountain View Whisman School District, Mountain View-Los Altos High School District, Los Altos School District and Foothill-De Anza Community College District. Leadership from these districts have directed their staffs to identify potential funding sources to contribute to the project.

The project has also gained financial support from the county Board of Supervisors (\$6 million) and Palo Alto City Council (\$3 million).

The county would not provide

an updated total cost for the project but past estimates have ranged from \$36 million to \$48 million.

Facebook's \$25 million contribution comes from the company's Teacher Housing Program, which started in 2017 and currently provides 22 affordable housing units for teachers from the Ravenswood City School District in East Palo Alto.

Simitian first proposed the project in January 2018 as a response to the rising cost of living in the area, which local teachers have said is making it increasingly difficult to afford homes close to where they work. A survey on staff housing conducted by the Palo Alto school district found that 59% of respondents (who were mostly teachers) are considering leaving the district within the next five years due to housing costs or long commutes. Unaffordable rental and housing costs are the top reasons that prevent staff from moving closer to work, the survey found.

School districts throughout the Bay Area are either considering or moving forward with teacher housing projects. The Palo Alto Unified school board was set to discuss the topic on Oct. 15 but postponed due to a long meeting. ■

Elena Kadvanly is a staff writer with the Palo Alto Weekly, The Almanac's sister paper.

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October 28, 2019

8:00pm

MacKenzie Room

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Arts & Entertainment

PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCES AND ENTERTAINMENT



'Monty Python's Spamalot' comes to the Woodside stage

Above: Annmarie Martin is Lady of the Lake and Brandon Savage is Galahad. **Below:** The cast includes Kara Connely (Laker Girl), James Jones (Sir Robin), and Taylor Smith (Laker Girl).

By Kate Daly | Photos by Steve Stubbs

Special to The Almanac

Laughing from beginning to end." That's how Artistic Director Bill Starr describes Woodside Community Theatre's production of "Monty Python's Spamalot," which opens Friday,

Oct. 25, for two weekends.

"This is a laughing show, full of humor, all types of comedy, whether it be vaudeville, slapstick or physical comedy," he says, holding true to the original spoof of the Arthurian legend that charmed Broadway audiences in 2005.

Based on the 1975 British film, "Monty Python and the Holy Grail," the musical won Tony Awards with whimsical songs such as "Always Look on the Bright Side of Life," which is from another Python move, "The Life of Brian."

Eric Idle wrote the book and lyrics, John Du Prez the music.

WCT's production features 29 cast members, many playing multiple roles. Co-producer Donna Losey says that this year the actors "came from far and wide to do the show — San Jose, San Francisco and El Cerrito."

As King Arthur, Russ Bohard reprises the same lead role he played at Hillbarn Theatre. He works at SHN's box office in San Francisco, and appeared in WCT's "South Pacific" eight years ago.

Annemarie Martin is making her WCT debut as Lady of the Lake. She comes from San Jose, where some might recognize her for singing the national anthem at San Jose Sharks games.

Rehearsals have been taking place at Hillview Middle School in Menlo Park.

Mark Wong takes the train from San Jose, where he is studying piano performance. His voice instructor advised him to do a show, so he auditioned and joined the ensemble.

'This is a laughing show, full of humor, all types of comedy, whether it be vaudeville, slapstick or physical comedy.'

BILL STARR,
ARTISTIC DIRECTOR

Sheraz Ragoobeer of Menlo Park has the shortest commute. In the ensemble he plays Fred, the star of the "He's Not Dead Yet" song; otherwise he works at a dispensary.

Brandon Savage has appeared in off-Broadway shows. He works at Box now, and is back at WCT as Galahad. He played Father in "Ragtime" in 2016.

Hillview science teacher Kara Connely returns to WCT this year as a Laker Girl. Richard Vaughan, a veteran of many WCT shows who teaches instruments at Hillview, will be playing cello in the live orchestra with about 14 other musicians.

This is Joe Murphy's first WCT show. The music teacher at Tierra Linda Middle

See SPAMALOT, page 21



A cultural cruise

'Mark Twain's River of Song' is a musical journey down the mighty Mississippi

By Karla Kane

Visitors to the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts this month can temporarily leave modern life behind and embark on a journey through the American past, thanks to TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's West Coast premiere of "Mark Twain's River of Song," a musical tapestry in the form of a

steamboat trip narrated by Twain himself.

Directed by co-author Randal Myler, the structure of "River of Song" is largely one of a north-south journey through the antebellum U.S. The trip is guided and punctuated by Missouri-raised Twain's evocative, wise and usually humorous anecdotes about his own life on the Mississippi as well

as tidbits from his famous novels, real snippets of oral history from common folk of the 19th century and a pleasant mix of songs both traditional and new, composed by Dan Wheatman, who also performs in the show. Played by Dan Hiatt, Twain (the pen name of Samuel Clemens) is the recognizably avuncular, rascally fellow beloved as one of the United States' most important cultural figures. Hiatt's Twain, proves an amusing, laid-back and insightful host.

Wheatman is joined by Valisia LeKae, Tony Marcus, Rondrell McCormick and Chic Street Man

in the ensemble. All of the ensemble members wear many hats (literally and figuratively), not only acting, singing and dancing but playing instruments as well, an old-timey mix of acoustic guitars, banjos, fiddles, mandolins and percussion. LeKae, providing the sole female perspective, deserves MVP honors for her velvety vocals and range to portray everyone from a heartbroken slave to a sprightly Huckleberry Finn.

The voyage takes us to the headwaters of the northern forests of Minnesota, where lumberjacks reign, then to the agricultural

What: "Mark Twain's River of Song."
Where: Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St.
When: Through Oct. 27.
Show times vary.
Cost: \$35-\$95.
Info: theatreworks.org.

territory of the plains states, where farmers toil to make a living and feed the nation. We meet boatmen, gamblers and many more, but the most arresting and interesting parts of the show are in the second act, as the great steamboat rolls

See RIVER OF SONG, page 22

Sudden Oak Death Blitz results to be revealed at Woodside meeting

By Rick Radin
Almanac Staff Writer

Woodside will be hosting a meeting Nov. 8 to share the results of the annual Sudden Oak Death Blitz held last spring.

Sudden oak death (SOD) is a forest disease that infects trees such as tan oak, coast live oak, Shreve's oak, California black oak and canyon live oak, said Debbie Mendelson, a Woodside resident who is the chair of the Woodside/Portola Valley

version of the event.

The oak trees get infected in the trunk and die over a two to three-year period, she said.

The tree that spreads SOD to the oaks is the bay laurel, which can grow beside and at times become intertwined with the oaks, said Matteo Garbelotto, director of the University of California at Berkeley's Forest Pathology and Mycology Lab.

During the Blitz, community members go out into the oak forests and take leaf samples

from bay laurel trees that carry the SOD microbe. The leaves are then sent to the lab to find out if the samples show evidence of SOD.

Last year, the infection rate for trees sampled in the south Peninsula area was the highest out of 18 participating areas in Northern California at 19.1% for the 88 trees that were sampled, according to the results from the lab.

"The way to slow down the disease is to find a way to

reduce the number of bay laurel," Garbelotto said. "Also, if we can increase the distance between the oaks and the laurel, the range that the disease can spread goes down."

The infection rate for oaks within 15 feet of a bay laurel is about 75%, he said. After a distance of about 20 yards, the infection rate drops substantially.

The infected oaks can fall down when they are still green, potentially on top of a house or

a car, Garbelotto said.

"If an infected oak is near your house, you want to take it out because if it burns in a fire it will spread to your home," he said.

Garbelotto will also be presenting an update on infestations around the Bay Area and will also discuss new treatment and disease diagnostic options and the discovery of outbreaks in areas previously thought to be uninfested.

See **BLITZ**, page 21

HALLOWEEN HOOPLA

Creating a sense of community

Saturday, October 26
11:00 am–2:00 pm
Downtown Menlo Park

Put on your costume and join us for our annual parade and trick-or-treat through downtown Menlo Park!



HALLOWEEN COSTUME PARADE

11:00 am

Come in costume and participate in the annual parade to Fremont Park. Receive a free trick-or-treat bag! The parade will start in the parking lot behind Cheeky Monkey.

TRICK-OR-TREAT AND CELEBRATION

11:30 am–2:00 pm

After the parade, trick or treat in downtown Menlo Park stores that display a trick-or-treat sign on their door. Entertainment and crafts will also be available at Fremont Park.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

- menlopark.org/halloweenhoopla
- facebook.com/menloparkevents
- 650-330-2220

EVENT SPONSORS



Food & Drink



For the love of jam

Sharon Heights woman preserves exotic fruit at French-style home jam business

By Kate Bradshaw | Photos by Sammy Dallal

When Lin Howery was growing up, her family never bought jam — they always made it, she says. Now, the Menlo Park resident is hoping you'll buy hers.

Owner of the gourmet jam business, J'aime Confiture, the Sharon Heights resident said she could never find the right jam in the market.

"It was always too sweet," she said. "I prefer that my kids get something healthier."

The hobby turned into a business idea three years ago as Howery began giving out a specialty tomato jam she makes to her friends. It wasn't something that could be found easily outside of gourmet food shops, and a few friends recommended that she make some to sell, she explained.

So she and a friend in 2016 approached the Filoli Historic House & Garden about the possibility of selling some jam at its holiday garden show. Filoli offered to sell her wares even sooner at one of its fall events, so

they sprang to work creating a business and working with the San Mateo County health department to meet all the requirements to do so.

In less than an hour at the fall Filoli event, she said, the 60 jars she'd brought had sold out.

"We thought, 'OK, we have a business then,'" she said.

Later on, a friend put in an order for corporate gifts, which expanded the business further, she added.

This year, they're expanding with events and placement in Peninsula shops like the Filoli gift shop and a couple of boutiques in San Francisco, she said. They just got a permit to sell the jams in stores, she added, and are hoping to have them available by the holiday season.

The business name, she explains, incorporates some clever wordplay. J'aime Confiture, in French, means "I

love jam." The word "jam" itself has an apocryphal French etymology story. As Howery tells it, during the 13th century, the French brought jam to England. In the royal court, French teachers would reward their students with jam, the candy of the day, to which the kids would say, "j'aime," or "I love."

With a cottage food operations permit, Howery uses her home kitchen for all of her preserving work.

"It's a little challenging to have a business at home," she admitted, adding, "At the moment it's worked for me. ... managing my time like this is best in

her husband, Raf Howery.

Lin Howery said she doesn't skimp on presentation in packing her jams either, focusing on elegant packaging. She generally offers 6-ounce jars topped with a trinket for between \$18 and \$25 each, as well as boxed sets.

The most popular product is the chocolate raspberry flavor, followed by strawberry, she added. She also tends to sell out of the persimmon orange flavor quickly.

Learn more about J'aime Confiture or place an order at jaimeconfiture.com.

'You can see the actual fruit in it.'

LIN HOWERY,
J'AIME CONFITURE



Top: Completed 6-ounce jars of J'aime Confiture jam are sold for between \$18 and \$25. **Right:** Lin Howery, owner of the business, prepares strawberries and raspberries for batches of her strawberry and chocolate raspberry flavored jams. **Above:** Howery carefully ladles jam into a jar through a funnel after it is prepared at her home kitchen in Sharon Heights.





Photo by Magali Gauthier

Debbie Mendelson shows a diseased bay laurel tree leaf. During the SOD Blitz, volunteers collect leaves like this to have them tested for sudden oak death. Bay laurels carry the disease, but are not killed by it.

BLITZ

continued from page 19

Garbelotto was on the team that first isolated the microbe that causes SOD.

The team found that the pathogen originated in ornamental plants that had arrived from Asia, including rhododendrons and camellia, and escaped into the larger environment, he said.

The phenomenon happened

first in California, but there have also been recent SOD outbreaks in England, Belgium, Holland, Ireland, France and southern Oregon, he said.

In San Mateo County, the SOD infections, carried by bay laurel and tan oaks, move through the ridge top of the Santa Cruz Mountains and then east down the hill through Woodside and Portola Valley to urban areas, where the temperature is warmer and

the severity of the infections decreases, Garbelotto said.

The blitz results meeting will begin at 7 p.m. at Independence Hall, 2955 Woodside Road.

For more information, contact Woodside Town Manager Kevin Bryant at (650) 851-6790 or kbryant@woodsideside.org, or Portola Valley Assistant Town Manager Brandi de Garmeaux at (650) 851-1700, ext. 222 or bdegarmeaux@portolavalley. **A**

SPAMALOT

continued from page 18

School in San Carlos is appearing as Lancelot.

Woodside High students in the cast include Michael Sacco, Lourdes Arteaga, Hazel Griffin, and alum Samantha Ayob.

Known for its ever-changing roster of amateur talent, WCT has put on musicals for decades, first at Woodside Elementary School and more recently at Woodside High Performing Arts Center, 199 Churchill Ave. in Woodside.

This year the nonprofit bought a set and had it shipped across the country. Once again the Patrick family of Woodside is busy customizing everything to fit onto the high school stage. Akio Patrick is technical director and set designer, his wife, Karen, is in

charge of costumes. Brother Steve Patrick is the master builder and his wife, Tina, and Don Coluzzi of Portola Valley, who is also doing lights, repainted the castle that dominates the scenery.

Woodsiders Darrell Batchelder and Chuck Martin are on spotlight duty. Karen Peterson is back as house manager.

The same co-producing team is in place: Donna Losey, Mark Bowles, Liz Matchett and Darlene Batchelder.

The former music director at Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, Brett Strader, is vocal

and musical director.

Choreographer Carrie J. Perna used to dance in New York and has brushed up on her tap dancing for this production.

Show times are 7:30 p.m. on Friday, Oct. 25, and Saturdays, Oct. 26 and Nov. 2; and 2 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 27, Saturday, Nov. 2, and Sunday, Nov. 3.

For tickets go to tinyurl.com/spamtiks. They range from \$20 to \$42 and might be available at the door, depending on demand.

More information is available on Facebook and @woodsidesidecommunitytheatre instagram. **A**

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Public Notices

995 Fictitious Name Statement

USMCA
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 282587
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
USMCA, located at 806 Coleman Ave. Apt. #9, Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
ALEXANDER KATZ
806 Coleman Avenue, Apt. #9 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 09/01/2019.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on September 20, 2019. (ALM Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 2019)

EMILY'S FINDS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 282610
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
Emily's Finds, located at 281 S. Balsamina Way, Portola Valley, CA 94028, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
EMILY McDONOUGH
281 S. Balsamina Way Portola Valley, CA 94028
This business is conducted by: An Individual.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 9-24-19.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on September 24, 2019. (ALM Oct. 2, 9, 16, 23, 2019)

TENDER HEARTS HOME CARE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 282681
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Tender Hearts Home Care, located at 170 Mathilda Ct. #C, Morgan Hill, CA 95037, Santa Clara County.
Registered owner(s):
HARRY TONG JR.
170 Mathilda Ct. #C Morgan Hill, CA 95037
MELIALOFA PALALA
170 Mathilda Ct. #C Morgan Hill, CA 95037
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 October 1, 2019. (ALM Oct. 9, 16, 23, 30, 2019)

GILT EDGE CREAMERY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 282682
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Gilt Edge Creamery, located at 1636 Gilbreth Road, Burlingame, CA 94010, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
KAEL FOODS, INC.
1636 Gilbreth Road Burlingame, CA 94010 California
This business is conducted by: A Corporation.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 9/25/19.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on October 1, 2019. (ALM Oct. 9, 16, 23, 30, 2019)

Call Alicia Santillan at 650-223-6578 or email asantillan@paweekly.com for assistance with your legal advertising needs. The deadline is Thursday at 5pm.


LYNBROOK CLASS OF 70, REUNION
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 282745
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Lynbrook Class of 70, Reunion, located at 70 Sioux Wy., Portola Valley, CA 94028, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
JOSEPH A. COLEMAN
70 Sioux Wy. Portola Valley, CA 94028
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 October 7, 2019. (ALM Oct. 16, 23, 30; Nov. 6, 2019)

DREAMSHINE HOME
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 282659
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Dreamshine Home, located at 134 Mendocino St. Apt. A, Brisbane, CA 94005, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
LUCIVANIA ANDRADE DE OLIVEIRA
134 Mendocino St. Apt. A Brisbane, CA 94005
MARCELO DE ASSIS PEREIRA
134 Mendocino St. Apt. A Brisbane, CA 94005
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 September 27, 2019. (ALM Oct. 16, 23, 30; Nov. 6, 2019)

KARAKADE THAI CUISINE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 282729
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Karakade Thai Cuisine, located at 593 Woodside Rd. G, Redwood City, CA 94061, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
SUPHATCHANANT NANTO
556 Larkin St. Apt. #203 San Francisco, CA 94102
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 October 4, 2019. (ALM Oct. 16, 23, 30; Nov. 6, 2019)

THREE OAKS CLINICAL PSYCHOLOGY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 282811
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Three Oaks Clinical Psychology, located at 199 Arlington Way, Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
HINDA G. SACK, PH. D.
199 Arlington Way 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 10/11/19.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on October 11, 2019. (ALM Oct. 23, 30; Nov. 6, 13, 2019)

LEHUA GREENMAN



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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.

Theater

'Mark Twain's River of Song' TheatreWorks Silicon Valley continues its 50th anniversary season with the West Coast premiere of "Mark Twain's River of Song." Through Oct. 27; times vary. \$30-\$100; discounts available, pricing subject to change. Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. theatreworks.org

'Monty Python's Spamalot' Adapted from the 1975 film "Monty Python and the Holy Grail," "Monty Python's Spamalot" is an irreverent parody of the Arthurian legend. Oct. 25-Nov. 3; times vary. \$42; discounts available. Woodside High School Performing Arts Center, 199 Churchill Ave., Woodside. woodsidetheatre.com

'The Phantom Tollbooth' Palo Alto Children's Theatre presents "The Phantom Tollbooth," which follows Milo into the fantastical world of the Lands Beyond on a quest to rescue princesses Rhyme and Reason. Through Oct. 27; times vary. \$14-\$16. Palo Alto Children's Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. cityofpaloalto.org/childrenstheatre

'Sweat' "Sweat" by Lynn Nottage, winner of the 2017 Pulitzer Prize for drama, tells of a group of steel workers in Berks County, Pennsylvania, who find themselves pitted against

each other in a desperate fight to stay afloat. Through Nov. 10; times vary. \$34; discount for students, seniors. The Pear Theatre, 1110 La Avenida St., Mountain View. thepear.org

'The Three Little Pigs' Palo Alto Children's Theatre presents "The Three Little Pigs." With simple sets and costumes, and lots of opportunities to get up and wiggle, this storyteller style theater is fit for ages 2 to 6 years old. Performances are approximately 55 minutes in length. Oct. 26-27; times vary. \$12-\$14. Palo Alto Children's Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. cityofpaloalto.org

Music

Bluegrass At The Barn Sponsored by Fort Point Beer Company, this seasonal concert series features an afternoon of live bluegrass, brews, hard cider and nature. Oct. 27; 1 p.m. \$10 adults; \$5 children, plus cost of Filoli admission. Filoli Gardens, 86 Old Canada Road, Woodside. filoli.org

Verdi's 'Nabucco' A love triangle set against the monumental backdrop of ancient Babylon, "Nabucco" is the opera that propelled Verdi into international stardom as an opera composer. Through Oct. 27; times vary. \$35-\$92; discounts for students, seniors, groups. Lucie Stern Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. wbopera.org/nabucco-2019

Festivals & Fairs

Family Nature Day at Huddart Park This event is for children and adults, with activities ranging from arts and crafts, several short and long nature walks, educational programming, book readings and more. Oct. 26, 10 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Free. Huddart Park, 1100 Kings Mountain Road, Woodside. Search eventbrite.com for more info.

Halloween Hoopla Parade and Trick-or-treat Participants are invited to dress in costume and participate in the annual parade through downtown Menlo Park to Fremont Park. After the parade, kids can trick or treat to downtown merchants. Other activities include crafts, live entertainment and carnival games. Oct. 26, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Free. Fremont Park, Santa Cruz Avenue and University Drive, Menlo Park. menlopark.org

Talks & Lectures

Talk Session One: A Conversation with Sangini Majumdar Bedner Sangini Majumdar Bedner, an artist, teacher and Portola Valley parent, sits with William Frederick to share her story and discuss all things life. Oct. 23, 4-5 p.m. Free; \$15 suggested donation. Ormondale Elementary School - Room 20, 200 Shawnee Pass, Portola Valley. Search eventbrite.com for more info.

'No Such Thing as a Bad Kid' Author and youth care specialist Charlie Appelstein will discuss his book, "No Such Thing as a Bad Kid," which includes principles and techniques to help families develop powerful and transforming relationships with their children and teens. Oct. 24, 7-8:30 p.m. Free. Menlo-Atherton Center for the Performing Arts, 555 Middlefield Road, Atherton. Search eventbrite.com for more info.

'Story is the Thing' "Story is the Thing," Kepler's quarterly reading series, features writers Carole Bumpus, Jerry Burger, Chia-Chia Lin, Peg Alford Pursell, Anniqua Rana and Rose Whitmore. Oct. 24, 7:30-8:30 p.m. \$12. Kepler's Books, 1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. keplers.org

'This is Now': Cyrus Grace Dunham An honest coming-of-gender story by Cyrus Grace Dunham, who joins Kepler's Literary Foundation in conversation with Angie Coiro for a "This Is Now" discussion of their transition memoir, "A Year Without A Name." Oct. 23, 7:30-9 p.m. \$20 or \$40 with book; discount for students. Kepler's Books, 1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. keplers.org

Fundraisers

Menlo Park Country Store Annual Fundraiser VA Palo Alto Health Care System presents the Menlo Park Country Store Annual Fundraiser. All proceeds benefit veterans. The event will include baked goods, arts and crafts and a silent auction. Oct. 24, 8 a.m.-2 p.m. Free. Menlo Park Division, Atrium of Building 334, Menlo Park. business.menloparkchamber.com

Family

Safety Day Safety Day activities include lessons about how to keep families safe in an emergency, a safety treasure hunt, car seat checks for proper installation and a costume parade. Oct. 26, 11 a.m.-3 p.m. Free. Town Center, 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley. portolavalley.net

Zoppe Italian Family Circus: 'La Nonna' Zoppe presents "La Nonna," a special show honoring women. This one-ring circus honors the best history of the old-world Italian tradition and stars Nino the Clown, along with many

other mostly women-based acts. Through Nov. 3; times vary. \$10-\$28. Red Morton Park, 1455 Madison Ave., Redwood City. redwoodcity.org/zoppe

Museums & Exhibits

Public Tour: Anderson Collection The Anderson Collection features modern and contemporary American paintings and sculptures assembled by a Bay Area family who built the collection over the last 50 years. Wednesdays, Saturdays and Sundays through Dec. 18, 12:30 p.m. Anderson Collection, 314 Lomita Drive, Stanford. events.stanford.edu

'The Cat Behind the Hat' Peabody Fine Art and Framing presents a gallery show of paintings and illustrations by Dr. Seuss. Through Oct. 27, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. Free. Peabody Fine Art and Framing, 603 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park. peabodygallery.com

'Cointraptions: Classic Coin-Operated Machines' "Cointraptions: Classic Coin-Operated Machines" explores what life was like before the era of credit cards with classic coin-operated machines, including gambling devices, a mutoscope, vending machines and more. Friday-Sunday through Feb. 16, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. The Museum of American Heritage, 351 Homer Ave., Palo Alto. moah.org

Film

Documentary films at Little House Little House Senior/Activity Center presents screenings of local filmmaker Dorothy Fadiman's film, "A Daring Journey: From Immigration to Education" and "Separated: Children at the Border" from the "Frontline" PBS series. Oct. 23, 1-3 p.m. Free for Little House members; \$3 donation for others. Little House Senior/Activity Center, 800 Middle Ave., Menlo Park. penvol.org/littlehouse/movies/

Woodside & Portola Valley Safety Day



**October 26, 2019
11 AM - 3PM**

**Portola Valley Town Center
765 Portola Road**

Free Event - All Ages Welcome

- See Sheriff Cars, Fire Engines, SWAT vehicles, communication equipment and more!
- Learn about how to keep your family safe in an emergency.
- Take part in a Safety Treasure Hunt and get prizes.
- Get your car seats checked for proper installation.

Costume parade at 1PM

Don't say BOO to Safety



RIVER OF SONG

continued from page 18

south, where we encounter cotton plantations, runaway slaves and a wrenching scene from Twain's masterpiece "Huckleberry Finn" between Huck and his fugitive slave companion Jim, who escape together for a river-raft adventure.

The music, representing an assortment of traditional styles from bluegrass to delta blues and Wheatman's stately country-and-folk compositions, prove a pleasing staged playlist of sorts, and the family friendly show could no doubt make an effective field trip for U.S. history and literature students. The whole thing has a charmingly old-fashioned, mellowly educational vibe. Viewers of the recent Ken Burns "Country Music" documentary on PBS will enjoy hearing some familiar tunes pipe up, including folk standard "The Unfortunate Rake," known by nearly countless other titles as well and here used as "The Wild Lumberjack."

The musical numbers, at the opening weekend performance I attended, sounded sometimes as if the kinks were still being worked out (some booming/feedback issues plaguing the mix didn't help) but the slightly rag-tag feeling is appropriate for the folksy setting. It's always fun to see the musicians on stage as part of the action rather than hidden in a pit, especially with this cast giving some lively and engaging



Photo by Kevin Berne

Two of Mark Twain's most beloved characters, from left, Jim (Rondrell McCormick) and Huckleberry Finn (Valisia LeKae), are part of TheatreWorks' "Mark Twain's River of Song."

performances.

Please, audience members, try to remember to heed the many posted signs and pre-show announcements about turning off mobile devices. You do not want to be the person whose phone started — and wouldn't stop, for an agonizingly long time — ringing during LeKae's most quiet, emotional and poignant monologue, as fellow audience members began to audibly lose patience. Awkward all around, but LeKae gets bonus MVP points for carrying on unruffled.

Steven B. Mannshardt's lighting infuses everything in a nice nostalgic glow, with Jill C. Bowers' costumes (again, with LeKae modeling the most changes) pleasing to the eye. Hiatt as Twain sports exactly the hair and suit you'd hope for and David Lee

Cuthbert's set boasts moss-draped oak trees and a variety of scene-appropriate projections.

Due to its pastiche nature, "Mark Twain's River of Song" doesn't get to go, if you'll pardon the water metaphor, very deep into Twain or the themes touched on (more — any? — perspective on the Native American experience would be nice). But overall it's a well-crafted introduction to and enjoyable meander through a quintessential time, place and voice in American culture. And it's a fitting tribute to what is, after all, the show's most important and central character, the mighty Mississippi river itself. Roll on.

Karla Kane is the arts and entertainment editor of the Palo Alto Weekly, The Almanac's sister publication.

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For video tour & more photos, please visit:

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Listed by Michael Repka of the DeLeon Team, the #1 Team in Menlo Park.*

*Search Criteria as compiled by BrokerMetrics® using MLS Data: January 1, 2018 - December 31, 2018, Menlo Park, All Residential Properties.

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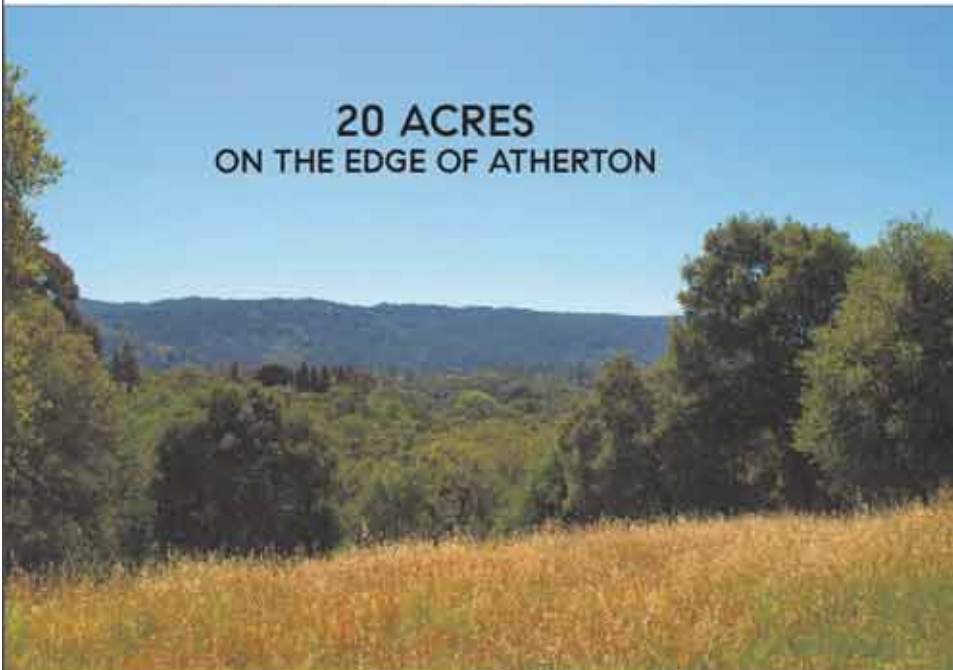
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