

The Almanac

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

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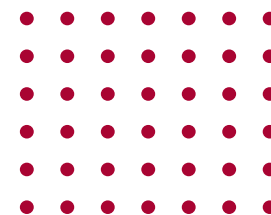
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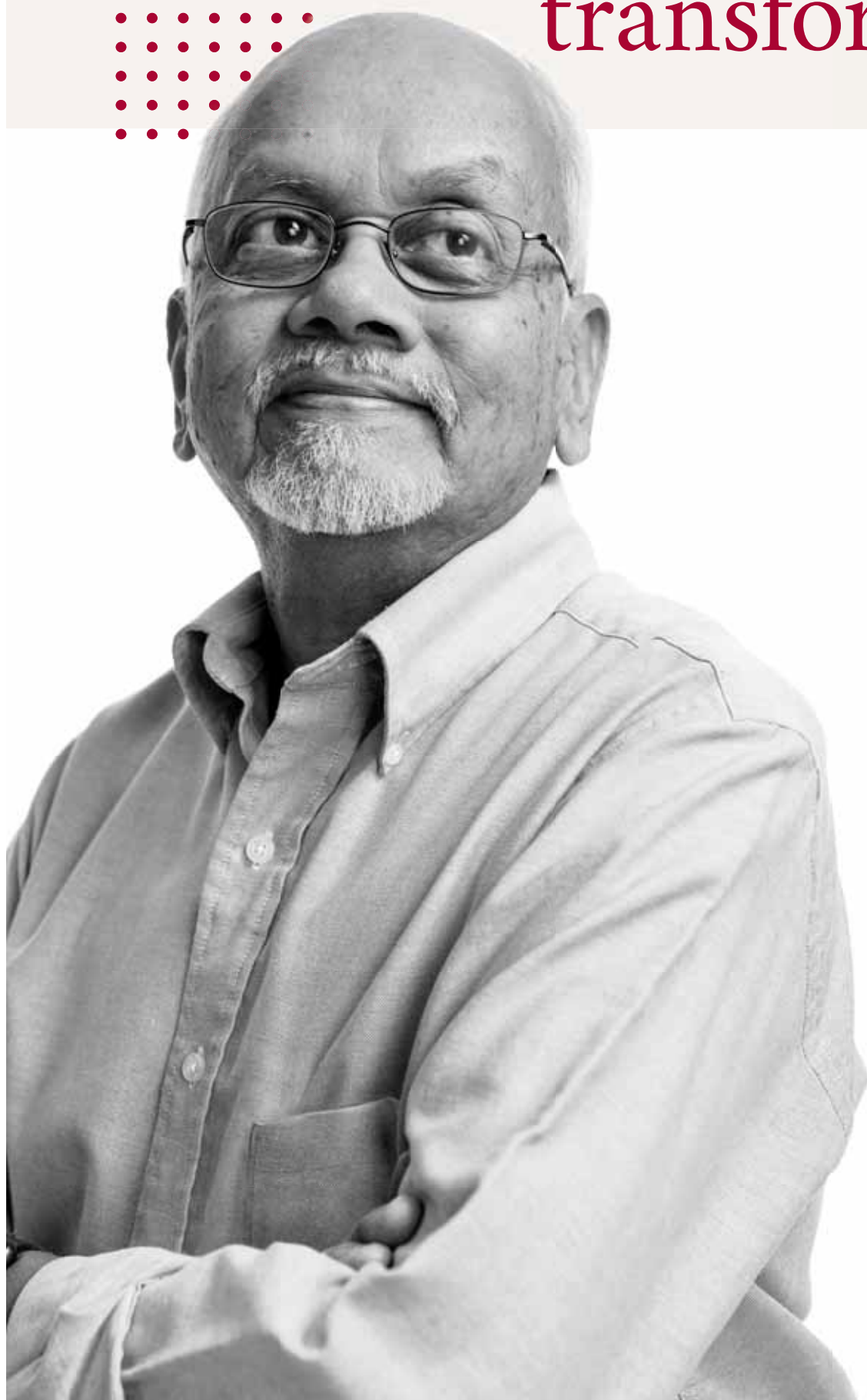
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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Council focuses on jobs-housing balance at Facebook's 'Village'

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

To ensure that Facebook's proposal to build a new neighborhood in Menlo Park undergoes all the areas of environmental analysis that the City Council believes should be studied, the council met on Monday, Dec. 16, to give feedback on the proposed "scope" of the project's environmental impact review.

The proposed project would build 1.75 million square feet of office space, 1,735 apartments, a grocery store, pharmacy and other retail spaces, a 250-room hotel, two parking structures, and some publicly accessible open space, all over three phases of development.

The site is now home to a non-descript, low-slung office park, occupied mainly by Facebook, that makes up about 1 million square feet of office space.

The city is considered the "lead agency" and oversees the review, which will be done by consultants ICF International and its subcontractors. The project is being developed by Signature Development Group.

In addition to funding the state-mandated environmental impact report (EIR), Facebook plans to also complete a fiscal impact analysis and a housing needs assessment for the project.

At the meeting, several community members urged the council to consider alternatives that would fully mitigate impacts to traffic, housing, and tribal and cultural resources existing on the property, as well as impacts to local schools.

Planning Commissioner Henry Riggs told the council he favors exploring two project alternatives as part of the EIR process: a project with zero net housing impacts, and one with zero net traffic impacts.

"Their property really depends on workers being able to get to and from businesses," he said. "Right now that is just not viable."

Riggs pointed out that in Facebook's last development, the company committed to designing 1,500 housing units, but those units were never really intended to balance out that existing Facebook office space since the units are now being applied for along with permission to build a substantial amount of office space.

Building on Riggs' points, council member (now mayor) Cecilia Taylor asked how the city might utilize information about Menlo Park's recent office space additions, unmitigated by new housing, to push for a better balance between housing and jobs in the city.

One of the challenges of the



Photo courtesy of Facebook/Signature Development Group.

A rendering of the "Town Square" at Facebook's proposed Willow Village.

methodology used in "housing needs assessments," as Facebook is planning to complete, is that while each city can absorb any number of new jobs, it is not expected to concurrently absorb that same number of housing units, because the assessment assumes that people will disperse into other communities.

Such analyses typically take the existing proportion of workers at a company who live within city limits and then assumes that proportion will apply with a new employee population, not recognizing that housing in the region is finite and not growing as quickly as office space.

In Facebook's most recent

analysis pertaining to its previous development, such a small percentage of company workers already lived in Menlo Park that the assumed new demand for housing units was also a relatively small number, somewhere between 4% and 7%.

Councilwoman Betsy Nash questioned this assumption. "It seems to me that many more would like to (live in Menlo Park) if there was housing available," she said. "Do other jurisdictions hear about the other 93% of housing needs they're supposed to accommodate? ... Isn't that how we end up with a regional housing needs imbalance?"

Leigh Prince, who assists

the Menlo Park city attorney, explained that they're talking with the consultants about how to take a broader look at the topic, but that analysis might best be undertaken as a citywide project instead of in relation to a single development.

Councilwoman Catherine Carlton expressed impatience at Facebook's past statements that it has intended to provide housing while it's continued to add thousands of jobs. She asked that a balanced scenario in which the development has enough housing to accommodate new workers be studied in the EIR.

See **WILLOW VILLAGE**, page 6

Facebook, activists, strong council drive change in city this year

The year was characterized by tough conversations about housing, transportation, homelessness, climate change, Stanford, Facebook, a development moratorium, and so much more.

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

The year 2019 in Menlo Park wrapped up a decade of significant change within a community that 10 years ago had no Facebook, no downtown specific plan and no ConnectMenlo plan. Things have sure changed since then.

Politically speaking, the most significant event of the year was on June 11, when the City Council entertained a discussion of enacting a moratorium on office and some housing growth on the city's Bay side.

The discussion aired numerous frustrations that had gained steam

over the years, voiced by members of the community whose lives have been negatively impacted because of the city's skewed jobs-housing balance and concomitant traffic problems. It launched a still-ongoing reckoning at the City Council level over how to grow responsibly and equitably when what's permitted under city zoning codes varies dramatically in different areas of town.

While there's still more reckoning to be done, it's clear that moving forward, the council will have a much more active

role in scrutinizing development proposals.

This debate was also significant because it's the last time the city will be able to have such a discussion, at least for the next five years, in the aftermath of state legislation that will ban development moratoriums or downzoning across California through 2024.

In addition to banning moratoriums on new housing construction, Senate Bill 330, passed earlier this year, requires cities and counties to speed up the process at which they issue permits for housing development that meets a jurisdiction's existing rules, allows no more than five public hearings on a housing project, and bans cities from hiking fees on housing permit applicants once they've submitted preliminary required information.



Photo by Sammy Dallal/The Almanac

Workers on Nov. 27 took down the marquee of Menlo Park's Guild Theatre on El Camino Real. The site is being converted into a live music and event venue by the local nonprofit Peninsula Arts Guild.

This legislation and a series of other newly passed state laws mark Sacramento's increasingly less tolerant stance toward the sluggishness of many cities — particularly on the Peninsula — to add housing to keep up with job growth in their communities.

Thinking more regionally

The year also marked Menlo Park's growing engagement in

discussions and debates outside city boundaries, as its leaders have come to think more regionally as they continue to grapple with the twin demons bedeviling the city and much of the region: too much traffic and too few affordable homes.

In fact, this year, Menlo Park

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Hearing for accused sexual predator moved to Feb. 20

By Rick Radin

Almanac Staff Writer

Accused sexual predator Randolph Haldeman on Dec. 18 received a new date for a preliminary hearing to face 20 sexual assault charges for allegedly molesting children at his Menlo Park home and at a community swimming pool, according to the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office.

The third and latest date for the hearing, Feb. 20, came at the request of the DA's office because the prosecutor assigned to the case is busy with another trial, according to District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe.

The preliminary hearing had previously been scheduled for



Randolph Haldeman

Dec. 18.

Haldeman, 59, was initially arrested on July 25 on two counts of "lewd and lascivious acts" with boys ranging in age from 8 to 13 years at his home and at the Ladera Recreation Center. He was released on bail hours later.

After the arrest was reported, eight more individuals came forward to report being sexually assaulted by Haldeman, and he was re-arrested on Aug. 21, according to the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office.

Several of the alleged molestations occurred after the victims had consumed alcohol, and involved fondling while viewing porn, according to Wagstaffe. The victims' ages at the time of the alleged assaults ranged from 4 to 16 years old, he said.

Haldeman pleaded not guilty to the charges on Sept. 9 and remains in custody on \$5 million bail. ■

WILLOW VILLAGE

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"It's not OK; it's making it worse," she said, referring to the city's skewed jobs-housing balance. "Minimally, this should be balanced."

On the traffic front, one challenge with the project is that the environmental impact analysis is expected to come out after a state law takes effect that will change the way that traffic impacts are measured, explained Nikki Nagaya, interim public works director. Starting July 1, the state will be switching to measuring traffic impacts based on vehicle miles traveled, a measure of the per-capita number of car trips generated by a project and how far cars travel to and from a project.

That measure is a substantial departure from the current system, which measures how well traffic-controlled intersections perform, or "level of service" based on how long cars have to wait at them.

For this environmental analysis, Nagaya said, vehicle miles traveled will be analyzed along with traffic at key intersections, since it's still of value to the city to see where, and at what scale, a project would be likely to create traffic delays.

Another concern with the proposal came from Crystal Leach, associate superintendent of administrative services at the Sequoia Union High School District, who said that the project could generate new students in already crowded schools, and new state laws could change school

bond funding and impact fees.

"We want to know how we can address those (concerns) if they can be addressed with the EIR process," said council member Ray Mueller. Menlo-Atherton High School "is at its limit. We have to figure out within the mitigation process how that's dealt with. People in Menlo Park ... expect us to protect school districts and improve school districts."

Resident Lynne Bramlett also expressed concern at the small number of comments the city had received relative to the project's size, and wondered if the city's process for notifying the public should have been more broad, particularly to include locally active environmental nonprofits like the Sierra Club and Save the Bay.

Offering full support to the project was Samuel Munoz, a carpenters union representative, who said the project would create good jobs for local carpenters.

Another concern raised by Belle Haven resident Pam Jones was about the Hiller mound, a former Native American shellmound on the property — and possibly the remnants of an entire village that may be buried beneath the current office park.

She asked that all likely descendants of the buried be notified, particularly those who are not federally recognized and live in the area.

"I believe it is time that as a nation we move away from the manifest destiny philosophy (that) when we want land use, we take what we want," Jones said. ■

Menlo fire board passes on all-electric engine letter of intent

Some board members say decision to sign contract premature

By Rick Radin
Almanac Staff Writer

The Menlo Park Fire Protection District board voted by a 3-2 margin on Tuesday, Dec. 17, not to sign a letter of intent and put down a refundable deposit on an all-electric fire and rescue vehicle, actions recommended by the fire chief.

The \$200,000 deposit on the \$1.12 million vehicle and the letter of intent would have enabled the district to evaluate it for three months before making a purchase decision.

Outgoing board President Virginia Chang-Kiraly and new President Robert Jones voted in

favor of the chief's proposal, while Jim McLaughlin, Rob Silano and Chuck Bernstein voted no.

The engine would have been used in Station 77 in the Belle Haven neighborhood of Menlo Park to replace a diesel-powered rescue truck currently in use, Chang-Kiraly said.

The engine, known as a Rosenbauer Concept Fire Truck, reduces exposure to diesel fumes, which are a known carcinogen; saves money by eliminating diesel fuel; virtually eliminates carbon emissions that cause climate change; and has fewer moving parts than conventional engines, resulting in lower maintenance costs, according to Fire Chief

Harold Schapelhouman.

A conventional diesel-powered truck with the same capabilities would cost between \$600,000 and \$700,000, Schapelhouman said.

Chang-Kiraly expressed disappointment that the board decided not to move forward, touting the benefits the truck would provide.

"That we were never going to use it as a ladder truck or an engine doesn't mean there is no use for it as a rescue truck," she said.

Bernstein said he voted no because he wanted the district's Apparatus Committee, made up of firefighters, to look at the proposal at its Jan. 23 meeting before putting down a deposit, even if it was refundable.



Photo courtesy of Menlo Park Fire Protection District

The fire chief has his sights set on acquiring an electric Rosenbauer Concept Fire Truck.

He said that Chang-Kiraly and Jones emphasized that the district had to move forward immediately or Rosenbauer could take the deal off the table, but added, "I felt that it was disrespectful to our professional staff not to ask what they thought."

"If my wife hadn't seen a house I was interested in buying, I wouldn't put down a deposit on it either."

Bernstein said he doesn't think the vote was the last word on the proposal, a sentiment Schapelhouman seconded.

"The board was obviously not sold, but I'm going to try again," he said.

At the meeting, Jones was chosen as board president and McLaughlin as vice president for 2020. Both votes were unanimous. ■

Taylor takes the gavel in Menlo Park

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

Two of the new faces to Menlo Park's City Council now occupy the city's two positions as mayor and vice mayor.

Cecilia Taylor, who represents Menlo Park on the city's Bay side of U.S. 101 in District 1, was chosen by her fellow council members to serve as mayor for the next year. Drew Combs, who represents the Willows, Flood Triangle and Suburban Park neighborhoods in District 2, will be vice mayor.

Taylor said the city is unique right now because three council members were elected from districts and two were elected citywide. "Together we provide a unique perspective of the city of Menlo Park and what our community is looking for in our service," she added.

Combs was picked for the role



Photo by Kate Bradshaw

At a celebration after their last meeting of the year, the five members of the Menlo Park City Council gathered for a photo at the gate house in the Menlo Park Civic Center. Cecilia Taylor and Drew Combs, center and center-right, were chosen by their colleagues to spend the next year as mayor and vice mayor, respectively.

of vice mayor after receiving a nomination from Betsy Nash, who would also have been in the running for the position.

In brief remarks, Combs talked about the random circumstances that brought him to Menlo Park

in the first place: a lucky Craigslist listing for an apartment in his price range. After having served on the city's Planning Commission and now being on

See TAYLOR, page 10

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



New Laws for Landlords

Dear Monica: We have a house that we have rented out for a few years and are trying to decide whether to keep renting it out or sell it. How is the rental vs selling market now? Kathy M.

Dear Kathy: Both the rental market and the selling market are fine but a bit flat right now. If you have been a landlord for awhile you have no doubt been following

the new rent control laws coming in 2020. Most single family homes and condos are exempt for now so you may not be affected. If you are not sure about this, the best advice would be to consult an attorney who understands the changes and can provide you with the updated forms you might need. The laws vary depending on the city or county so it's best to know the rules.

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Facebook reveals new details about community center offer

By Kate Bradshaw
Almanac Staff Writer

In a letter sent to Menlo Park's City Hall on Dec. 16, Facebook revealed new details about its commitment to build a new multi-generational community center and library in Belle Haven, which the company initially announced in October.

The letter, signed by John Tenanes, the company's vice president of global facilities and real estate, puts forward ambitious plans to build a new senior center, youth facilities, gym and library, as well as to renovate some amenities near the pools and improve pedestrian access and vehicle circulation at the existing Belle Haven community center campus — all in the next two and a half years.

"This project is an exciting opportunity to provide a tremendous neighborhood resource that will serve as a community gathering place in Menlo Park, the place we consider home," Tenanes writes. "Thank you for this opportunity and we look forward to working closely with you, Menlo Park's Belle Haven residents and City staff on this important initiative."

'Currently, permits can take up to 8 months after projects are approved, and our request for this project is that permits be issued within 2 months of submittal.'

JOHN TENANES, FACEBOOK VP OF GLOBAL FACILITIES AND REAL ESTATE

In response, the city announced Dec. 19 that it intends to develop a potential project timeline, milestones and recommendations for the City Council to work through starting in the new year. Over the next four to six weeks, the city reports, staff will develop a proposed response and develop recommendations for the City Council about how community engagement efforts should move forward, what kind of environmental review will be needed, what kind of temporary or interim services should be provided during construction, how much of the budget should be dedicated to costs not covered by the offer, and how the city can meet Facebook's rigorous proposed timeline.

The council is tentatively scheduled to discuss these matters at its meeting on Tuesday, Jan. 28.

An additional community



Photo by Magali Gauthier/The Almanac.

The Menlo Park Senior Center is a hub of the Belle Haven community. It's part of a collection of city facilities in the neighborhood set to be rebuilt or renovated as part of the Facebook project. In the photo, Margaret Blackwell sings along during a gospel song at the Black History Month Luncheon and Gospel Fest at the center on Feb. 22.

meeting about the project has been scheduled on Saturday, Jan. 11, from 10 a.m. to noon at the Menlo Park Senior Center at 110 Terminal Ave., at the Belle Haven community center and senior center complex.

"This is an incredibly exciting project that will jump-start a process that normally takes local government many more years to complete," said City Manager Starla Jerome-Robinson in the city's Dec. 19 announcement. "I'm confident that this project will create a next generation community center that is relevant and meaningful to the neighborhood and program participants. Facebook's generosity deserves to be met with our commitment to move quickly and we are up to the challenge."

In the letter to Menlo Park, Tenanes emphasizes that the contribution to the city "should be treated as a standalone endeavor that is not connected to any other Facebook project." In addition, he writes, "By providing updated facilities, our goal is to give residents a welcoming place to gather, celebrate and reinforce the social fabric that makes this neighborhood special."

Tenanes makes it clear in the letter that Facebook has identified certain requirements that the city must meet for the company to be able to deliver the project so quickly.

"This expedited schedule is contingent upon leveraging existing information and achieving consensus among key stakeholders, including community members, City staff and City leadership," he writes.

It helps that the city has been doing its own planning to identify community needs for such facilities, he notes. The city has recently completed a Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan that identifies the need for a new community center in Belle Haven, and has also completed both

a needs assessment and a space needs assessment that lay out priorities for a Belle Haven library that better serves the community.

To keep the ball rolling as Facebook takes on the project of actually developing such facilities, Tenanes is asking that the city identify the project as a priority and commit to a timely approval and permitting process.

"Currently, permits can take up to 8 months after projects are approved, and our request for this project is that permits be issued within 2 months of submittal. This will lead to an expedited completion date and ultimately benefit the residents of Menlo Park," he writes.

The city should also expect to be responsible for the costs related to processing the project approvals, permitting, plan-checking and building department inspections, as well as running activities and programs at the new facility.

He notes that while it could be possible to keep some of the existing facilities open during construction, doing so could slow the project down, and Facebook would prefer to relocate the existing programs somewhere else, except to allow access to Beechwood School and the soccer fields at Kelly Park. Facebook would not be responsible for any temporary facilities during the construction period.

Facebook is also not currently proposing to replace the two pools — a lap pool and a wading pool — located on the site, though the city has identified a need for these facilities to be updated. If there are additional items beyond what the company has proposed, Tenanes explains, the city can fund those with contributions from the city or a third party.

The timeline

As envisioned now, the project would take place in two phases, Tenanes writes.

The first phase, which would

include reaching out to the public, creating the building designs, developing plans for how to program the space and getting the project approved, is intended to last six months.

Starting in January, Facebook plans to put forward a clearer plan to generate community input about the project and determine when those community meetings will take place.

Tenanes says Facebook wants to leave it up to the community to decide what programs will be operated in the facility, and will plan to collect data about what programs people would like to see there.

In February and March, meetings will be held with the community and operations staff to further determine what spaces will be needed.

Already, he notes, Facebook has done some initial work with the architectural firm Hart Howerton; the letter proposes that the firm be the lead project planner and designer, and asks that the city retain a consultant to guide the project as well.

He also notes that Facebook has been working with the support of Menlo Park's new mayor, Cecilia Taylor, who enabled the company to start working with the architectural firm to develop preliminary space and site plans and a conceptual design for the project.

Facebook would be expected to act as the project's master developer, responsible for design and construction, he adds.

In a written statement, Taylor told The Almanac: "I believe this

Facebook Community Center proposal has the potential to rebuild relationships between the Belle Haven community and the city of Menlo Park and to make a difference in our the quality of life. This is a much awaited opportunity to upgrade and expand services for our youth, our families, our seniors, and ourselves after decades of outreach by the city and input from residents. It is important that each and every resident has access to essential tools and resources for connection, learning, exercise, and community. This is a step forward toward a live-play community."

"I am hopeful about this partnership between the Community, the City, and Facebook," she added.

The second phase of the project would be to develop construction plans, demolish the existing facilities and build the new facility. Tenanes says Facebook's optimistic belief is that it can complete construction within 18 months after receiving the building permit.

In the city's press statement, longtime Belle Haven resident Rose Bickerstaff expressed support for the project.

"We are thankful for Facebook's decision to generously gift Menlo Park's Belle Haven community a new campus. It is a decision that truly pays it forward," she said.

"The positive impact of this new combined senior center, community center and library will be felt not only by our bayside neighborhood, but also Menlo Park residents in general." ■

DeGolia is Atherton's new mayor

Atherton council members chose Rick DeGolia to be the town's new mayor, and Elizabeth Lewis to serve as vice mayor, for 2020 at the Dec. 18 City Council meeting.

DeGolia, who joined the council in 2013 and whose current term ends in 2022, held the vice mayor chair this year.

He was passed the gavel on Dec. 18 by Bill Widmer, who served as mayor in 2019.

Lewis' term ends in the coming year — December 2020. Council member Cary Wiest's term will also end next year.

The mayor and vice mayor serve one-year terms that are effective on the day and time the council reorganization takes place.

During the same meeting, the City Council voted to hire Mona Ebrahimi, of the law firm Kronick Moskovitz Tiedemann & Girard, to



Rick DeGolia was chosen Atherton's mayor for 2020.

provide the town's city attorney services.

And the council honored outgoing City Attorney Bill Connors and Assistant City Attorney Jennifer Larson that night. Connors is retiring from his post on Dec. 31.

— By Angela Swartz



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Sequoia Healthcare District debuts online resources guide

By Angela Swartz
Almanac Staff Writer

To help connect local residents of all ages to free or low-cost activities and services in their area, the Sequoia Healthcare District recently launched a free online resources guide.

In October, the district, which provides community-based health care services, introduced “Sequoia Strong,” a website with a comprehensive list of mental health services, extracurricular activities, academic support and drug prevention information services, according to the initiative’s program manager, Cat Bottini.

The district is using technology to spur people to do in-person activities, she said. Seniors especially can become isolated, and district officials want the website’s resources to connect people to activities that keep them active and engaged, she said.

“We want people to know what resources we have,” Bottini said. “Everyone is so connected (electronically), but there are so many choices (for services).”

All options on the website are recommended by district officials. Bottini works with experts and wellness coordinators to curate the directory. The directory encompasses not only the district’s coverage area

— cities in the southern Peninsula, including the four towns in The Almanac’s coverage area: Menlo Park, Portola Valley, Woodside and Atherton — but neighboring areas as well, Bottini said.

The guide can also serve as a resource when a person is dealing with a difficult life event, such as a loved one’s death or unemployment, she said.

Mindy Hill, wellness director for the San Carlos School District, said the directory will be a “catchall place” for community resources that she can refer district parents and students to on a regular basis.

“I know people really struggle with what’s all out there (in

terms of health resources), and this is a great place where they can see it all,” Hill said.

She noted that as a wellness coordinator, it’s hard to know exactly what people need.

“It’s almost like you don’t know what you need until you see it right in front of you,” she said. For example, people might not know they’d be interested in a particular extracurricular activity, alcohol and tobacco use information or volunteer opportunities until they see all of the resources on one website, she said.

Eventually, the health care district would like to establish a teen advisory board to help other teens find these health

services, Bottini said.

She said website visitors have spent a lot of time using the directory, with the average person spending six to nine minutes browsing.

Sequoia Strong is an offshoot of “70 Strong,” an online resource guide the health care district created for seniors in the area. The organization decided to expand the program to reach people of all ages, Bottini said.

The health care district saved \$500,000 by bringing the resource guide in-house — 70 Strong was run by an outside consultant, said Pamela Kurtzman, the district’s CEO.

For more information, go to sequoiastrong.org. ▣

County schools file lawsuit over e-cigarette marketing to kids

By Almanac Staff

The San Mateo County Office of Education, joined by three county school districts, filed a lawsuit Tuesday, Dec. 17, against San Francisco-based Juul Labs over its alleged efforts to entice young people to smoke electronic cigarettes.

The legal action was approved by the county Board of Education. The county office was joined by the Cabrillo Unified School District, the Jefferson Union High School District and San Mateo-Foster City School District, according to a press release from the county office.

The lawsuits allege that Juul’s marketing strategy, advertising and product design have targeted youth, especially teens and preteens, causing a rise in the use of e-cigarettes by children.

“The use of e-cigarettes by young people has become, in the words of the U.S. Surgeon General, a ‘public health epidemic’ that is impacting the health, including brain development, of high numbers of youth, and potentially setting them up for a future of addiction to other drugs,” the press release states.

County schools Superintendent Nancy Magee said in the written statement: “Enough is enough. We hope this lawsuit

will help put an end to tobacco companies’ profit-driven efforts to lure our children into a lifetime of poor health, addiction, and dashed dreams.”

Plaintiffs’ attorney Anne Marie Murphy said school districts are bearing the brunt of the apparent epidemic and that usage is a public health crisis.

In response to the lawsuits, Juul spokesperson Ted Kwong said, “Our customer base is the world’s 1 billion adult smokers, and we do not intend to attract underage users. To the extent these cases allege otherwise, they are without merit.” ▣

Bay City News contributed to this report.

Aalfs returns to mayor’s chair

By Rick Radin
Almanac Staff Writer

Jeff Aalfs was chosen by the Portola Valley Town Council as mayor, and Maryann Derwin as vice mayor, for 2020 at the council’s Dec. 12 meeting.

Aalfs first joined the council in 2011, and previously served as mayor in 2014.

“2019 was a very demanding year as the Council tackled a range of issues from a new garbage contract to controversial housing conversations,” Aalfs said in looking back on his term as vice mayor this year. “Mayor (Ann) Wengert provided great leadership, with a focus on the Town’s fiscal health, the importance of resident feedback and desired outcomes, with an eye towards maintaining the Town’s priorities.”

As a council member, Aalfs has made environmental causes a priority through adoption of “reach codes,” rules that go beyond state requirements in mandating energy efficiency, and encouraging energy-efficient building and renewables, according to a town release.

Portola Valley is designing a Climate Action Plan with a target of 2030, planning for the Town Center to be a net zero energy facility as well as exploring additional electric vehicle charging



Jeff Aalfs is serving his second term on the Town Council.

stations at Town Center and other town facilities, according to a list of council environmental priorities for 2019-20.

Aalfs also serves as the town’s representative, and chair of the board of directors, for Peninsula Clean Energy, San Mateo County’s nonprofit electricity supplier.

He is an energy consultant helping residential and some commercial clients to comply with government energy codes and improve building efficiency.

Aalfs is married with two children and has a bachelor’s degree in molecular biology from the University of California at Los Angeles and a doctorate in genetics from Harvard University.

Derwin joined the council in 2005 and served as mayor in 2007, 2012, and 2016. ▣

TAYLOR

continued from page 7

its City Council, he said, “For me, being involved in local government here has been an amazing journey. I look forward to continuing it as vice mayor.”

The positions of mayor and vice mayor rotate each year, and the council’s tradition is to give each council member a chance to serve in those positions.

The council’s meeting also included a recognition of the outgoing mayor, Ray Mueller. Taylor presented Mueller with a proclamation and said, “I appreciate the invaluable mentorship and the leadership you have provided the council this past year. ... Through your leadership, I learned agenda management, meeting management and a thoughtful way to build relationships with our staff.” ▣

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High-profile crime cases leave a mark

By Rick Radin
Almanac Staff Writer

Three high-profile crime cases, a well-respected fire chief's retirement in Woodside, and the completion of a long-term effort to replace a fire station in Menlo Park marked 2019.

Skyline Boulevard killings

In June, Pacifica resident Malik Dosouqi, 26, was charged with two counts of murder and five felony counts after he was arrested for the killings of taxi driver Abdulmalek Nasher and tow truck driver John Pekiaki. He allegedly had lured the two men in separate incidents to a remote Skyline Boulevard location in Woodside.

San Mateo County sheriff's deputies found the body of Nasher, 32, on the evening of June 17 after he went to the location on El Corte de Madera Creek Preserve on a work call. Nasher died at the scene of multiple stab wounds, according to the Sheriff's Office.

Deputies investigating Nasher's death the next evening heard a cry for help from Pekiaki, 31, in roughly the same area and discovered him lying off the side of the road, also with multiple stab

2019
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REVIEW

wounds. He died at the scene.

Pekiaki was a tow truck driver for Specialty Towing in East Palo Alto who had been called to the scene late in the evening on June 18 to help a stranded motorist.

Dosouqi was ruled incompetent to stand trial on Nov. 1 by a San Mateo County Superior Court judge and was ordered committed to Napa State Hospital for psychiatric treatment on Dec. 6, according to San Mateo County District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe.

Sex assault of juveniles

Randy Haldeman, 59, of Menlo Park was arrested in July and charged with sexual assaults of boys from 8 to 13 years old, allegedly at the Ladera Recreation Center and at his home, according to Rosemerry Blankswade of the Sheriff's Office. He was quickly released on bail.

When news of his arrest came out, multiple other young people came forward saying that they had also been assaulted by Haldeman over a period of years.

Haldeman was re-arrested at his home and was booked on a



Photo by Magali Gauthier/The Almanac

Dan Ghorso of the Woodside Fire Protection District poses for a portrait at Fire Station 7 in Woodside shortly before his retirement as fire chief in April.

multitude of charges.

He was to receive a preliminary hearing in San Mateo County Superior Court on Dec. 18, but the court date was moved, by request of the District Attorney's Office, to February. He's being held on \$5 million bail.

Suspected killer of retired arborist gets 2020 trial date

Francis Wolke, 27, the man charged with killing former Atherton town arborist Kathy Hughes Anderson in her Menlo Park home last year, received an April 28, 2020, date for a pre-trial conference and a June 22 date for a jury trial, according to the San Mateo County District

Attorney's Office. Wolke has pleaded not guilty to the crime.

Police arrested Wolke after he was found at Hughes Anderson's home on Valparaiso Avenue on Dec. 12, 2018, the day her body was found, and booked him into San Mateo County Jail on first-degree murder charges, according to a Menlo Park Police Department report.

There is no known relationship or contact between him and Hughes Anderson, nor a known motive for the crime, according to the DA's office.

Wolke remains in custody on \$10 million bail.

Menlo fire station

After a 12-year journey with many detours, the Menlo Park Fire Protection District in June opened its new Station 6, which has an inside that couldn't be more up-to-date, with an outside that looks like a throwback to earlier times.

The station is centrally located at 700 Oak Grove Ave., a block from both Santa Cruz Avenue and El Camino Real.

The new 8,335-square-foot station replaced a 3,000-square-foot building that opened in 1953, according to Fire Chief Harold Schapelhouman.

The new station cost \$11.54 million to build, including design fees, construction, project

management fees and other costs, according to a district release.

It can house up to eight firefighters and two emergency vehicles, and is connected to the United States Geological Survey early warning earthquake notification system, called Shake Alert.

Fire chief retires

Woodside Fire Protection District Chief Dan Ghorso retired in April after 28 years in the department, and was replaced by his second-in-command, Deputy Fire Chief Rob Lindner.

Woodside is the only place Ghorso worked since beginning his firefighting career in 1991. The district includes Woodside, Portola Valley and unincorporated areas of San Mateo County.

Ghorso, a Foster City resident, grew up in South San Francisco and attended a Catholic seminary for high school, with the idea of joining the priesthood. An early career incident when he was working at a car dealership sealed a commitment to public service.

"One day an elderly gentleman came in and suddenly collapsed, with blood coming out of his ears," Ghorso said. "There was nothing any of us could do to help him, and at that point I decided I wanted to do something where I could help people in that kind of emergency." ■

Craving a new voice in Peninsula dining?



Every other week, top local food reporter Elena Kadvany provides insight into the latest openings and closings, what she's eating that she's excited about, interviews with chefs and the trends affecting local restaurants.



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Give to The Almanac Holiday Fund

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Contributions to the Holiday Fund go directly to programs that benefit Peninsula residents. Last year, Almanac readers and foundations contributed \$150,000 from more than 150 donors for the 10 agencies that feed the hungry, house the homeless and provide numerous other services to those in need.

Contributions to the Holiday Fund will be matched, to the extent possible, by generous community organizations, foundations and individuals, including the Rotary Club of Menlo Park Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. No administrative costs will be deducted from the gifts, which are tax-deductible as permitted by law.

All donations to the Holiday Fund will be shared equally among the 10 recipient agencies listed on this page.

Boys & Girls Clubs

Provides after-school academic support, enrichment, and mentoring for 1,800 low-income K-12 youth at nine locations across Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, and the North Fair Oaks neighborhood of Redwood City.

Ecumenical Hunger Program

Provides emergency food, clothing, household essentials, and sometimes financial assistance to families in need, regardless of religious preference, including Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for more than 2,000 households.

Fair Oaks Community Center

This multi-service facility, serving the broader Redwood City community, provides assistance with child care, senior programs, citizenship and immigration, housing and employment, and crisis intervention. Programs are available in Spanish and English.

LifeMoves

Provides shelter/housing and supportive services across 18 sites in Silicon Valley and the Peninsula. Serves thousands of homeless families and individuals annually on their path back to permanent housing and self-sufficiency.

Project Read

Provides free literacy services to adults in the Menlo Park area. Trained volunteers work one-on-one to help adults improve reading, writing and English language skills so they can function more effectively at home, at work and in the community. Basic English classes, weekly conversation clubs and volunteer-led computer enrichment are also offered.

Ravenswood Family Health Center

Provides primary medical and preventive health care for all ages at its clinic in East Palo Alto. Of the more than 17,000 registered patients, most are low-income and uninsured and live in the ethnically diverse East Palo Alto, Belle Haven, and North Fair Oaks areas.

St. Anthony's Padua Dining Room

Serves hundreds of hot meals six days a week to people in need who walk through the doors. Funded by voluntary contributions and community grants, St. Anthony's is the largest dining room for the needy between San Francisco and San Jose. It also offers take-home bags of food, as well as emergency food and clothing assistance.

Second Harvest Food Bank

The largest collector and distributor of food on the Peninsula, Second Harvest Food Bank distributed 52 million pounds of food last year. It gathers donations from individuals and businesses and distributes food to more than 250,000 people each month through more than 770 agencies and distribution sites in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

StarVista

Serves more than 32,000 people throughout San Mateo County, including children, young people and families, with counseling, prevention, early intervention, education, and residential programs. StarVista also provides crisis intervention and suicide prevention services including a 24-hour suicide crisis hotline, an alcohol and drug helpline, and a parent support hotline.

Upward Scholars

Upward Scholars empowers low-income adults by providing them with financial support, tutoring, and other assistance so they can continue their education, get higher-paying jobs, and serve as role models and advocates for their children.

The organizations below provide
major matching grants to the Holiday Fund.



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As of December 16, 116,254 donors have contributed \$97,034 to the Almanac Holiday Fund.

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Photo courtesy of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula

Club instructor Sandy Orozco is a former BGCP student, and was chosen 2014 Youth of the Year. An instructor in the nonprofit's intensive literacy program, she supports second and third graders in achieving grade-level reading proficiency.

Nonprofit Boys & Girls Clubs addresses the opportunity gap

By Elizabeth Harris, grants manager, Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula

Jorge has been a member of the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula (BGCP) since kindergarten and is typically shy and hesitant to take the spotlight. Last spring, when BGCP mentors encouraged him to present an eighth grade speech, Jorge worked with his mentors to improve his writing and public speaking, skills that Jorge knew would be vital to his future success in school.

At the 8th Grade Gala, Jorge gave a commanding speech in front of 100 peers, teachers, and community members about the need for computer science and other programs that prepare low-income youth of color to be competitive in the 21st century job market. His parents and

HOLIDAY FUND

Donations to The Almanac's Holiday Fund benefit the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula and nine other nonprofits serving the local community. To donate, use the coupon on Page 12 or go to siliconvalleycf.org/almanac-holiday-fund.

community were proud, but, more importantly, he was proud of himself.

Jorge is one of 2,500 low-income K-post-secondary students benefiting from BGCP programs at three clubhouses and 10 school sites in East Palo Alto, eastern Menlo Park and Redwood City. Although our students live adjacent to some of the wealthiest communities in the world, BGCP students are primarily low-income students of color, and face

See **BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS**, page 14

Giving kids from troubled families a chance to cope and thrive

By Lauren Heminez, StarVista grant writer

At just 11 years old, Karina (not her real name) was struggling with life at home. As she began showing up late to class and having trouble at school, her school principal took notice and connected Karina to a counselor who could provide her with additional support.

Karina confided in her counselor about her feelings of loneliness and explained how "there's always a lot of arguing and fighting, and no matter what I do, I can't make it better." In addition to listening to Karina and offering support, her counselor told her about an upcoming camp for kids with experiences just like hers, and soon after, she was on her way to

her first day at Kids' Kamp.

Kids' Kamp is a free annual camp offered by StarVista's Children's Place program for children of families impacted by addiction. At Kids' Kamp, Karina was able to meet other kids with feelings and experiences like hers.

In addition to fun outdoor activities, the camp teaches kids about addiction and helps them

See **STARVISTA**, page 14



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New leaders hired, enrollment dips, vaping trend sounds alarm

By Angela Swartz
Almanac Staff Writer



It was a year of change and challenges for local schools as several longtime administrators left their posts, a new school opened and others expanded, and administrators began to face the vaping health crisis.

TIDE Academy, a new public high school in Menlo Park, opened for classes in August, but construction was ongoing because of project setbacks, according to school and construction officials.

The school also made some staffing changes during the year. In June, before the school even opened, Allison Silvestri replaced Shamar Edwards, who had been principal since July 2018. Edwards, who had also served as the district's executive director of small-school innovation and alternative programs, said she was surprised by her dismissal from her post. The district asserted that it had always planned to hire a new principal once the school was open.

Several other teachers and an administrator also left during the summer and early fall.

The district did not provide explanations for the other staffers' departures.

The Early Learning Center preschool in the Menlo Park City School District, which opened in 2018, added about 30 students during the 2019-20 school year. And officials from All Five preschool in Menlo Park's Belle Haven neighborhood announced they were raising funds to expand the preschool to infants and toddlers in fall 2020.

Board member, administrator news

In the Las Lomas School

District, Beth Polito, who most recently headed the Woodside Elementary School District, replaced Lisa Cesario, who announced her retirement in February.

After nearly two decades with the Woodside district, Steve Frank filled the district's top management post when Polito left.

Portola Valley School District Superintendent Eric Hartwig resigned at the end of the 2019-20 school year. Roberta Zarea filled that post on July 1.

After 13 years as the Menlo Park district's chief business and operations officer, Ahmad Sheikholeslami left at the end of October for a role in Pleasanton Unified School District.

Two local school boards welcomed new board members this year.

The Menlo Park district's board chose former member Mark Box as its new member in the fall. Box took the seat left vacant by Caroline Lucas, who resigned in August to teach in the district.

When Portola Valley district board member Michael Maffia stepped down from his post in the spring, the board chose Kimberley Morris Rosen to fill the seat. In August, Gulliver La Valle also resigned from the Portola Valley board.

The county canceled the district's school board election in November because the number of qualified candidates in the race was equal to the number of open seats. The candidates for the two open seats — incumbent Brooke Day and Anne Fazioli-Khiari — were

appointed by the board.

Enrollment, tax measure

Enrollment dipped again this year in local elementary school districts, which is mostly attributable to families moving away from the area because they can't afford to live here, district officials say. For example, the Woodside district saw an enrollment decrease of about 6.8% — from 411 students this time last year to 376 students as of Sept. 19.

The Portola Valley School District board passed a resolution this fall to put renewal of the district's parcel tax on the March 3 ballot. Measure O, which passed in 2013 with 69% of the vote and generates about \$1.2 million annually, is set to expire in June 2021. Property owners pay about \$581 per parcel annually, according to the district. Two-thirds of voters must approve the tax for it to be renewed.

Vaping crisis

School districts are grappling with what local officials are calling a national epidemic of teens using electronic cigarettes and other vaping devices. The Sequoia Union High School District reinstated student alcohol and tobacco use surveys because of the health crisis.

While the cigarette smoking rate is 3.1% among youth ages 14 to 18 in San Mateo and San Francisco counties, 20.8% of teens in those counties vaped in 2018, up from 11.7% in 2017, according to the San Mateo County health department's Tobacco Prevention Program. The 2018 rate of teens vaping in the county is "alarmingly high" compared with the statewide



Photo by Magali Gauthier/The Almanac

Construction workers dig around pipes on campus on the first day of school at TIDE Academy.

rate of 10.9%, county officials said.

Teacher pay, test scores

Teachers in the Menlo Park district received a 5% raise for the 2019-20 school year following the school board's passage of a "teacher compensation philosophy" that emphasizes giving teachers pay increases that are higher than what neighboring districts offer. As a result, teachers received a higher raise than they have in recent years.

The Sequoia district raised teachers' salaries by 3.35% for the 2019-20 school year.

Portola Valley district teachers and other certificated staff received pay hikes, including the potential for a bonus and a boost to overtime pay. District teachers, unlike other local educators, since 2013 have received raises based on their performance and their students' performance, and not on the number of years they have been in the district. The new contract established a \$1,500 bonus for teachers who receive a positive annual evaluation. Under

the previous agreement, teachers received a 1% raise for a positive evaluation.

San Mateo County students' standardized test scores remained stagnant during the 2018-19 testing period, but local students still outperformed their peers statewide.

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 test scores consistent with the previous year's testing period.

Power shutoffs

In the fall, Portola Valley schools closed during PG&E's planned power shutoffs. The fire danger-related blackouts lasted several days.

Officials decided to reopen schools before the power was turned back on. Classes took place by lantern light and teachers conducted lessons on whiteboards, sans technology devices. ▀

BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS

continued from page 13

tremendous odds. Nationwide, only 8% of Latino students graduate from college.

"For students at the Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula, it's not a matter of lack of skill, talent or intelligence. The difference is the lack of opportunities that our students have access to," says Esmeralda Ortiz, senior director of high school and post-secondary success programs

BGCP, one of 10 beneficiaries

of The Almanac's Holiday Fund this year, wants kids' futures to depend more upon their own actions than upon the circumstances into which they were born. We are not selective and welcome all K-12 students.

Our goal is to provide students with engaging learning experiences, exposure to opportunities that develop interests and passions, relationships with positive role models, and the academic and life skills required to graduate high school and pursue post-secondary education or training.

In addition to the academic support, enrichment, and social-emotional learning programs for all students, students who are at-risk of falling off-track for school success receive intensive second and third grade literacy interventions and sixth through ninth grade one-on-one advising, social-emotional coaching and

goal-setting support.

BGCP students also have access to five full-time on-site therapists to address mental health challenges, which are a barrier to many students' success.

After participating in BGCP's summer high school transition program, Jorge is flourishing in ninth grade and demonstrating both personal and academic confidence. The next step in BGCP's K-12 continuum is our Future Grads program, which supports 10th grade through post-secondary students to become the first in their family to graduate from college.

BGCP staff will be proud to see Jorge and many BGCP peers join the over 200 Future Grad students who have graduated high school and the 89% that have enrolled in college.

To learn more about the nonprofit, visit bgcp.org. ▀

STARVISTA

continued from page 13

to build self-esteem, understand their feelings, and learn healthy coping mechanisms.

Karina spoke about how nice it felt to be at camp because "all the bad things at home and the drama are pushed away." As camp came to an end, Karina said she left camp feeling supported and cared about, and like she wasn't alone anymore.

With the help of StarVista's Children's Place program, children like Karina can access the support they need and develop skills to build happy, healthy lives. As the longest-running program in the country for children of addicted families, Children's Place has provided more than 15,000 children in San Mateo County with counseling, education, prevention and alternative activities since its inception.

Children's Place is a program of StarVista, a nonprofit organization that has served San Mateo County for 53 years, and is one of the 10 beneficiaries of The Almanac's Holiday Fund. Driven by its mission to deliver high-impact services through counseling, skill development, and crisis prevention, StarVista helps more than 44,000 children, youth, adults and families in the county across 30 programs every year.

Other programs include: transitional housing and independent living skills for homeless and former foster youth; early childhood education and parent support groups; substance abuse treatment for youth with co-occurring mental health issues; the county's only 24/7 crisis intervention and suicide prevention hotline; youth leadership programs; the San Mateo County Pride Center; and counseling in more than 40 countywide schools. ▀

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MENLO PARK 2019

continued from page 5

won the dubious superlative of having the most expensive apartment rents in the Bay Area, according to one analysis by the website RentCafe.com, which evaluated apartment buildings of 50 units or more and found Menlo Park's average apartment price to be \$4,368 a month.

Council members attended a joint meeting with the city councils of Palo Alto and East Palo Alto to talk about the potential impacts of proposed state housing laws and how they would affect local housing policies.

In keeping with this new sense of regional thinking, the council also held joint meetings with Atherton and the Menlo Park Fire Protection District. In addition, council members met with Congresswoman Jackie Speier about shared issues of federal and local importance, like gun violence, housing, the census, the USGS property, and how to support youth. (Just last week, a proposal to open a safe parking program at the USGS property for people living in their vehicles while the land is mostly vacant and before the federal government sells it was nixed because it was determined to be "not feasible.")

New City Hall leadership

Work at City Hall moved forward under the leadership of new City Manager Starla Jerome-Robinson, a longtime city resident who came out of retirement to take the position after former City Manager Alex McIntyre left late in 2018.

The city also made a number of leadership hires and promotions. Justin Murphy, public works director, became deputy city manager; Sean Reinhart, who had been serving in the role in an interim capacity became library services director; and Theresa DellaSanta, the assistant city manager in Atherton, became human resources manager.

Nikki Nagaya was promoted to the position of interim public works director, Deanna Chow was promoted to interim community development director, Chuck Andrews was promoted to assistant community development director, and Clay Curtin was promoted to public engagement manager.

Work moved forward on the city's transportation master plan, a monster project to develop a citywide plan for how to improve transportation for cars, pedestrians and cyclists within the city. The project has been going on since early 2017 and is now expected to be reviewed and adopted by the council in early 2020.

A key part of this project — setting new impact fees that

developers must pay to help cover transportation infrastructure costs their projects generate — was completed this month, substantially increasing the amount the city will be permitted to charge to pay for needed transportation infrastructure. The new fees are expected to go into effect on Feb. 8.

When complete, the transportation master plan is intended to include a list of more than 150 transportation projects citywide, ranked based on whether they will improve safety, manage traffic congestion, reduce greenhouse gases, improve sustainability, or serve children near schools or otherwise sensitive populations.

City work on two major projects — planning for a new Belle Haven library and improving the city's park facilities in the coming decades in its park facilities master plan — coalesced when Facebook made an offer in October to build a new multi-generational community center and library.

Stanford

Other events of significance to Menlo Park this year will be remembered by what doesn't get built — for now. After more than two years of public discussions and debates that Menlo Park residents played a vociferous part in, Stanford University on Nov. 1 abruptly withdrew its proposal to expand its campus by 3.5 million square feet. The university's general use permit application, if approved, would have allowed it to build more than 2.275 million square feet of academic space and space for 2,600 student beds. In addition, in the final days before the university withdrew its application, it had increased its commitment to build 2,172 units of staff housing, up from the 550 it had originally proposed.

At least in Menlo Park, the process highlighted how little say the communities adjacent to the university that are not in Santa Clara County have in negotiating with the university over what it should be required to provide to those communities as it creates new demand on nearby infrastructure and schools.

In the weeks leading up to Stanford's decision, Menlo Park signed onto a statement by a coalition of other San Mateo County stakeholders, heightening tensions with the university by asserting it would not be paying its fair share toward the county. The letter said, "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."

Facebook

Interactions between Facebook and its neighbors also continued to play a part in city life. One example: The police department announced in February it would change its policy of stopping youth on Facebook bikes after the tech company said it hadn't asked law enforcement officials to do so.

Otherwise, Facebook's interactions with Menlo Park mainly revolved around the company's proposal to build "Willow Village," a planned new neighborhood in northeast Menlo Park. The company is working with developer Signature Development Group and will be moving forward with its environmental impact review of the project, a process expected to last most of next year. A draft environmental impact report is tentatively expected to be released in the fall of 2020, according to city staff.

New policies

In the policymaking realm, the council took a number of significant actions. In September, it passed a minimum wage ordinance that will require city businesses to pay all employees at least \$15 an hour starting Jan. 1.

The council also ended the city's red-light camera program, a controversial initiative in effect since 2013, and passed requirements for most new buildings to be all-electric in the new year.

After word got out that some landlords in Menlo Park were trying to skirt the intentions of state legislation that will create as of Jan. 1 legal protections for some renters, evicting their tenants before the new year or enacting major rent hikes, the council enacted the legislation early to help keep those renters in their homes. It also passed a ban on vaping devices and started a youth advisory council that will work with the Parks and Recreation Commission.

Grappling with how to support the city's unhoused residents, the City Council hosted a study session with community experts and nonprofits that work with the homeless. However, the city's policies for supporting the homeless are far from comprehensive or consistent: The Almanac reported that last year, the police department sent a homeless woman long associated with Menlo Park on a one-way taxi ride to Ocean Beach in San Francisco, which the police chief and a police commander defended as part of the city's "boutique approach" to homelessness.

Menlo Park in 2019 also began to feel more acutely the challenges associated with climate change. Over the summer, the city set up cooling centers to offer relief to those without air conditioning.

While Menlo Park residents were fortunate enough to not have



Photo by Adam Pardee

A proposal to remove seven redwood trees at the corner of Ravenswood Avenue and El Camino Real, above, was met with public outcry, triggering a series of appeals to various commissions and ultimately the City Council. Ultimately, the trees were removed, but some were converted into sculptural benches children now use for storytime at the library, below. In the photo, Audrey, 2, reads with her nanny, Maribel Cortes, on one of the benches in August.



Photo by Magali Gauthier/The Almanac



Photo by Sammy Dallal/The Almanac

Workers on Nov. 27 took down the marquee of Menlo Park's Guild Theatre on El Camino Real. The site is being converted into a live music and event venue by the local nonprofit Peninsula Arts Guild.

their power shut off by PG&E as a preventative measure against wildfires, there have been ongoing conversations with nearby

agencies like the MidPeninsula Regional Open Space District

See **MENLO PARK 2019**, page 17

Civic center groundbreaking the highlight of the year

By Angela Swartz
Almanac Staff Writer

Atherton broke ground on its long-awaited civic center project in April. The \$31.6 million project, scheduled for completion in 2021, includes a police and administration facilities, building and planning offices, and a library.

Still determining the fine points of how to pay for the massive project, town officials are leaning toward implementing a “certificates of participation” financing mechanism (COPs) at about \$7 million over a 10-year term for construction costs. Without an influx of cash, the town’s general fund is projected to be in the red by \$1.9 million by October 2020, according to staff.

The town also had several administrative changes and tackled ongoing issues, such as security, gasoline-powered leaf blowers, traffic and prolonged home construction projects.

Burglary spree

The town decided to explore adding automated license plate readers, known as ALPRs, in

town following a rash of 20 home burglaries between November 2018 and February. ALPRs are mounted on police cars or on fixtures such as road signs and bridges.

Some residents questioned how their privacy can be protected if there are cameras recording their movements daily.

The town already has some license plate readers, but began testing additional readers in Holbrook-Palmer Park in December.

Traffic concerns

In July, the City Council asked staff to study priority projects to keep traffic moving on the most heavily used streets.

Council members said 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.

In November, the council amended a contract with transportation consulting firm TJKM to include an additional fee of up to \$149,300 for community

2019
YEAR IN
REVIEW



Photo by Magali Gauthier/The Almanac

Mayor Bill Widmer addresses the crowd at the Civic Center groundbreaking ceremony held on April 23.

outreach efforts related to traffic-calming projects in town.

Construction

The council voted in October 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. A harsher penalty, town

officials have said, might help speed up projects, which create noise and more traffic from construction vehicles.

The ordinance laying out construction rules grants a 30-day grace period before daily fines were imposed, starting at \$200; they increased to \$400 after two months. The fines escalated to

\$1,000 a day when projects go 121 days beyond the time limit. Before it was amended, there was a \$250,000 cap to the penalties.

Leaf blower restrictions

The council examined the town’s policy on the use of

See **ATHERTON**, page 20

MENLO PARK 2019

continued from page 16

about how to better protect the area’s surrounding open spaces from wildfire risks.

The county is also working to expand its flood district as part of broader goals to create a “resilient shoreline” to protect the area against the threats posed by sea level rise. In December, the council approved a resolution declaring a climate emergency, and expressed support for developing a new climate action plan built around a goal of making the city carbon-neutral by 2030.

Business

There was also a lot of change in the city’s business community. Openings included the Saint Frank Coffee kiosk at 1020 Alma St. and Mr. Green Bubble at 604 Santa Cruz Ave.

Local institutions Draeger’s and Peet’s underwent interior revamps, and Menlo Grill reopened as Menlo Tavern. Applewood Pizza was replaced by Mountain Mike’s Pizza.

The Oasis, a longtime beer garden in a historic building, was replaced by a venture capital firm office. The Guild, Menlo Park’s last movie theater, shut down in September, and construction is underway to transform it into a live music venue, a process expected to last two years and narrow southbound El Camino Real during the day

to one lane for about six months.

The community

Within the community residents banded together on several different fronts. A new nonprofit supporting the arts, Menlo Park Public Art, emerged and announced plans to place an 18-foot-tall sculpture at Fremont Park.

Menlo Together, a new nonprofit focused on advocacy supporting housing and transit-oriented development, organized an event exploring the historical implications of Menlo Park’s history of race-based unequal housing and school zoning policies.

And outside of any formal organization, residents rallied together in an attempt to save seven redwoods planted on top of a parking garage at the prominent corner of El Camino Real and Ravenswood Avenue. While the trees were eventually cut down, some of the redwood logs were carved into benches now used for library story time sessions at the Civic Center, and the property owner agreed to plant about 50 new trees throughout Belle Haven.

During the year, The Almanac highlighted the impressive actions of a number of people who live, work or study in the community and who are doing interesting things. Menlo Park resident Nicole Taylor took on the challenge of righting a troubled Silicon Valley Community Foundation; Mark Tuschman

showcased compelling photographs depicting the many faces and experiences of immigrants in the area.

Catherine Martineau, executive director of Canopy, helped update the city’s heritage tree ordinance and pursue tree plantings throughout Menlo Park and neighboring communities. Wrestlers Gracie Figueroa and Alleida Martinez, freshmen on Menlo College’s Women’s Wrestling team, enabled their team to bring home the title of the inaugural National Association of Intercollegiate Athletics Women’s Invitational.

Menlo School student Santy Mendoza, who is undocumented, made it into Harvard. We learned more about Menlo-Atherton High School grad Brian Tetrud, who built Ladera Foods using a family granola recipe, and Lin Howery of Sharon Heights, who preserves fruit by hand-crafting jams out of her home. Elsewhere in Sharon Heights, Mike Goedde launched a business selling cardboard costumes for kids, which he makes with help from his brother in his garage. Intellectual property lawyer and Finance and Audit Committee member Soody Tronson developed a new device to help nursing mothers.

The new year

Looking ahead to the new year, a major challenge in 2020 will be to ensure that all city residents are counted during the 2020 census.



Photo by Magali Gauthier/The Almanac

Menlo Park resident Nicole Taylor, president and CEO of the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, poses for a portrait at the company’s office in Mountain View on May 1.

The Belle Haven neighborhood is expected to be a hard-to-count census tract, based on some of its demographic characteristics and the portion of its population living in non-traditional housing situations.

Leading the city as mayor will be Cecilia Taylor, Belle Haven’s first elected representative in three decades and the city’s first African American woman to serve in the position, with District 2 representative Drew Combs, who is also African American, serving as vice mayor. As occurs every year, the City Council is expected to meet in January to start ironing out its new work plan for the 2020 calendar year.

And of course, 2020 will be a presidential election year with a

series of significant local elections. On March 3, primaries for the District 13 state Senate seat and the District 24 state Assembly seat will take place.

In November, the city will complete its transition to district representation on the City Council. There will be two council seats up for election to choose representatives for Menlo Park districts 1 and 3. The District 1 seat, which covers the Sharon Heights and Stanford Hills neighborhood, is now occupied by two incumbents, Catherine Carlton and Ray Mueller. The District 3 seat, which covers the neighborhoods of Linfield Oaks, Vintage Oaks, Park Forest and Felton Gables neighborhoods, has no representative at present. ▣

Housing, wildfire preparedness top Portola Valley issues

By Rick Radin
Almanac Staff Writer

Portola Valley worked in 2019 to cope with the threat of new rules from Sacramento about the need to build affordable housing and other challenges that some residents feel could imperil the “rural character” of the community.

The community also dealt with the threat of wildfires and related PG&E power shutoffs, began consideration of an application from Neely Wine to allow wine tasting and wine club events on its property, and hosted a political demonstration in town when President Donald Trump paid a visit in August to nearby Los Trancos Woods, among other highlights.

Creating affordable housing

The Town Council formed a committee to research using town-owned property to build affordable housing, but the panel found very little land available that would be appropriate.

The state has passed an array

of new laws that will affect a new Regional Housing Needs Assessment that will begin in 2022 and could require the town to plan for 100 to 200 units of housing over the next 10 years, with some percentage being below-market-rate units.

So far, identification of town-owned properties, which would be the cheapest to build on, has fallen short.

The committee identified a small segment near the Town Center that could be used to build four condominiums, but the requirements from new state regulations promise to be much higher, according to Town Manager Jeremy Dennis.

The council may have the option of purchasing land to build housing and is considering a plot next to Roberts Market near the intersection of Alpine and Portola roads, but the amount of money available is limited, town officials note.

The council also passed an accessory dwelling unit ordinance in March, which allows homeowners to add units as

large as 1,200 square feet on properties that are less than 3,500 square feet, and units as big as 1,500 square feet on parcels that are 3,500 square feet or larger.

Previously, second units were allowed only on residential parcels that are an acre or larger unless they were inside an existing structure.

Stanford project advances

Stanford University began pursuing a plan in March to build 27 faculty homes and 12 affordable rental units on property it owns known as the Stanford Wedge, located on Alpine Road between Westridge Road and Golden Oak Drive. The rental units would contribute to the town’s affordable housing quota, along with possible faculty units at Woodside Priory School.

Each single-family home would be on its own lot, and each home would be two stories with three or four bedrooms and a study.

“Per the current schedule, which is subject to change, the EIR will be completed and the



Photo by Magali Gauthier/The Almanac

Lucy Neely, with her dogs, outside the building in which the Neely Winery tasting room would be if permits are approved.

final project reviewed by the town council in 2020, with development not occurring until 2021 at the earliest,” wrote Joel Berman, Stanford community relations and land use communications officer, in an email.

Dealing with wildfire threat

In April, the Town Council

formed a committee to look at ways to reduce the threat from wildfires that have been raging across Northern California. The committee reported its recommendations in November, which include adopting “reach codes” that go beyond state

See **PORTOLA VALLEY 2019**, page 20

Zoning relief, power shutoffs top Woodside news

By Rick Radin
Almanac Staff Writer

Woodside took a step toward more inclusiveness in 2019 as the town tried to accommodate the needs of the more-affordable Glens neighborhood residents to upgrade their homes. The town also joined Portola Valley in signing a new solid waste contract and coping with PG&E’s fire prevention power shutoffs.

The Glens neighborhood has a variety of lot sizes and many residents on smaller lots objected to zoning rules that prohibited them from adding on to their properties.

In November, the Town Council took action on recommendations from the Planning Commission that allowed Glens homeowners with the smallest lots to add up to 500 square feet to their homes.

It also approved a recommendation to allow residents to count parking on the road right-of-way but off the pavement toward meeting the requirement for off-street parking, furthering the right to maximize the use of their lots, and also approved incentives for building garages, among other changes.

The Planning Commission and the planning department had been working with the Glens community on the revised rules for more than a year.

Horses not for everyone

In October, the Town Council approved public funding to replace a washed-out equestrian bridge after the Planning Commission passed on recommending the funding by a 3-3 vote, with one member absent.

The bridge, to be placed across Bear Gulch Creek near the intersection of Woodside Road and Why Worry Lane, will reopen the Center Trail, a riding trail that has been in use for more than 100 years, according to the staff report on the project. The trail closed following a storm in 2017.

Planning Commissioner Sani El-Fishawy, who led the argument against approving the project at the commission’s Sept. 4 meeting, came to the council meeting to repeat the reasons he’s opposed to using public funds for horse trails.

“There’s a yawning gap between horse people and non-horse people,” El-Fishawy said. “The bridge project doesn’t meet the condition of a public good, and it divides the community and exacerbates tribalism.”

New waste disposal contract

In November, the council overcame doubts about signing a single-bidder contract by accepting an offer from GreenWaste Recovery calling for an average 32% increase in rates for curbside service.

So-called “concierge service” customers, whose property drivers must walk or drive on to empty disposal carts, received a rate hike ranging from 50% to more than 400%, according to Sloan Vasquez McAfee, the solid waste consulting firm that negotiated the contracts with Woodside and Portola Valley over the past 18 months.

The top-end concierge service increases apply only to customers who need drivers to drive from 100 feet to more than 400 feet onto their properties to reach the carts.

The move followed the Portola Valley council’s approval of a virtually identical contract on Nov. 13.

Power shutoffs hit hills areas

PG&E implemented three planned power blackouts in October intended to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire ignitions from its energized power lines that could fall during inclement weather.

About 1,000 customers in San Mateo County, including portions of Woodside, lost power around 1 a.m. on Oct. 24 as part of PG&E’s planned shutoff, according to the utility. Power was fully restored in the county just before 6 p.m. that day, according to a San Mateo County Office of Emergency Services alert (SMC Alert).

PG&E also shut off power to 738,000 customers in 34 counties starting on Oct. 9, including

nearly 15,000 customers in San Mateo County. Many streets in Woodside lost power in that shutoff. Woodside customers who lost power generally had it restored within about 24 hours.

The largest shutoff of the month began around 8 p.m. on Oct. 26 and affected about 57,218 customers in the county, including portions of Woodside, as well as parts of cities stretching as far north as South San Francisco and south to Redwood City, according to PG&E.

Women out in the cold?

An Almanac article in March questioned whether women were being discriminated against when trying to participate in town government.

Currently, there are 17 men and two women in positions of authority, including the Town Council and the Planning Commission.

Female majorities were common on the Planning Commission from 2006 to 2015, and on the architectural review board from 2009 to 2014, The Almanac found. Over 12 years — between 2006 and 2018 — neither panel had fewer than three women members.

In 2018, the number of women on the architectural review board dropped to one: Thalia Lubin, a member since 2010 and the only licensed architect on the board. Then, on Feb. 12, the council voted 4-3 to appoint Christopher Matthew Green, who is a

non-licensed architect, and not reappoint Lubin.

The council interviewed the candidates in public. The town code requires appointment of a licensed architect to the board “if one is available.” Green, the director of retail design at Apple, is a practicing architect, according to his application, but does not have a license, he told the council.

The council is “systematically eliminating well-qualified women who want to serve and have a right to do so,” a former volunteer said. “One would think, with record numbers of women elected to office in the recent midterm (national) elections (and) in a state with two female senators, (a state) that also requires boards of publicly traded companies to have female members, that (council members) might at least be a little concerned about how it appears when the all-male council votes for all male applicants.”

Woodside deaths in 2019

Lifetime Woodside resident Dolores Degan; structural engineer Bill Menta, who lived most of his life in Woodside; horticulturist and Woodside Library benefactor Timmy Gallagher; Tony Rose, founding superintendent of the Portola Valley School District; and former town council member, geologist and equestrian Carroll Ann Hodges passed away this year. ■

Artscene

PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCES IN ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Picasso pays a visit to Palo Alto

By Sheryl Nonnenberg

Pace Palo Alto is not a large gallery space, but it has been expertly and imaginatively transformed with each exhibition. For the current show, “Seeing Picasso: Maker of the Modern,” the gallery has become very museum-like, with a light barrier drapery in the front window, security guards and an optional audio guide. The reason for such formality is Pablo Picasso — perhaps the most famous modern artist and a name familiar to most, either because of his art or his turbulent private life.

“Seeing Picasso” (on view until Feb. 16) is a mini-retrospective, with paintings, drawings, ceramics and sculptures from the entire arc of the artist’s long and prolific career. It’s an opportunity to view seldom-seen works from private collections as well as examples of his work that would ordinarily require a trip to New York City.

“Marc Glimcher, president and CEO of Pace Gallery, has worked on this show for 18 months,” said Elizabeth Sullivan, Pace Palo Alto president. “He really wanted to bring Picasso to Palo Alto and we are thrilled that the lenders also wanted to do a show here.”

Some of the pieces are from unnamed private collectors, but there are also loans from the Fundacion Almine y Bernard Ruiz-Picasso para el Arte, which is overseen by the artist’s grandson and his wife.

Pace is a sales gallery, but the purpose of this show is mainly educational, with only seven of the 35 objects available for sale. Sullivan said she hopes there will be a lot of outreach with the show, especially given the name-recognition of Picasso (1881-1973).

“We want to do special programs for local school children, bringing them into the gallery and doing projects,” she said.

Information about the artist is imparted in the entry gallery by means of an illustrated timeline that details all of the major events during his life. It is a remarkable chronology of a man who came from humble beginnings in Malaga, Spain, and was, from the outset, a child prodigy.

As a young man, he settled in Paris, endured two world wars, poverty and the derision of critics. He eventually became a leader in several of the most important avant-garde art movements that informed modern art as we know it today.

The second and third galleries are installed in chronological order, allowing the viewer to fully grasp the well-known periods that delineate Picasso’s work. His early work, characterized by his training in the classical approach to representation, is exemplified by “Lola with a



Image courtesy of Artists Rights Society and Pace Gallery

Femme la Main sur une Cle (Dora Maar), 1938

Doll” (1896) and “The Dead Casagemas” (1901). Both are true-to-life portraits, undertaken in a realistic style. There is obvious tenderness toward the subjects of these works, especially in the portrayal of Casagemas, whose suicide would send Picasso into a deep depression that lasted several years.

Several charcoal drawings of women reflect the artist’s transition from realism to abstraction. By 1910, he had begun to fracture the human form, as can be seen in “Standing Woman.” This would be the beginning of his “analytical cubism” phase, with monochromatic canvasses full of overlapping forms.

“Bust of a Man” (1912) is a study in geometry and how the artist strove to draw the figure from multiple angles. His “synthetic cubism” phase is included here in “Sliced Pear and Pipe” (1914).

Always a bit of a shape-shifter, Picasso next took on a Neoclassicism, apparently inspired by a trip to Italy, where

he saw paintings from the Renaissance. In “Study of Hands” (1920) and “Three Women by the Fountain” (1921) the artist has returned to realism, although the figures are quite rounded and bulky.

Picasso flirted with surrealism, although he never became an official member of that group. Examples here include both sculptures done in bronze and plaster and a very enigmatic charcoal on canvas entitled “Woman with a Flower” (1932). In what seems like a

continuous line, the artist has created a seated figure with both organic and geometric forms.

It has been noted that Picasso’s style changed dramatically with each of his love affairs. There are extraordinary examples of Picasso paying homage to wives and lovers here, beginning with a sweet portrait of Marie-Therese Walter. She is painted in an almost child-like manner, with pastel colors and the hint of a smile.

In contrast, “Woman with Hand on a Key” (1938) depicts photographer Dora Maar in strong shades of green and purple, her facial features disjointed.

“Seated Woman” (1949) is a portrait of Francoise Gilot, the mother of two of Picasso’s children and the only woman to have ever left him. Her face is sketchily drawn, while her body is a bulbous blue shape. The overlapping forms suggest the outlines of an ochre-colored chair, with just enough detail for the mind to fill in the gaps.

There are numerous examples of Picasso’s ceramic work, undertaken in the latter part of his life. “Bikini Vase” (1961) was created using red earthenware in a classic vase shape, onto which the artist has painted a bright yellow bathing suit top and bottom. It’s a fun and clever piece and reflects the artist’s *joie de vivre*.

The latest piece in the exhibition is “Head of a Man with Beret” from 1971, two years prior to his death. It is, perhaps, a sombre self-portrait done in an amalgam of styles by an artist who lived life to the fullest and left an indelible legacy.

There is a lot to take in here, including an audio-visual tour narrated by Stanford University professor Alexander Nemerov, which perhaps warrants multiple visits. Sullivan noted: “Because there are so many pieces in this small space, we want you to keep coming back.”

Sheryl Nonnenberg is a freelance writer.

IF YOU GO

What: “Seeing Picasso: Maker of the Modern.”

Where: Pace Gallery, 229 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto.

When: Through Feb. 16.

Gallery is open Tuesday-Saturday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Cost: Free.



Image courtesy of Artists Rights Society and Pace Gallery

Tête d'homme au béret, 1971

Public Notices

995 Fictitious Name Statement

LINDSEY HUTCHINSON WELLNESS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 283186
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Lindsey Hutchinson Wellness, located at 1388 Elder Avenue, Menlo park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
LINDSEY WALKER HUTCHINSON
1388 Elder Avenue
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 N/A.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on November 21, 2019.
(ALM Dec. 11, 18, 25, 2019; Jan. 1, 2020)

LA STANZA
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 283287
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
La Stanza, located at 651 Oak Grove Ave., Suite H, Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
ANGELO CUCCO
1364 Laurel St. #1
San Carlos, CA 94070
MIGUEL ANGEL PRADO LUNA
1235 Jefferson Ave. #217
Redwood City, CA 94062
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 December 6, 2019.
(ALM Dec. 18, 25, 2019; Jan. 1, 8, 2020)

MALLET SPORTS AND ENTERTAINMENT
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 283222
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Mallett Sports and Entertainment, located at 50 Woodside Plaza #106, Redwood City, CA 94061, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
MALLET SPORTS LLC
50 Woodside Plaza #106
Redwood City, CA 94061
CA
This business is conducted by: A Limited Liability Company.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 08/20/2014.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on November 26, 2019.
(ALM Dec. 18, 25, 2019; Jan. 1, 8, 2020)

997 All Other Legals

SUMMONS
(CITACION JUDICIAL)

CASE NUMBER: 19CIV00085
(Numero del Caso):

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT:
(AVISO AL DEMANDADO):
MAYSA HAMZA
and DOES 1 — 10, Inclusive

YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF:
(LO ESTA DEMANDADO EL DEMANDANTE):
VLADIMIR ROZNYATOVSKI and TATIANA BAYEVA

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond within 30 days. Read the Information below.
You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form if you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the

California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.

There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service. If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center (www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp), or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and cost on any settlement or arbitration award of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case. AVISO! Lo han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede decidir en su contra sin escuchar su version. Lea la información a continuación.

Tiene 30 DIAS DE CALENDARIO despues de que le entreguen esta citacion y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta corte y hacer que se entregue una copia al demandante. Una carta o una llamada telefonica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la corte. Es posible que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y mas informacion en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California (www.sucorte.ca.gov), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede mas cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentacion, pida al secretario de la corte que le de un formulario de exencion de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder el caso por incumplimiento y la corte le podra quitar su sueldo, dinero y bienes sin mas advertencia. Hay otros requisitos legales. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remision a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro. Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, (www.lawhelpcalifornia.org), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, (www.sucorte.ca.gov) o poniendose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. AVISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperacion de \$10,000 o mas de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesion de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desechar el caso.

The name and address of the court is:
(El nombre y direccion de la corte es):
SAN MATEO SUPERIOR COURT
400 COUNTY CENTER,
REDWOOD CITY, CA 94063

The name, address and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is:
(El nombre, la direccion y el numero de telefono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es):
David S. Henshaw
1871 The Alameda, Ste. 333
San Jose, CA 95126
Phone: (408) 533-1075

DATE: January 8, 2019
(Fecha):
Neal Taniguchi
Clerk, by /s/ _____, Deputy
(Secretario) (Adjunto)
NOTICE TO THE PERSON SERVED: You are served
(ALM Dec. 18, 25, 2019; Jan. 1, 8, 2020)

PORTOLA VALLEY 2019

continued from page 18

requirements, including banning all combustible roofing and fencing materials, requiring ember-resistant vents and enclosed eaves, and installing multi-pane tempered glass windows and skylights in all new construction.

PG&E implemented planned power blackouts in October intended to reduce the risk of catastrophic wildfire ignitions from its energized power lines that could fall during inclement weather. Portola Valley was threatened by three blackouts and was affected by two of them.

The largest shutoff of the month began around 8 p.m. on Oct. 26 and affected about 57,218 customers in the county, including portions of Portola Valley.

Winery tasting room plan

A plan to allow wine tasting and wine club public events at Neely Wine at 555 Portola Road came before the Portola Valley Planning Commission in April.

The proposal has met with some resistance from neighbors near the winery over possible noise, parking, and other concerns. Some neighbors expressed concerns that the idea threatened the maintenance of Portola Valley as a semi-rural community, while the Neely family has maintained that it needs to find ways to enhance the financial viability of the 230-acre property it acquired in 1995 to maintain it as open space.

Planning Commission meetings in November and December explored the compatibility of the tasting room proposal with Portola Valley's general plan and zoning regulations, while Neely has reduced the number of events the winery was seeking permission to hold.

Some opponents argue that the wine club expansion would draw in more visitors and traffic from outside Portola Valley, while

Neely has maintained that they are principally targeting town residents in their wine club plans.

New waste disposal contract

In November, the town accepted an offer from GreenWaste Recovery calling for an average 32% increase in rates for curbside service.

So-called "concierge service" customers, who need drivers to walk on or drive onto their properties to empty disposal carts, received a rate hike ranging from 50% to more than 400%, according to Sloan Vasquez McAfee, the solid waste consulting firm that negotiated contracts with Portola Valley and Woodside over 18 months.

The move preceded the Woodside council's approval of a virtually identical contract on Nov. 19.

Alpine Inn reopens

The historic Alpine Inn, purchased by a group of Portola Valley investors in 2018, reopened in August to much fanfare. The remodeling work resulted in a spruced-up interior, kitchen and expanded food and beverage service in a larger outdoor seating area.

According to a published report, the investor group paid more than \$3.8 million for the property.

Workers began remodeling the 167-year-old inn in February. They were able to rebuild the original coolers, but had to start over in the kitchen because it was "illegal, all home stuff, needed upgrading, had no sink, no grease trap," said Greg St. Claire of the Avenir Restaurant Group that manages the inn.

Workers peeled away five layers of old linoleum before covering the floor with barn wood reclaimed from Half Moon Bay.

The initial reaction to the reopening was huge as residents flocked to the redesigned inn, jamming the parking lot on weekends and evenings.

Founded in 1852 as the Casa

De Tableta roadhouse, where country folk could gather to play cards, dance and drink, the property has changed names and owners multiple times, and is registered as the second-oldest continually operating tavern in the state.

Leaf blower ban

In January, the Town Council voted to ban gas-powered leaf blowers to reduce ambient noise and air pollution in the community and followed that up in December by offering a gas-powered leaf blower buy-back program that will provide incentives to switching to electric blowers. The switch can be costly. Whereas a typical gasoline-powered blower costs between \$400 and \$600, an electric blower with all its associated equipment currently costs \$1,900, Public Works Director Howard Young told the council. Some jobs will require gardeners to carry a spare battery, available currently for another \$850, Young said.

Leaf blowers kick up fugitive dust — a term the California Air Resources Board defines as particulate matter that is not a side effect of fuel combustion. Particulate matter, according to a town staff report and a 2012 report from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District, is "by far ... the greatest harm to public health in the Bay Area."

Death of town leaders

Stanford professor, geophysicist and explorer Sheldon Breiner, and George Comstock, a pioneer in the computer industry who served as mayor of Portola Valley during his one term on the Town Council and held a seat on the Architectural and Site Control Commission for eight years, died in 2019.

Others who died this year include Sam Halsted, who served on Portola Valley's first Town Council, and civic volunteer and pilot Bud Eisberg. ▣

ATHERTON 2019

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gasoline-powered leaf blowers in town with an eye toward reducing noise and air pollution.

In September, council members asked staff to estimate the amount of time it would take to look into restricting the use of gasoline-powered blowers. The staff found that researching and amending the current ordinance would cost between \$33,800 and \$38,800, according to a staff report.

The council opted to begin the project this fiscal year, which closes at the end of June, following a budget amendment in February.

Leadership changes

City Attorney Bill Conners

announced in early August that he would retire at the end of December. Conners joined the town in 2011.

Earlier this month, the council hired Mona Ebrahimi of the law firm Kronick Moskovitz Tiedemann & Girard for the town's city attorney services.

The council honored outgoing Conners and Assistant City Attorney Jennifer Larson during the same meeting. Conners' last day in his role is Dec. 31.

Theresa DellaSanta, city clerk/deputy city manager, left her post in May to take a human resources manager role with the city of Menlo Park. Anthony Suber took over her position in May.

The council on Dec. 18 elected Rick DeGolia as mayor and Elizabeth Lewis as vice mayor to

serve during the 2020 calendar year.

A new neighbor

Stephen and Ayesha Curry purchased a \$31 million home in Atherton this year, according to a Variety media report.

The Golden State Warriors point guard and his wife, a celebrity chef and cookbook author, bought the three-story home, which includes a guest house and detached garage, according to the report.

The purchase of the property this year follows comments Curry made in April that he was considering a move because of a potentially difficult commute from his home in the East Bay to the Chase Center, the Warriors' new stadium in San Francisco. ▣

Call Alicia Santillan at 650-223-6578 or
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with your legal advertising needs.
The deadline is Thursday at 5pm.

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

'Pride and Prejudice' TheatreWorks Silicon Valley brings literature's most infamous battle of the sexes to life. Through Jan. 4, 2020; times vary. \$34-\$108. Lucie Stern Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. theatre-works.org

Concerts

Charlie Musselwhite Blues legend Charlie Musselwhite puts on a holiday performance, with Valerie Troutt opening the show. Dec. 29, 7:30-10:30 p.m. \$25. Oshman Family JCC, 3921 Fabian Way, Palo Alto. eventbrite.com

Free Organ Recital Weekly noon-time organ recitals on the two Flentrop organs at All Saints Episcopal Church. Each recital includes at least one work by Johann Sebastian Bach. Tuesdays through May 26, 2020, 12:15-12:45 p.m. Free. All Saints Episcopal Church, 555 Waverley St., Palo Alto. asaints.org

Festivals & Fairs

Christmas Tree Lane Fulton Street lights up this Christmas season, marking the 79th annual Christmas Tree Lane event. Dec. 25-31, 5-11 p.m. Free. Christmas Tree Lane, 1705 Fulton St., Palo Alto. christmastreelane.org

Museums & Exhibits

A Gift of Art from Marilyn F. Symmes Marilyn F. Symmes' gift to the Cantor Arts Center is an eclectic selection of prints and drawings highlighting different ways of thinking about artworks as both images and objects. Through May 18, 2020; times vary;

closed Tuesdays. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 328 Lomita Drive, Stanford. museum.stanford.edu

Baylug Lego Holiday Show Bay Area Lego User Group and the Bay Area Lego Train Club co-host the annual holiday show featuring train layouts, Bay Area landmarks, castles, miniature cities, sculptures, portraits and more all made out of Legos. Through Jan. 5, 2020, 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m. \$3. The Museum of American Heritage, 351 Homer Ave., Palo Alto. moah.org

'Cointraptions' "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. Through Feb. 16, 2020; Friday-Sunday, 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Free. The Museum of American Heritage, 351 Homer Ave., Palo Alto. moah.org

Edward Weston and Ansel Adams This exhibit features landscapes, still lifes, nudes and portraits created by Edward Weston in Mexico and Ansel Adams in the American southwest. Through Jan. 6, 2020; 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed Tuesdays. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 328 Lomita Drive, Stanford. museum.stanford.edu

Holidays at The Main Gallery The Holidays at The Main Gallery exhibit features 17 local artists working with various media. Through Dec. 30, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Free. The Main Gallery, 1018 Main St., Redwood City. sanfrancisco.eventful.com

'Jordan Casteel: Returning the Gaze' Featuring paintings made in the last five years, Jordan Casteel's large-scale portraits of Harlem community members are intimate portrayals of often overlooked members of society. Through Feb. 2, 2020, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed Tuesdays. Free. Cantor Arts

Center, 328 Lomita Drive, Stanford. museum.stanford.edu

'Left of Center' "Left of Center" exhibition seeks to show how modes of art-making that originated on the West Coast decisively changed the topography of American modernism. Through Sept. 20, 2020; times vary; closed Tuesdays. Free. Anderson Collection, 314 Lomita Drive, Stanford. events.stanford.edu

'The Melancholy Museum' Mark Dion, known for his work on the history of museums and their collections, delves into the original Stanford family collection to create a cabinet of curiosities for the 21st century. Ongoing. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 328 Lomita Drive, Stanford. museum.stanford.edu

'Our Sacred Coast' Artist Ian Wing's "Our Sacred Coast" is an exhibition of landscapes, including plein air and studio pieces, depicting select locations across the California coastline. Through Jan. 20, 2020; times vary. Community School of Music and Arts, 230 San Antonio Circle, Mountain View. arts4all.org

'Process and Pattern' Memory, history and making collide in the work of contemporary artists McArthur Binion, Charles Gaines, Julie Mehretu and Analia Saban. Through Feb. 17, 2020, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed Tuesdays. Anderson Collection, 314 Lomita Drive, Stanford. events.stanford.edu

Richard Diebenkorn See an intimate and interactive installation of Bay Area artist Richard Diebenkorn's paintings and sketchbooks that shed light on the artist's process, including his shift from figurative to more abstract work. Ongoing; times vary; closed Tuesdays. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 328 Lomita Drive, Stanford. museum.stanford.edu

'Surf Sequence' "Surf Sequence" explores Ansel Adams' relationship with water in

different forms with a series of spontaneously captured surf images. Through May 18, 2020; times vary. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 328 Lomita Drive, Stanford. events.stanford.edu

'West x Southwest' The Capital Group Foundation's gift of 1,000 photographs includes works by American photographers Ansel Adams, Edward Curtis, John Gutmann, Helen Levitt, Wright Morris, Gordon Parks and Edward Weston. Through Jan. 5, 2020, 12:30 p.m. Free. Stanford University, 450 Jane Stanford Way, Stanford. events.stanford.edu

Galleries

'Collusion' "Collusion" is a joint exhibition by Inna Chorneykina and Marina Goldberg, featuring oil and watercolor paintings of colorful landscape, cityscape and still life scenes. Through Dec. 31, 10:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; closed Sundays. Free. Portola Art Gallery, 75 Arbor Road, Menlo Park. portolaart-gallery.com

Film

'Waste Land' "Waste Land" follows renowned artist Vik Muniz as he journeys from Brooklyn to Brazil and the world's largest garbage dump, Jardim Gramacho, located on the outskirts of Rio de Janeiro. Dec. 26, 6-8 p.m. Free. Anderson Collection, Stanford University, 450 Jane Stanford Way, Stanford. arts.stanford.edu

Outdoor Recreation

'A Road Less Traveled' Docents Stephen Buckhout, Padma Satisha and Paul Billig lead a 4-mile hike on Old Page Mill Trail to explore a section of the former road to Page's Mill. Dec. 25, 10 a.m.-1 p.m. Free. Skyline Ridge Preserve, Highway 35, La Honda. opensource.org

Winter Waterfowl Embark on a birding expedition with docents Kate Gudmundson, Laura Levin, Mary Brunkhorst and Dennis Smith to look for waterfowl and other birds visiting the San Francisco Bay as they migrate along the Pacific Flyway. Jan. 1, 2020, 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Free. Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Area, Shoreline Boulevard, Mountain View. opensource.org

Health & Wellness

Windhover Tour Open for public tours every Saturday, the Windhover building is a meditative space built with the intention of promoting mental and spiritual well-being. Ongoing; Saturdays, 11:00 a.m.-noon. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 370 Santa Teresa St., Stanford. museum.stanford.edu

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"The Big Lift" by Kate Bradshaw

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Artistic Photo

"Dreams come true" by Magali Gauthier

Enterprise Story

"One family's battle to stay in Menlo Park" by Kate Bradshaw

Land Use Reporting

"It takes a village" by Kate Bradshaw

Profile

"Looking for trouble" by Barbara Wood

Editorial Comment

"Questions surround councilwoman's trip to China" by Renee Batti

News Photo

"MP to distribute 1,000 'N95' masks" by Magali Gauthier

In-Depth Reporting

"The long road to the classroom" by Angela Swartz

News Photo

"Taking a stand" by Michelle Le

Profile Story

"Portola Valley's passionate pollinator" by Maggie Mah



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Viewpoint

IDEAS, THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS ABOUT LOCAL ISSUES

LETTER

Our readers write

Gratitude during this Christmas season

Editor:

Menlo Park Mayor Ray Mueller's recent State of the City address centered on his gratitude to both the formal and informal leaders in our fair city. His thank-yous were thoughtfully written.

Mr. Mayor, you also deserve a big thank you for all that you've done for us this past year.

During this Christmas season my wife and I eat out and shop locally quite a lot. I've noticed how special our city and our downtown feel this year. I want to thank three groups in the city who were mentioned by Ray who are worthy of follow-up recognition.

The first group deserving a big thank-you are the advocates for bicycle safety lanes throughout the city. As I drive from the Willows neighborhood to downtown I notice the upgraded street markings on Middlefield Road in front of Menlo-Atherton High School. That is a recent example of this important addition to our city's modernization and infrastructure.

Second is our Chamber of Commerce. Over the years they've been leaders in helping to beautify downtown. Their members have

helped stimulate the planting of trees on Santa Cruz Avenue and El Camino Real, and the adding of lighting to the Santa Cruz street trees — and they always hang that "Shop Menlo Park" banner over Santa Cruz Avenue encouraging support for local merchants.

Recently the Chamber spoke to the City Council encouraging them not to cut funding for Christmas lights on the trees in Fremont Park, on El Camino Real at Ravenswood Avenue, and in Belle Haven. I personally love the lighted "Charlie Brown" tree in Fremont Park.

The third group I so appreciate are all of the advocates for heritage trees throughout our city. We are so fortunate to live in a city which is integrated with such a wonderful urban forest. (Have you noticed how beautiful the fall colors have been this year!)

I'm grateful for lots this Christmas season, but especially for the vibrancy and beauty of our excellent downtown. Happy Hanukkah and Merry Christmas to all.

Clem Molony

Menalto Avenue, Menlo Park



MIDDLE PLAZA

CONSTRUCTION ALERT

Night Work on El Camino Real –
Starting December 2019

WHAT:

Middle Plaza construction crews will be doing night work and partially closing travel lanes on El Camino Real between Middle Ave and Ravenswood Ave in both directions for the demolition and installation of West Bay sanitary sewer lines. For a given direction of travel, a maximum of two lanes of travel will be shut down each night, leaving at least one lane of travel open at all times. Work will take place at night when traffic volumes along El Camino Real are lower.

WHEN:

Mid-December, 2019 – mid-January 2020

Construction schedules are approximate and subject to change due to weather and unforeseen conditions.

WORK HOURS:

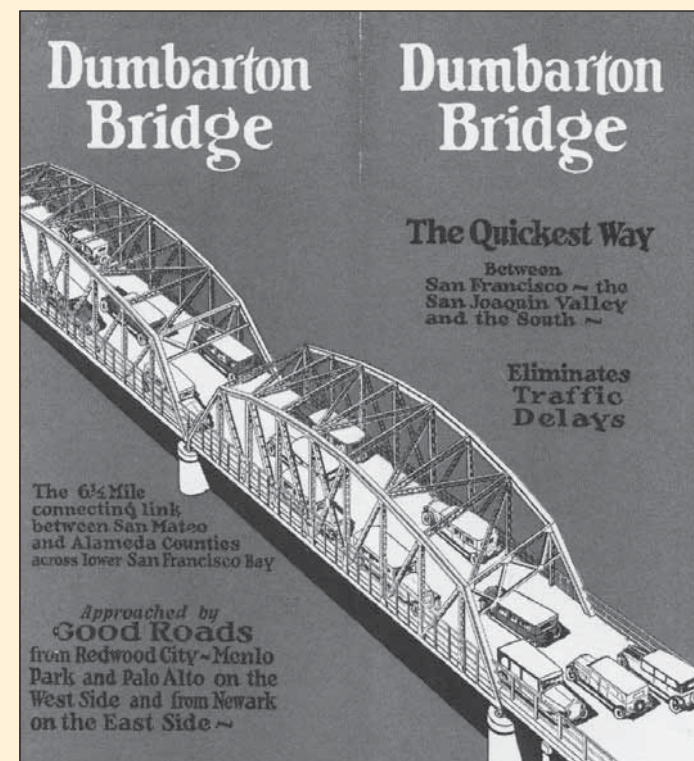
10:00 P.M. to 5:00 A.M., Sunday through Thursday. No night work will occur on Friday and Saturday

MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the Middle Plaza project and to sign up for construction alerts, please visit our website at middleplaza.stanford.edu

If you have any comments or questions, contact (650) 497-4052 or middleplaza@stanford.edu

Office of Government & Community Relations
450 Jane Stanford Way
Building 170, 1st Floor, Main Quad
Stanford, CA 94305



Courtesy of Menlo Park Historical Association

Looking back

The Dumbarton Bridge "eliminates traffic delays," this poster asserts. But in 1927, when the new bridge opened, the claim was valid — believe it or not, motorists of 2019. Yes, those were the days. The poster image is found, along with a brief description of the bridge's opening to traffic crossing the Bay between San Mateo and Alameda counties, in the history book "Menlo Park: Beyond the Gate" by Michael Svanevik and Shirley Burgett.

Happy Holidays

The holidays are a time to show appreciation to those who are important to you. Here at DeLeon Realty, our thoughts turn to our amazing clients. You are a big part of our success, and have helped to make us the #1 real estate team in the nation*.

With sincere gratitude, we wish you and your loved ones a joyous holiday season, and a healthy, prosperous New Year. Cheers to a great 2020!



*As ranked by REAL Trends 2019 Team Volume list. Published in the *Wall Street Journal* in June 2019.

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