

The Almanac

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

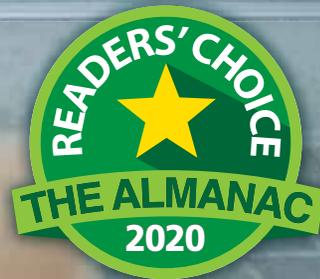
NOVEMBER 27, 2020 | VOL. 56 NO. 12



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DESPERATE TIMES, CREATIVE MEASURES



HOW BUSINESSES
ARE PIVOTING TO
SURVIVE PANDEMIC

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INSIDE

Help local families in need **4, 6**



VIEWPOINT **17** Find up-to-the-minute news at AlmanacNews.com



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Give to The Almanac Holiday Fund

Your gift helps local children
and families in need



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.

Health Connected

Serves over 5,000 students and their families each year through comprehensive sexual health education programs. Students learn to have ongoing communication with parents and to make informed decisions that will apply to their lives, now and in the future.

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.

Literacy Partners — Menlo Park

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.

St. Francis Center

Helps low-income, working families become self-supporting members of the community by providing long-term solutions through educational programs for children and parents, as well as after-school programming at Siena Youth Centers. St. Francis Center also provides housing, food and clothing services to address short-term needs.

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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Local News

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Olivia Treynor

Cristina Gomez, left, and **Mirna Aquino**, right, prepare bags of food for local families at the Sequoia Union High School District's Central Kitchen in Redwood City on Nov. 23.

All the fixings: Sequoia district hands out Thanksgiving meal kits to families

By **Angela Swartz**
Almanac Staff Writer

Sequoia Union High School District officials distributed free Thanksgiving meal kits to families of local students in kindergarten through 12th grade this week due to “overwhelming” demand amid the COVID-19 pandemic.

District officials gave out 2,400 meals to roughly 600 families, which included turkey, mashed potatoes, sweet corn,

gravy, peas and carrots, stuffing, cranberry sauce and blueberry crumble, through a contactless drive-thru at the Food Services Central Kitchen in Redwood City on Monday, Nov. 23.

“There was nothing but gratitude from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.,” said Yaz Widatalla, the district’s food services supervisor on Tuesday, Nov. 24.

This school year, the district has offered free breakfast and lunch to all children under the age of 18 — including students who don’t attend district

schools — while campuses are closed for distance learning. Food insecurity has increased during the pandemic, Widatalla said.

“Why not do something a little bit extra?” he said of the meal kits. “Not only to reach out to the students, but the families as well.”

District officials are also considering distributing meals around the Christmas holiday. ■

Email **Angela Swartz** at aswartz@almanacnews.com

What county health leaders are doing to bridge COVID-19 testing gaps

By **Kate Bradshaw**
Almanac Staff Writer

People of color have been the most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, and San Mateo County is working on reducing disparities through testing initiatives, county health officials said in a panel discussion hosted Nov. 19.

The virtual event also included an announcement that the county recently created a health equity officer position to be filled by Shireen Malekafzali of Get Healthy San Mateo County,

focused on bringing together existing equity efforts, identifying needs and listening to community leaders in the hardest hit areas.

The discussion, moderated by Henrietta Burroughs, executive director of East Palo Alto Today, convened health leaders and other community members to share what they’ve learned and what they’re doing to reduce the pandemic’s toll on communities of color.

Redwood City resident Hector Alvarado shared his experience of contracting the coronavirus

at work and how it spread quickly to his family members.

In early September, he said, he and his coworkers had been mostly following safety protocols but let their guards down around a trusted colleague, who wasn’t masked. Within days, he had contracted the virus, along with his wife, her parents and her sister, he said. Although he began quarantining away from other family members as soon as he felt symptoms, isolating himself in his kids’ bedroom

See **TESTING GAPS**, page 12

High school district parents, teachers and students at odds over returning to classrooms

By **Angela Swartz**
Almanac Staff Writer

Some Sequoia Union High School District students are pleading to return to classrooms next semester, but necessary upgrades to ventilation systems and the complexity of organizing high school students — who typically have about six classes with six different teachers during their school day — into cohorts may cause delays.

District officials said during a board meeting Nov. 18 that they will present a reopening plan to San Mateo County’s Office of Education on Dec. 2.

Locally, major public high school districts have not reopened and the Palo Alto Unified School District may push back its planned reopenings of Gunn and Palo Alto high schools. Private schools such as Menlo School have reopened to high schoolers.

Menlo-Atherton High School parents like Terri Epidendio said they don’t understand why the district didn’t have a plan for returning to campus sooner. She is concerned about students who don’t have a good setup for distance learning at home and are falling behind academically. She wonders how families in her Menlo Park neighborhood of Belle Haven, where she has seen homes crowded with as many as 17 people living there, are able to have stable WiFi access.

“These kids will lose a year and half of their lives,” she said. “They can’t make it up overnight. They are already behind to begin with. Maybe for once we should focus on the poor in this country. ... These students are really at risk.” Epidendio said there will be long-term health effects on students who are out of classrooms for an extended period of time; namely, not graduating from high school, which will impact their ability to find jobs and obtain health care.

In addition to learning loss, COVID-19 closures will probably increase high school dropout rates, according to recent

research by McKinsey & Company. The virus is disrupting many of the supports that can help vulnerable students stay in school: academic engagement and achievement, strong relationships with caring adults and supportive home environments, the study states. In normal circumstances, students who miss more than 10 days of school are 36% more likely to drop out, according to McKinsey.

In October, district officials reported that the percentage of students with more than one failing grade this fall jumped to 29% from 19.7% in 2019.

‘(Teachers) feel like Sisyphus; pushing the boulder up the hill, just to have it roll down again.’

EDITH SALVATORE, SEQUOIA DISTRICT TEACHERS ASSOCIATION PRESIDENT

Interim Superintendent Crystal Leach noted that the district “does not have the luxury, nor would we (the district) ever want to, pick and choose who we are educating (in person).”

Leach noted the district does not plan based on a set reopening date, but rather on conditions tied to the health and safety of students and staff.

“We are hopefully getting close to the end (of distance learning),” she said during last week’s meeting. “I know people are tired and frustrated; this district will continue to move forward to best serve students and our families.”

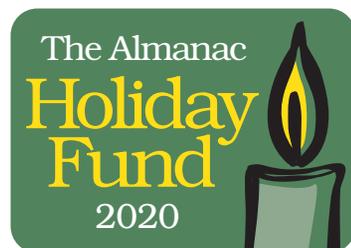
For those students who are not struggling with access to technology for distance learning, there are still concerns about the long-term health effects of spending so much time on electronic devices during the school day, said Dr. Caroline Krauskopf, a district parent. She sees her own children with multiple windows open on their

See **SCHOOLS REOPENING**, page 9

Amid pandemic, Holiday Fund launches charitable campaign

Donations help Ecumenical Hunger and nine other nonprofits serve the community

By Embarcadero Media staff



For the past eight months, local nonprofit organizations like East Palo Alto's Ecumenical Hunger Program have been scrambling to meet the needs of their clients. In ordinary times, Ecumenical Hunger Program staff would be hard at work to provide emergency food, clothing, furniture, household essentials, social support and sometimes financial assistance for families in need.

But since the pandemic and shutdown began, the agency has had to do a hard pivot.

With families out of work and many not qualifying for government assistance, the greatest need in the community has simply been food, according to Executive Director Lesia Preston.

The nonprofit is distributing 1,000 boxes of food per week — at least double the pre-pandemic level of 350 to 500, she said. Because of public health mandates, the 45-year-old nonprofit cannot bring in volunteers to help, and it has temporarily closed all services except for essential food programs.

Food boxes containing protein, vegetables, grains, cereals and canned goods are distributed using a drive-thru method at the agency's Pulgas Avenue headquarters in East Palo Alto.

Unfortunately, traditional food bank resources at the same time are "diminishing," she said.

To supplement food bank supplies, Preston and her staff have contacted local grocery stores, warehouses, restaurants and farms to see if they can get donations or purchase critical supplies in bulk.

"Staff members are wearing multiple hats, which include sourcing food, picking up and accepting fresh food donations, stocking the food pantry, packing food boxes, directing traffic and more," Preston said.

She and key staff members are working seven days a week to keep up with the demand.

To give a much-needed boost to organizations like Ecumenical Hunger Program, The Almanac is again launching its annual Holiday Fund campaign to raise funds for dozens of programs serving families and children in the Midpeninsula.

Last year, Almanac readers and foundations contributed over \$150,000. Because The Almanac and its Holiday Fund partner the Silicon Valley Community Foundation cover all the administrative costs of the campaign, every dollar raised goes directly to this year's 10 nonprofit organizations.

"The needs in our area have



Magali Gauthier

Zoua Her and Lene Lauese, staff members at Ecumenical Hunger Program, put bags of produce in a client's car at a drive-thru set up by the nonprofit in East Palo Alto on March 19.

always been pressing for those families and individuals who aren't benefiting from the tech economy, but this year, with the pandemic, our nonprofit partners are seeing deeper and more widespread pleas for assistance. What's more, those agencies are operating within considerable constraints due to public health protocols," Almanac Publisher Bill Johnson said.

"We've always been inspired by the unflagging generosity of our fellow neighbors who donate to the Holiday Fund. As this pandemic has exacerbated the inequities in our community, we're asking those who have been less materially affected to please join us in supporting these nonprofits that are working around the clock to ease the burdens of increasing numbers

of people," Johnson said.

In addition to individual tax-deductible donations, the fund this year is being supported through matching grants from Rotary Club of Menlo Park, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation so that every donation is effectively doubled.

To contribute online to the campaign, go to almanacnews.com/holiday_fund.

For those who need food assistance, call Ecumenical Hunger Program at 650-323-7781 or stop by the agency Tuesday through Thursday from 10 a.m. to noon or 2:30-4:30 p.m. More information about EHP can be found at ehpcare.org.

Coronavirus central: In 'unprecedented' surge, most new cases in people ages 18-49

By Embarcadero Media staff

San Mateo County reported 227 new cases of COVID-19 on Monday, bringing the county's total to 13,561. One more person has died, raising the death toll to 170. There were 43 people hospitalized with confirmed and suspected cases. Santa Clara County reported 439 new cases of the coronavirus on Monday, raising the total to 31,103. One more person has died, raising the death toll to 464. There were 191 people hospitalized, 23 of whom were new. The most recent seven-day rolling average of new cases per day stands at 325.

'Unprecedented' surge

California's latest surge of COVID-19 infections is "unprecedented," Gov. Gavin Newsom said Monday, as new cases and hospitalizations have skyrocketed in recent weeks.

Newsom, speaking from his home in quarantine after three of his children were recently exposed to the virus, said the state has averaged nearly 12,000 new cases per day over the last seven days, a level California hasn't reached since the pandemic began.

Of those new cases, 60% of them are among those 18 to 49 years old, according to Newsom.

Hospitalizations have also spiked by 77% over the last 14

days while intensive care unit admissions have risen by 55% over that span.

"Obviously this extends all across the United States and many parts of the world," Newsom said of the recent surge. "We're not immune here in the state of California."

California has clamped down on social activities like indoor restaurant dining in response to the new surge, moving more than two dozen counties into the state's most-restrictive reopening (purple) tier and implementing a monthlong curfew in those counties to discourage residents from spreading the virus. San Mateo is one of only three Bay Area counties in the less-restrictive red tier.

The surge also comes as the state builds its capacity to dole out millions of doses of a coronavirus vaccine, Newsom said.

That work includes collaborating both with local governments and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, which has given some \$28 million to the state to distribute vaccines when they are available to mass amounts of people.

Newsom likened the state's vaccination planning to its annual efforts to vaccinate roughly 19 million residents against the annual flu.

"We're not starting from scratch," Newsom said.

Newsom and state Health

See **CORONAVIRUS**, page 7

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Nightly curfew imposed on most of California

Governor orders purple tier counties to stay home; San Mateo County is in the red tier

By Bay City News Service

Gov. Gavin Newsom issued a monthlong stay-at-home order Nov. 19, intended to reduce nighttime gatherings and limit the spread of the coronavirus.

The order requires nonessential work and gatherings to stop from 10 p.m. to 5 a.m. in counties assigned to the “purple” tier, the most-restrictive tier in the state’s pandemic reopening system.

A total of 45 counties are in the purple tier as of Nov. 24, including Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, Sonoma, Solano, Santa Clara and Santa Cruz counties.

According to Newsom, the order will be in effect from Nov. 21, through Dec. 21.

“The virus is spreading at a pace we haven’t seen since the start of this pandemic and the next several days and weeks will be critical to stop the surge,” Newsom said in a statement.

“We are sounding the alarm.”

Newsom first floated the possibility of a curfew order Nov. 16 when the state moved more than two dozen counties into the purple tier due to rising coronavirus case rates and hospitalizations across the state.

Dr. Mark Ghaly, secretary of the state’s Health and Human Services Department, said the state chose to issue a curfew to prevent the need for further, even tighter restrictions.

“We’ve seen in the past that COVID goes from zero to 60 mph very quickly,” he said during a briefing on the new stay-at-home order, adding that “all tools are on the table.”

Ghaly suggested that issuing a curfew would discourage state residents from engaging in higher-risk, late-night activities like going to a taproom or restaurant, even with restrictions limiting seating to only outdoors.

Preventing such actions, he

said, could save the lives of people who may be more vulnerable to developing serious complications from contracting the virus.

“Maybe you’re a worker who’s out at night with a group of friends, outdoors even, and you contract COVID and then you go the next day to work and it is passed on, maybe not the next day but a day or two later, to a vulnerable resident in a congregate care facility,” he said. “Exactly the situation we want to avoid.”

Dr. Anthony Fauci, the nation’s top infectious disease expert and the director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, recently endorsed the potential use of a curfew to limit the spread of the coronavirus.

Fauci, asked about the potential of a curfew Nov. 17 while receiving an award from San Jose State University, said conditions can vary from county to county and city to

city, but that he supported the general premise.

“You don’t like to be very prescriptive,” he said. “But, sometimes when you’re dealing with the seriousness of the situation right now, I leave it up to the good judgment of the leaders of your states and your cities to make that (decision).”

Ghaly said the state’s decision to issue the monthlong curfew had more to do with the state’s

current surge in cases rather than the potential for large gatherings during Thanksgiving and other upcoming holidays.

“In many ways, the days and weeks to come will be different than in years past,” he said. “And, in order for us to do the best we can with controlling this virus, we’re going to have to keep our guard up, make some tough choices.” ■

CORONAVIRUS

continued from page 6

and Human Services Secretary Dr. Mark Ghaly reiterated that residents should avoid large Thanksgiving gatherings, particularly in light of most of the state’s new cases being reported in people under 50 years old.

“We need to just be very careful,” Ghaly said. “We know that our hospitals are seeing levels of surge that they’ve never seen before, even at the height of our June and July peak of cases.”

Stanford faculty condemns Scott Atlas

Members of Stanford University Faculty Senate approved a resolution on Nov. 19 to condemn Dr. Scott Atlas for his statements related to COVID-19, the university announced Nov. 20.

Atlas, a senior fellow at Stanford’s Hoover Institution and a special assistant to President Donald Trump on COVID-19 issues, has taken six actions that “promote a view of COVID-19 that contradicts medical science,” the faculty senate alleged, including discouraging the use of masks, misrepresenting information about pandemic management, endangering citizens and public officials, showing disdain for established medical knowledge and damaging Stanford’s reputation and academic standing, according to Stanford News.

Atlas’ actions are “anathema to our community, our values and our belief that we should use knowledge for good,” according to the resolution, which was approved by 85% of the faculty membership.

The resolution did not ask the university to sanction Atlas, however, which some felt could have a chilling effect on freedom of speech and willingness to enter government service among faculty, Stanford News noted.

Comprehensive COVID-19 coverage

View interactive charts tracking the spread of the coronavirus in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties online at paloaltoonline.atavist.com/tracking-the-coronavirus. Find a comprehensive collection of coverage on the Midpeninsula’s response to the new coronavirus by The Almanac and its sister publications, Palo Alto Online, and the Mountain View Voice, at tinyurl.com/c19-Almanac. *CalMatters and Bay City News Service contributed to this report.*

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REAL ESTATE Q&A

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COVID-19 and Property Taxes

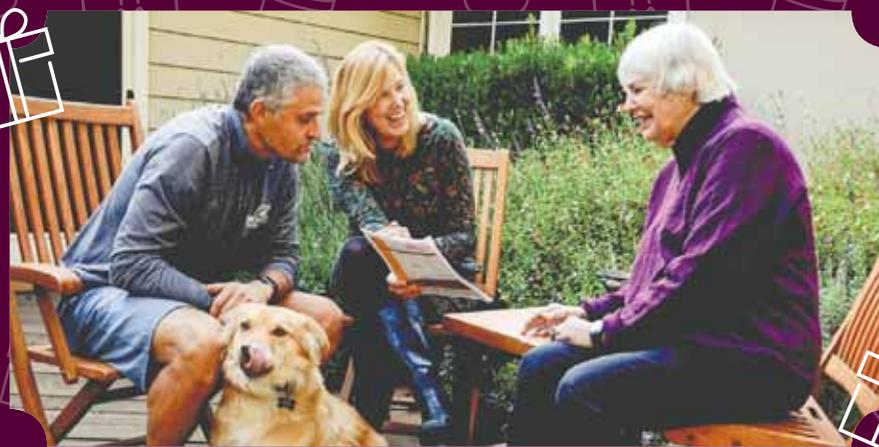
With everything there is to remember these days - wear your mask, don’t socialize in groups, get your COVID test, don’t travel unnecessarily, etc. - it is easy to forget to do other important things, like pay your property taxes.

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this deadline you will owe the tax plus a 10% penalty and a collection fee. However if you are a homeowner who is unable to pay on time, and the inability to pay is directly caused by COVID-19, and your property is not already delinquent or defaulted on any taxes due prior to March 4, 2020, you are eligible to have the penalty waived on a case by case basis. You may apply for this waiver through the County Assessor’s website.

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Newly elected Las Lomas board member won't serve

Jody Leng refuses to take seat, leaving two open spots on five-member school board

By Angela Swartz

Almanac Staff Writer

Not one, but two seats will soon need to be filled on the Las Lomas Elementary School District governing board. Jody Leng, who was elected to the board in the Nov. 3 election, recently informed the district she would not take her seat. The other open seat belonged to board president Jon Venverloh, who resigned Nov. 8 amid public outcry over his wife's racist and misogynistic tweets about Vice President-elect Kamala Harris.

Leng could not be reached for comment on her decision to run for a seat and then refuse to take it after being elected.

The board voted 4-0 Nov. 18 to appoint new trustees in lieu of holding a special election, which would cost between \$365,000 and \$438,000, according to San Mateo Chief Deputy County Counsel John D. Nibbelin. The trustees agreed that the cost of a special election was "exorbitant" and preferred to try the appointment route.

"The (appointment) process is conducted in public; to me it's the right balance of equity and access and saving the district close to half a million dollars," said trustee Dana Nunn during the meeting. She noted that a contested election is the "gold standard" for the community to select new board members, but there's also no guarantee that a special election, which wouldn't be able to happen until at least



Jody Leng



Jon Venverloh

May, would be contested.

Without Venverloh and Leng, there will only be three sitting board members in December: Nunn; board member-elect Jason Morimoto, who will take his seat on Dec. 11, and John Earnhardt. Trustees Diana Honda and Bill Steinmetz did not seek reelection and their terms end on Dec. 11.

There is urgency to fill the seats sooner rather than later, given the board's duty of managing the district's strategic plan and the extra tasks around distance learning and reopening classrooms during the COVID-19 pandemic, Nunn said.

Appointees would serve until the next regular election for district trustees, which is in November 2022.

The county requires the district to either order a special election or make provisional appointments within 60 days of the vacancies (on or before Jan. 7, 2021, for Venverloh's former seat, and Feb. 9, 2021, for the seat to which Leng was elected), according to a presentation by Nibbelin for the school board's Nov. 18 meeting. If the board does not take one of these actions, Nancy Magee, the county superintendent of schools, will

order a special election.

A newly elected trustee would serve for the balance of the term remaining after the resignation of the incumbent. In the case of Venverloh's vacancy, an elected successor would serve until December 2022. In the case of Leng's seat, an elected successor would fill her vacancy until December 2024. Trustees said they are open to holding an election if their appointment search is not successful.

After an appointment is made, a special election may still be required if at least 1.5% of the voters sign a petition calling for an election, Nibbelin said.

Morimoto asked the board to wait until after he is seated in December to select the new board appointments.

Venerloh's resignation

Venverloh, a former Google executive, in 2018 joined the elected board that oversees Las Lomas Elementary School in Atherton and La Entrada Middle School in Menlo Park. He issued a statement on Facebook Nov. 8 announcing he was stepping down from the board and condemned his wife's tweets. His wife, Mehridith — who volunteered for Mothers Together at Menlo Church from 2012 to 2014, according to her LinkedIn page and the church — issued an apology to Harris and community members on Facebook, saying her comments were a result of tapering off of her medication.

Martha Lampert, president of the Las Lomas Education Association, read a statement from teachers during the Nov. 18 meeting.

"Teachers stand with the staff, administrators and board members to support all our students and families, particularly our students and families of color," she said. "Each member of our diverse community enhances our school and enriches our lives. Bigoted statements that question the integrity, accomplishment and character of people of color, of women, of LGBTQ people and of people who live at the intersections of these communities are intolerable and have no place in our Las Lomas family or on either

of our campuses. We will speak up loudly and strongly against any racism and bigotry."

Nunn opened the meeting by addressing the controversy with Venverloh.

"I'm disgusted and deeply sorry for the pain and hurt this has caused in our community," Nunn said. She noted it was an incredibly hard week for the district. "All we can do is move forward and do better together. ... We've gotten a lot of emails and calls for a more diverse board. I would welcome that. We can hopefully find strategies for more candidates and more diverse candidates." ■

Email Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com

CRIME BRIEFS

Failed carjacking attempt

Menlo Park police officers arrested a teen Wednesday night, Nov. 18, after she allegedly tried, and failed, to drive away with a vehicle in downtown Menlo Park.

Police officers responded to a reported theft just after 8 p.m. on the 600 block of Santa Cruz Avenue in downtown Menlo Park. A downtown business owner and her mother had been unloading merchandise into their shop, and while inside, heard an engine rev, according to police.

They went to their vehicle, parked in front of the business, and found a teenager in the driver's seat who appeared to be rummaging through property inside.

When the business owner asked what the girl was doing, she reportedly began trying to put the car in drive, but appeared not to know how. Despite efforts by the business owner's mother to keep the girl inside the vehicle until the police arrived, she broke loose and ran from the scene with a wallet belonging to the business owner, according to police.

About 20 minutes later, police found a teen matching the suspect's description several blocks away, but did not find the stolen wallet. They arrested the 16-year-old from East Palo Alto on suspicion of attempted carjacking and released to her mother on a promise to appear in court, according to police.

Witnesses with information related to the case are asked to contact Detective Josh Russell at 650-330-6364 or jprussell@menlopark.org.

—Kate Bradshaw

Three nabbed on weapons, robbery charges

San Mateo County sheriff's deputies and San Jose police detectives arrested three men on a variety of weapons and robbery charges Nov. 16, following a monthlong investigation.

Sheriff's and police detectives worked together to determine whether the suspects possessed high-powered rifles and high-capacity magazines, eventually tracking them to a home in the 1400 Block of Camelia Drive in East Palo Alto.

During the arrests, detectives found four assault rifles, three handguns, several large-capacity magazines, a bulletproof vest, narcotics and ammunition, sheriff's officials said.

Detectives said that the loaded weapons were allegedly within reach of a toddler who lives at the home.

One suspect, 20-year-old Brandon Rodriguez, has been wanted by San Jose police for his alleged involvement in several armed robberies in the Bay Area, according to the Sheriff's Office.

Rodriguez was arrested along with 26-year-old Ramon Godinez Avila and 23-year-old Guillermo Vargas Anguiano. Rodriguez is facing charges related to the alleged robbery while the other two men face a variety of weapons charges, including possession of an assault rifle and altering a firearm serial number, according to sheriff's officials. They also face one count of child endangerment because of the weapons' alleged proximity to the toddler.

—Bay City News Service

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SCHOOLS REOPENING

continued from page 5

computer screens, texting and playing games simultaneously, and worries this learning setup will create long-term attention issues for students.

“Even for students not getting Ds and Fs, these behavior patterns hamper the depth of learning that these young people are acquiring,” she said. “Physiologically it creates changes in the brain.”

Teachers union perspective

Sequoia District Teachers Association officials have vehemently opposed reopening classrooms during the pandemic. During last week’s board meeting, union president Edith Salvatore read a prepared statement from the group, saying though teachers want to be back in classrooms to support students, the risk of virus transmission on campus is too high.

“A lot has changed since this past summer, but much hasn’t. In terms of risk for COVID, we now know how to protect ourselves better, but the best protection is to limit interaction with people outside your household. Bringing large numbers of students and staff back means



Magali Gauthier

An empty classroom on the Woodside High School campus on July 20. Classes haven’t been held on campus since the pandemic forced its closure in March.

necessarily breaking that rule,” she said. “It means that whatever precautions we have in place, they are only as good as our ability to follow and enforce them without fail, without a momentary slip. It means placing our well-being and that of our family members in the faith that our colleagues and students and their families are following all those same rules when they are with us and when they are not.”

Teachers cry themselves to sleep and lash out with frustration that their students are suffering amid the pandemic and they cannot be there for them,

she said.

“They feel like Sisyphus; pushing the boulder up the hill, just to have it roll down again,” she said. “What would have been a quick glance across the room to see which students need help has become a view of black squares as teachers walk the knife’s edge between compassionate understanding of teens’ anxiety and tech issues and the expectation that they participate with their cameras on.”

HVAC systems

A big focus for the district over the last several months

has been upgrading classrooms’ HVAC systems, Leach said during an October board meeting.

The district has been working on increasing the air exchange rates in classrooms — so that virus particles won’t stick in the air for as long, she said.

Studies have shown air cleaning and filtration can help reduce airborne contaminants, including particles containing viruses.

HVAC fixes should be completed by late January, Leach said on Nov. 18.

County COVID-19 cases

Last week San Mateo County moved from the orange tier (moderate transmission of the virus) back to the red tier (substantial) because of increasing COVID-19 cases.

“As we continue moving forward, it is important to remember that our plans are contingent on current health conditions not deteriorating,” Leach said in a Nov. 20 email to parents. “However, in all likelihood, as we see in neighboring counties, San Mateo County is projected to slip into the purple tier (widespread) eventually. If that does occur, we will not be able to implement our reopening plan.”

As of an Oct. 16 accounting, district officials found they can accommodate slightly more than half of students on campus with distancing, Leach said. (That means at M-A, 124 rooms can accommodate 1,337 people total; 130 rooms with 1,439 people at Woodside High School; and 15 rooms with 218 people at TIDE Academy, according to district staff.)

“We know we will be back,” Leach said. “High schools are quite complex. We are navigating through a pandemic no one has ever seen. When we see rises in cases, schools close. Locally, conditions will worsen.”

Back in October, board president Allen Weiner said the district was working to reopen classrooms.

“This is hard, but the fact that this is hard does not mean this is impossible,” Weiner said. “We’re taking steps to have students return to campuses in increasing numbers.”

The district sent students and families online questionnaires about reopening on Nov. 20. The survey closes on Dec. 4.

Watch the board meeting at tinyurl.com/SequoiaNov18. ■

Email Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com

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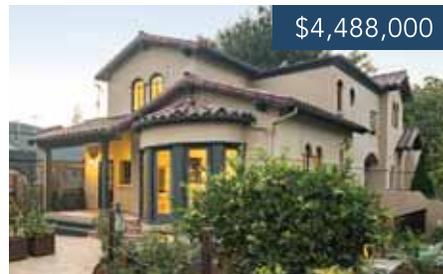
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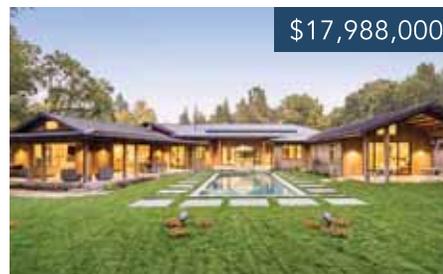
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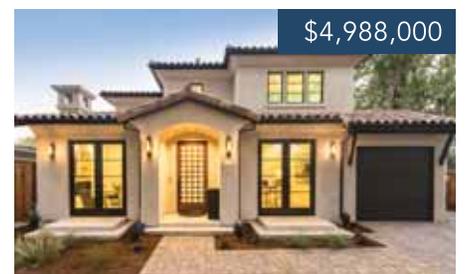
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TESTING GAPS

continued from page 5

while the kids were relocated to an air mattress in the living room, it was too late, he said.

“I didn’t know I had already put them at risk before,” he said.

While he experienced fevers, his wife experienced more severe symptoms, including body pains, a fever for 10 days, dehydration and fainting, he said. Both she and Alvarado’s colleague also experienced severe insomnia for days while they were in recovery, he added.

“This virus is not a cold, it’s not the flu,” he said. “It’s something completely different.”

Testing barriers

Justin Mates, deputy county manager, described some of the obstacles that the public health department has worked to overcome to make testing more accessible to residents. For instance, although the county established a stationary large-scale testing site in San Mateo, many residents had a hard time getting there. In response, the county has set up rotating drive-thru sites throughout the county, as well as walk-up sites in neighborhoods to make it more convenient and accessible. As a result, the county has doubled its

testing rates, he said.

Another barrier to testing is the question of trust, Mates said. Some testing vendors require people to make appointments online in advance and may ask a lot of questions, and some people are inclined not to trust vendors or the government with such information, he said.

One contractor the county is working with is Verily, a subsidiary of Google. Several weeks ago, Alameda and San Francisco counties ended their contracts with Verily in response to concerns that the company requires people to have a Gmail account, does not provide information in many languages, and can ask enrollees sensitive personal information, according to the Los Angeles Times. The contracts’ critics also raised concerns that although funding for some testing sites is intended to help low-income, Latino or Black neighborhoods, there had been some instances of higher rates of higher-income residents registering for drive-thru tests through the Google-linked system.

Mates confirmed that his office had also heard those concerns and noted that the county’s standing testing site is state-sponsored and the decision is not at the county level.

“Verily has responded to some



Courtesy county of San Mateo

County health leaders convened virtually Nov. 19 to discuss what they’re doing to tackle disparities in COVID-19 testing and outcomes for communities of color in San Mateo County.

of the concerns folks have had about how the information is used,” he said. “There are clear opportunities for people to opt out of the Verily system.”

County officials have also worked to figure out ways to create temporary Gmail accounts, for instance, or avoid signing into Gmail or the Google platform to access test results, he said. The privacy concerns, he added, should be balanced against the “values testing vendors bring to the table.”

Other barriers to accessing testing may be cultural, said Melissa Aliu, a first-generation Samoan and Tongan scholar. In the family-oriented Pacific Islander community, many households are multigenerational, and

quarantining in isolation may not be a realistic option, she said. While earlier outreach efforts didn’t necessarily resonate with her community’s values, she said that testing outreach efforts should focus on the importance of getting tested in terms of caring for one’s family’s health.

“If I care about the people that I love ... getting tested should be a norm I practice,” she said.

Mitigating the spread of COVID-19

“We now know that half of COVID cases are infected by people who don’t have symptoms,” said Dr. Curtis Chan, deputy health officer in San Mateo County, who offered additional guidance for how to reduce the spread of COVID-19.

Within your own household, he advised, start wearing a mask in the house as soon as you feel symptoms or think you might need to go get a test.

COVID-19 is much more infectious than the flu and much more deadly for older adults, particularly those over 60, he said.

The positivity rates among Spanish and Vietnamese speakers are currently about four times that of the general population, between 11% to 15%, so the county plans more outreach to these communities in particular, said Dr. Kenneth Tai, the chief health officer at North East Medical Services, a nonprofit

community health center.

He emphasized the need for people to stay safe during Thanksgiving by spending it with one’s immediate household. “The message is to spend the holidays in your own bubble,” he said.

Prevention

“Our key strategy is to test more people,” said Tai. People who are vulnerable, elderly, or don’t speak English as their first language are priorities for increased testing, he added.

When the vaccines become available, Burroughs asked, who will get them first?

Generally, it will be essential health care workers, then people who are over 65 or who have underlying medical conditions that make them more vulnerable to developing complications from COVID-19, Tai said. These conditions include cancer, heart conditions, a weak immune system and Type 2 diabetes, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Gov. Gavin Newsom has also put together a task force that will evaluate vaccines even after they are approved at the federal level to make sure they are safe.

“From what we hear from manufacturers, these are very, very safe vaccines,” Tai said. ▣

Email Kate Bradshaw at kbradshaw@almanacnews.com



Courtesy Steve Fisch/Stanford Medicine

A Stanford Medicine technician in Dr. Benjamin Pinsky’s lab sorts through patient samples for the COVID-19 infection.

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

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Email: sharper@woodsidetown.org

PUBLIC HEARING

1. 1. Town-wide

1. ZAOM2020-0003

Town of Woodside

Planner: Jackie Young, Planning Director

A resolution of intent and recommendation to the Town Council to amend Chapter 153, Zoning, pertaining to building and plate height, including building and plate height for Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU’s).

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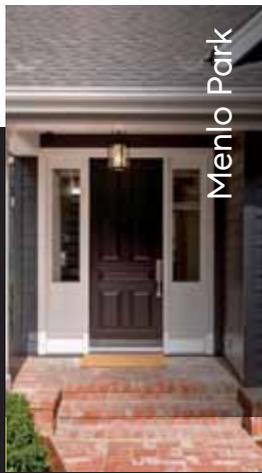
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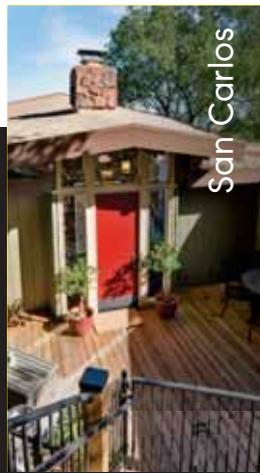
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For more than 70 years, Peninsula Volunteers, Inc., duly recognized nonprofit, 501 (c) (3), has demonstrated a profound legacy of caring for seniors, a commitment of providing high quality and nurturing programs so seniors are engaged, cared for and respected as vital community members. PVI's four core programs, Meals on Wheels, Rosener House Adult Day Care for those with Alzheimer's and other dementias and the venerated Little House, The Roslyn G. Morris Activity Center, and Transportation services address the most pressing issues of aging adults by offering critical services to sustain their daily physical, nutritional, emotional and mental health while achieving dignity and independence in their lives. | 800 Middle Ave Menlo Park, CA 94025

Senior needs exposed through the lens of COVID-19.

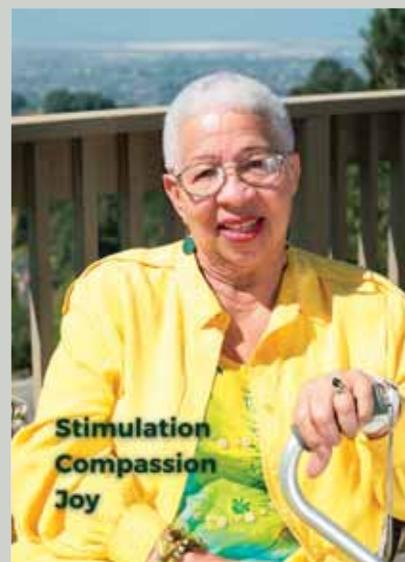


James
Redwood City

"PVI's Meals on Wheels brings me love. The meals have kept me alive and changed my life. It's my connection to human beings." The warm and pleasant driver is like receiving a "hug through their smiles."

James lives alone and struggles with mobility due to chronic health conditions, making shopping and cooking for himself very difficult. The local liquor store is the most accessible option for food purchases, yet choices are scarce for healthy, affordable and easy to prepare meals. Though primarily wheelchair bound, James is anxious about using his wheelchair after witnessing another wheelchair user tip over on the uneven sidewalk. When James contacted PVI's Meals on Wheels program he weighed only 110 pounds and had no food in his refrigerator. Now James is sustained by daily nutritious meals. His PVI Meals on Wheels volunteer driver is often the only person he sees and the connection is like a "daily hug." James is confined to his apartment most days, where he likes to tinker and fix things, like stereo equipment. No longer burdened by hunger or malnutrition, James finds daily comfort in his hobbies.

Ruth suffers from Alzheimer's and PVI's Adult Day Services at Rosener House has been her therapeutic haven since 2017. She now participates in our virtual programming for families in need at home. Ruth's dementia has worsened and she struggles with memory difficulty and focus, no longer recalling how to use technology. Mark, both husband and caregiver, starts each online Zoom activity for her. Group activities and individual attention during the one on one calls help to combat increased isolation due to COVID-19, creating a lifeline for them both. Mark says the "thoughtfully tailored and creative personalized sessions by Kris and Josh are extraordinary." The home delivered activity packets also keep Ruth's attention, providing Mark with much needed respite. Ruth often cries and happy tears flowed when a piano video was played for her. Her music memory awakened and she joyfully reminisced. Pre pandemic, Ruth enjoyed playing the Steinway piano at Rosener House where participants and staff liked hearing her play many classical melodies. Mark shares how very grateful he is for all the ways PVI "supports our family while we are dealing with this extremely devastating disease."



Ruth and Mark
Menlo Park

"PVI's Rosener House at home is an absolute lifeline for those with Alzheimer's. Our caregivers had to retreat to their own home situations because of COVID-19. It's my only respite right now!"



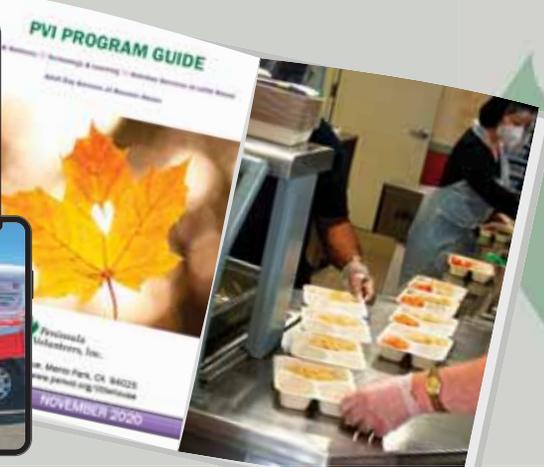
Frank
Menlo Park

"My daughter says that I'm a different person since joining PVI's Little House online classes: more pep, more cheerful, more mobile, just happier."

Frank moved to Menlo Park to be closer to family when his beloved wife passed away. He joined PVI's senior activity center at Little House shortly afterward to fulfill a promise he made to his wife, to take health and wellness more seriously. Frank started attending our onsite fitness classes and appreciated PVI's transportation rides to and from the senior center before COVID-19. Frank is now participating in the new virtual fitness class offerings, enjoying the camaraderie of others and the variety of fitness levels in the classes. Frank especially likes that minimal equipment is needed to participate and "there is something for everyone." The instructors know participant names, give positive vibes and activity sessions are just the right size to engage. Frank says the morning classes give him "something to look forward to" and that PVI offers "a gem of a program!"

Visit penvol.org for more information and to read their complete stories.





Please help support isolated seniors in need!
- Rebecca Matteson Nelson

Rebecca Matteson Nelson
Director of Development

Supporting the most vulnerable community through COVID-19 and beyond!

Dear Friends and Neighbors,

It is hard to believe that we are entering the third full season of the pandemic. All of us at Peninsula Volunteers, Inc., (PVI) hope that you and your families continue to be well and safe throughout this extraordinary time.

As COVID-19 continues to reshape our lives, the effect on seniors remains a daily concern for so many you know and love. Today, life for an older adult in your community feels much more insecure and fragile. Someone near you is waking up alone fearful of having no means of getting food for the day; others are struggling to care for a loved one with Alzheimer's while coping with added health crisis stresses and schooling for children; and an isolated, lonely older adult is left at home without visitors, may need help using technology, and is longing to once again connect and engage in group activities that will help her flourish.

Our senior population is growing rapidly. Unmet needs are skyrocketing and amplified by COVID-19 and the holiday season. With **less than 2% of institutional philanthropy going to services for seniors**, together we must bridge a growing local funding gap to meet these needs. We need to ensure seniors are no longer overlooked.

- 1 in 8** seniors struggles with hunger and must choose between paying rent or purchasing medication or food;
- 1 in 3** seniors dies with Alzheimer's or another dementia, more than breast and prostate cancer;
- 1 in 5** seniors feels lonely and many are without transportation or technology to access the wellness program.

We are still six feet apart, yet remain shoulder to shoulder in caring for at risk seniors in our community!

PVI is here to walk through these tough times alongside you and our community. Deeply centered on our mission and values, we believe that every person deserves to age well. Our core programs serve over 5,000 senior households on the Peninsula, addressing the most pressing issues of aging adults by offering critical services to sustain daily physical, nutritional, emotional and mental health while achieving dignity and independence in their lives.

PVI provides Connection, Community, Hope and Joy!

We are meeting the new reality head on, swiftly adapting our services for the new environment by offering access to critical senior care programs online from the comfort and safety of home, while PVI's Meals on Wheels continues home meal deliveries uninterrupted. Guided virtual online programs and activity packages ensure active older adults and those with Alzheimer's and dementia and their families are able to be active, stimulated and safely supported, and isolation and loneliness relieved. Enhanced on demand transportation to support healthcare and food access provides rides to seniors for doctor, grocery and pharmacy visits.

You may ask "what can I do to help?" You can have an immediate on the families that need us most!

You provide PVI's nutritious Meals on Wheels and wellness checks to vulnerable older adults who cannot get the daily nutrition they need. The wait list of hungry homebound seniors is growing. You help families caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's remain all together at home with Rosener House Adult Day Services active, therapeutic program support and caregiver respite. You support active older adults through Little House, The Roslyn G. Morris Activity Center's variety of wellness activities and on-demand transportation services that help seniors thrive.

Your gift today of any size will help us sustain our vital programs.*

You are the proof that community hearts are generous during this extraordinary time of need.

With grateful thanks,

Thank you for ensuring seniors are not overlooked. -Peter

Peter Olson
Chief Executive Officer

Mical Atz Brenzel
Chairman of the Board/President

Your help and generosity are very much appreciated. -Mical

* A \$500 donation will cover: one month of daily Meals on Wheels for two seniors; or one month of daily staff-guided virtual therapeutic sessions from Rosener House for one adult with Alzheimer's; or ten 60- minute personal training sessions from Little House for one senior, or 30 transportation rides for 30 seniors for two months.



Have an immediate *impact* by donating online at penvol.org/donate.

From 13 to zero: Reopened school districts report their COVID-19 cases

Portola Valley and Las Lomas have yet to report a positive case; Menlo Park City schools reported 13

By Angela Swartz

Almanac Staff Writer

COVID-19 cases are cropping up at local public school districts that have reopened classrooms to students over the last two months, and some districts are beginning to post updated case counts on their websites.

The Menlo Park City School District has reported 13 cases of COVID among staff members and students on its website since students returned to campus on Sept. 28. About 2,330 of the district's 2,808 students have returned to campus so far, said Parke Treadway, the district's public information officer.

Four cohorts of students have moved to distance learning for 14-day quarantines. Not every case requires a cohort to move, either because the infected person didn't have close contact with a cohort or had not been with their cohort within the close contact period, Treadway said. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, close contacts are those who were in proximity within two days of test specimen collection or onset of symptoms.

"Our week on/week off model is really helping limit the



Magali Gauthier

number of close contacts, as we had hoped," she said. "We have not had multiple cases within the same cohort."

The district is including the positive COVID-19 case data for the public in an effort to be transparent, she said. "That is important to our board and leadership."

District officials update the previous week's data by Tuesday, and positive cases are reported to San Mateo County Health. Case notifications are provided to

the appropriate cohorts and school communities, but no identifying details about individuals testing positive will be provided to the public.

San Mateo County schools must halt in-person learning if:

■ There are multiple confirmed cases in multiple cohorts within 14 days on a single campus.

■ 5% or more of the total number of teachers, students, and staff on a campus are confirmed positive cases within a 14-day period, depending on the size and physical layout of

the school.

■ There is insufficient staffing available because of health or the need to quarantine.

So far there have been no cases reported in the Portola Valley School District, which reopened to students in October and has a COVID-19 case dashboard on its website. Almost 250 students in grades TK-5 of the district's roughly 495 students have returned to campus, according to a presentation by district staff.

"We will post the COVID

Oak Knoll Elementary School

Principal Kristen Garcia hands first graders jump ropes during recess on Sept. 29. Each class has its own bin of equipment and toys. There have been 13 cases of COVID-19 reported across the district's five campuses.

data on our website to assist parents, staff, and the community in understanding the degree to which PVSD is directly experiencing COVID positive cases over the course of time, which will be updated weekly," said Superintendent Roberta Zarea in an email.

There have been no cases reported in the Las Lomas Elementary School District since it reopened last month, said Superintendent Beth Polito. The district has two schools: Las Lomas Elementary in Atherton and La Entrada Middle School in Menlo Park. District officials plan to create a similar public reporting matrix soon, she said.

In the nearby Palo Alto Unified School District, six cases — four staff members and two students — have been reported since its schools reopened in August to elementary school students, according to the district's website.

Officials in the Woodside Elementary School District, which reopened to students in October, could not be reached for comment on the number of COVID-19 cases in the 369-student district, and case counts are not posted on the district website. ■

Email Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com

Cantor Arts Center head is asked to leave

After investigation into a 'toxic workplace' at museum, Susan Dackerman steps down

By Palo Alto Weekly staff

Following an external investigation into workplace problems at Stanford's Cantor Arts Center, Susan Dackerman, the director of the museum since September 2017, is stepping down, an email from Stanford University said Nov. 18.

No date for her departure or explanation of the situation that led to Dackerman's exit was given in the message from Matthew Tiews, the interim senior associate vice president for the arts and associate vice president for campus engagement. However, Tiews wrote, "The university will be addressing internal concerns and structural considerations so that the museum is best positioned for success going forward."

Deputy Director and Chief of



Susan Dackerman

Staff James Gaddy is also leaving his job at the museum, according to an email sent to museum staff and obtained by this news organization.

On Nov. 23, Elizabeth Kathleen Mitchell and Maude Brezinski were named interim codirectors of the Cantor Arts Center, Matthew Tiews, interim senior associate vice president for the Arts said in a statement. Mitchell is the Cantor's Burton and Deedee McMurtry curator and Brezinski is the executive director of development for the arts.

"Together, Elizabeth and Maude are well positioned to guide the museum's artistic and scholarly excellence and engagement with our community as we seek permanent leadership," Tiews said.

Allegations that Dackerman led a "toxic workplace" surfaced this summer when the resignation letter from Director of Academic and Public Programs Peter Tokofsky became public. In it, he told the 20-member Director's

Advisory Board that the exodus of one-quarter of the museum staff and two of the four-person leadership team needed the board's attention.

"I have spoken with many of those who left, and they cite difficulties with leadership and, generally, the 'toxic workplace' of the Cantor as their reasons for leaving," his letter stated.

He said Dackerman asked for his resignation due to allegedly poor performance, but Tokofsky in his letter cited his many accomplishments in his year at the museum, including an increase in Stanford class visits by 35% and numerous new partnerships with Stanford departments and faculty.

The Stanford Daily detailed additional allegations of a fraught workplace culture in an article it published in August.

According to a list of staff departures obtained by this news organization, at least 14 people departed from Cantor in 2019-2020, including those in curatorial, exhibitions, events, special projects,

collection, communications, security and membership. At least another 16 left between 2017, when Dackerman arrived, and 2019, including those in development, visitor services, conservation.

In an email dated October 2019, one departing employee wrote to her colleagues at Cantor:

"I wanted you to hear from me first that I have resigned from my position and proposed my last day for November 1st. ... I am leaving to escape the unfortunate toxicity of our work environment."

Tiews, in a message obtained by The Almanac's sister publication, the Palo Alto Weekly, and sent to staff on July 17, 2020, said the Office of the Vice President for the Arts and Cantor management had "received notice of concerns about work environments at the Cantor. ... As you know, Stanford University is committed to a culture of respect for students, faculty, staff, volunteers, supporters and visitors, and we take these

claims very seriously."

He added that at Dackerman's request and after consulting with appropriate campus offices, the university engaged an independent outside investigator to review the specific concerns and related issues as they arise. He instructed staff not to respond to the media and to refer reporters to Robin Wander in Stanford Communications.

In an undated statement to the Stanford Daily obtained by the Weekly, Tiews noted that within months of hiring Dackerman in 2017, "the director and deputy director recognized they need to invite experts in organizational development to provide guidance to advance the organization" through analysis, trainings and group meetings.

"As the team and its work culture continue to develop, significant progress is being made to establish a positive, inclusive and healthy work environment that promotes respect and high performance," he wrote in part. ■

Viewpoint

IDEAS, THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS ABOUT LOCAL ISSUES

Your help is needed more than ever. Support the Holiday Fund.

Many Peninsula residents have sought the assistance of a local nonprofit at one point or another, obtaining everything from academic or after-school support for their child and vital health care to food and housing help.

Now, facing an overwhelming demand for services spurred by the coronavirus pandemic combined with operation limitations due to the health crisis, these organizations need you to step in.

Almanac readers have given generously to our annual Holiday Fund in years past, with support from foundations combining to raise over \$150,000 last year. Though many people face strained financial circumstances due to the pandemic, we hope those who can will support these nonprofits so they can do as much as possible to help local families and individuals now and long after the pandemic subsides.

Since The Almanac and its Holiday Fund partner the Silicon Valley Community Foundation cover all the administrative costs of the initiative, every dollar raised goes directly to this year's 10 nonprofit beneficiaries. In addition to individual tax-deductible donations, the fund this year is being supported through matching grants from Rotary Club of Menlo Park, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation so that every donation is effectively doubled.

To contribute online to the campaign, go to almanacnews.com/holiday_fund. Follow the instructions in our ad on Page 4 to send a donation via mail.

This year's beneficiaries are:
Boys & Girls Club of the Peninsula: With locations in Menlo Park, East Palo Alto and the North Fair Oaks neighborhood in Redwood City, this organization provides academic and after-school support, enrichment, mentoring and activities for low-income K-12 kids. To support students with distance learning, the Boys and Girls Club is now providing them with a safe, in-person working space for online learning that is walking distance from home, at their clubhouses or school sites.

Ecumenical Hunger Program: EHP provides emergency food, clothing and household essentials, and sometimes financial assistance, to families, regardless

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

of religious background. At Thanksgiving and Christmas, the program provides baskets to more than 2,000 households. Because of public health mandates, the 45-year-old nonprofit cannot bring in volunteers to help, and it has temporarily closed all services except for essential food programs.

LifeMoves: With sites on the Peninsula and throughout Silicon Valley, this program serves thousands of homeless people annually, including families. It offers one-on-one counseling, assistance in securing housing, children's programs and training in comprehensive skills so that its clients can achieve self-sufficiency.

Health Connected: An East Palo Alto-based nonprofit, Health Connected serves more than 15,000 students and their families in the state through its comprehensive sexual health education programs. Its mission is to "equip young people with information, skills, and support to make thoughtful choices about their relationships and sexual health throughout their lives," according to the organization's website.

Literacy Partners - Menlo Park: Literacy Partners was established to promote and facilitate literacy in Menlo Park and surrounding areas, according to its website. Its goal is to support Project Read - Menlo Park, which offers free literacy services to local adults. It trains volunteers to work one-on-one with students wishing to improve their basic reading, writing and English language skills so they can achieve their goals and function more effectively at home, at work, and in the community. It also sponsors basic English classes and weekly conversation clubs.

Ravenswood Family Health Center: The center provides primary medical and preventive health care at a clinic in East Palo Alto. Most of the center's registered patients, who number more than 17,000, are low-income and uninsured, and live in the Belle Haven, East Palo Alto and North Fair Oaks areas.

St. Anthony's Padua Dining Room: St. Anthony's serves hundreds of hot meals six days a week. It also offers take-home bags of

food, and emergency food and clothing assistance.

St. Francis Center: Beginning in 1986, the St. Francis Center began providing food, clothing, and other essential services for low-income families out of a small house in the Fair Oaks neighborhood. In addition to these services it continues to provide those who live and work in Redwood City, the organization now includes the 10,000-square-foot St. Francis Center, Siena Youth Center, Holy Family School, and eight apartment buildings for low-income families.

Upward Scholars: This program, formerly the Sequoia Adult School Scholars, provides financial support, tutoring, textbooks and other assistance to local low-income adults, allowing them to continue their education, improve their workplace prospects, and serve as role models and advocates for their kids.

StarVista: StarVista serves more than 41,000 people in San Mateo County with counseling, prevention, early intervention, education and residential programs. It also provides crisis intervention and suicide prevention services, including a 24-hour suicide crisis hotline, a parent support hotline, and an alcohol and drug helpline.

LETTERS

Our readers write

First recycled water system

The headline certainly seems like a step in the right direction — our first recycled water system launched in Menlo Park ("Menlo Park's first recycled water system launches in Sharon Heights," Oct. 30). I read on to discover that \$5.3 million of voter-authorized state funds were used for this project to irrigate a private country club's golf course. I also learned that in past summers, 14% of Menlo Park's municipal water draw from Hetch Hetchy was being pumped into this private country club's golf course. Shocking on both counts! It would be great for The Almanac to write more about how these realities were justified, and what the opportunity was for the public to weigh in.

Barbara Beebe
Oakley Avenue, Menlo Park

Public Notices

995 Fictitious Name Statement

CJW ARCHITECTURE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 285670

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
CJW Architecture, located at 130 Portola Road, Suite A, Portola Valley, CA 94028, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
CARTER J. WARR
130 Portola Road, Suite A
Portola Valley, CA 94028

This business is conducted by: An Individual.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on September 1994. This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on November 5, 2020.

(ALM Nov. 13, 20, 27; Dec. 4, 2020)

CHERUBIC IN-HOME CARE SERVICES
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 285643

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Cherubic In-Home Care Services, located at 3290 San Jose Ave., CA 94501, Alameda County.

Registered owner(s):

ELITSI SEKONA
3290 San Jose Ave.
Alameda, CA 94501

This business is conducted by: An Individual.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 10/19/2020.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on October 29, 2020.

(ALM Nov. 20, 27; Dec. 4, 11, 2020)

997 All Other Legals

Title Order No. 05942225 Trustee Sale No. 84977 Loan No. HUELIN APN: 088-030-100 NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST DATED 2/22/2018. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDINGS AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER. On 12/16/2020 at 12:30 PM, CALIFORNIA TD SPECIALISTS, AS TRUSTEE as the duly appointed Trustee under and pursuant to Deed of Trust Recorded on 3/1/2018 as Instrument No. 2018-014763 in book N/A, page N/A of official records in the Office of the Recorder of San Mateo County, California, executed by: DAVID L. HUELIN, TERESA F. WHITE-HUELIN, TRUSTEES OF THE DAVID HUELIN AND TERESA F. WHITE HUELIN LIVING TRUST DATED JUNE 24, 2016, as Trustor CHI-KOU, LILY FAN, HUSBAND AND WIFE AS JOINT TENANTS, as Beneficiary WILL SELL AT PUBLIC AUCTION TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER FOR CASH (payable at time of sale in lawful money of the United States, by cash, a cashier's check drawn by a state or national bank, a check drawn by a state or federal credit union, or a check drawn by a state or federal savings and loan association, savings association, or savings bank specified in section 5102 of the Financial Code and authorized to do business in this state). At: Outside the Marshall Street entrance to the Hall of Justice and Records located at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063, NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE — continued all right, title and interest conveyed to and now held by it under said Deed of Trust in the property situated in said County, California described the land therein: Lot 9 as shown on that certain Map entitled "Dearborn Park, Map No. 2, San Mateo County, California", filed in the Office of the County Recorder of

San Mateo County on March 7, 1924 in Book 11 of maps at Page 51. The property heretofore described is being sold "as is". The street address and other common designation, if any, of the real property described above is purported to be: 730 DEARBORN PARK ROAD PESCADERO, CA 94060. The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address and other common designation, if any, shown herein. Said sale will be made, but without covenant or warranty, expressed or implied, regarding title, possession, or encumbrances, to pay the remaining principal sum of the note(s) secured by said Deed of Trust, with interest thereon, as provided in said note(s), advances, if any, under the terms of the Deed of Trust, estimated fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee and of trusts created by said Deed of Trust, to-wit \$525,052.98 (Estimated). Accrued interest and additional advances, if any, will increase this figure prior to sale. The beneficiary under said Deed of Trust heretofore executed and delivered to the undersigned a written Declaration of Default and Demand for Sale, and a written Notice of Default and Election to Sell. The undersigned caused said Notice of Default and Election of Sell to be recorded in the county where the real property is located and more than three months have elapsed since such recordation. DATE: 11/16/2020 CALIFORNIA TD SPECIALISTS, AS TRUSTEE, as Trustee 8190 EAST KAISER BLVD., ANAHEIM HILLS, CA 92808 PHONE: 714-283-2180 FOR TRUSTEE SALE INFORMATION LOG ON TO: www.stoxposting.com CALL: 844-477-7869 PATRICIO S. INCE; VICE PRESIDENT CALIFORNIA TD SPECIALIST IS A DEBT COLLECTOR ATTEMPTING TO COLLECT A DEBT. ANY INFORMATION OBTAINED WILL BE USED FOR THAT PURPOSE. "NOTICE TO POTENTIAL BIDDERS: If you are considering bidding on this property lien, you should understand that there are risks involved in bidding at a trustee auction. You will be bidding on a lien, not on the property itself. Placing the highest bid at a trustee auction does not automatically entitle you to free and clear ownership of the property. You should also be aware that the lien being auctioned off may be a junior lien. If you are the highest bidder at the auction, you are or may be responsible for paying off all liens senior to the lien being auctioned off, before you can receive clear title to the property. You are encouraged to investigate the existence, priority, and size of outstanding liens that may exist on this property by contacting the county recorder's office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge you a fee for this information. If you consult either of these resources, you should be aware that the same lender may hold more than one mortgage or deed of trust on the property. NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNER: The sale date shown on this notice of sale may be postponed one or more times by the mortgagee, beneficiary, trustee, or a court, pursuant to Section 2924g of the California Civil Code. The law requires that information about trustee sale postponements be made available to you and to the public, as a courtesy to those not present at the sale. If you wish to learn whether your sale date has been postponed, and, if applicable, the rescheduled time and date for the sale of this property, you may call 844-477-7869, or visit this internet Web site www.stoxposting.com, using the file number assigned to this case T.S.# 84977. Information about postponements that are very short in duration or that occur close in time to the scheduled sale may not immediately be reflected in the telephone information or on the Internet Web site. The best way to verify postponement information is to attend the scheduled sale."

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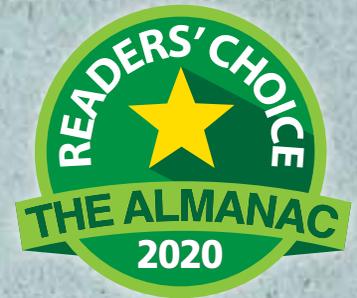
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DESPERATE TIMES, CREATIVE MEASURES

Using ingenuity, businesses pivot during the pandemic

By Elena Kadavy, Lloyd Lee, Kali Shiloh and Linda Taaffe



After the coronavirus hit the Bay Area, the halt of the local economy was swift and unprecedented. Over the past eight months, Midpeninsula businesses have had no idea how long or how extreme the impacts of COVID-19 might be. They've faced an unpredictable cycle of forced closures and partial reopenings — that at times have pivoted back and forth and back again within days amid changing health mandates that have indefinitely extended shelter-in-place orders from weeks into months.

As many local businesses rise above the chaos

and uncertainty to redefine their operations during this time when it appears that business as usual will not be usual anytime soon, their creativity, perseverance and commitment to serving the community has pushed the concept of “small business” beyond the established boundaries.

From Menlo Park's Flea Street Cafe, which used community donations to launch a meal program that spared kitchen layoffs while feeding thousands of meals to front-line workers at local hospitals each week, to Mountain View's Ava's Market,

which turned to robots to make contactless home deliveries, to Stanford University's Cantor Arts Center, which utilized real estate software to keep its collection accessible to the public, local businesses are blazing new trails and turning to unconventional ways to serve the community.

To salute their efforts, we are sharing the stories of how some businesses have responded to the coronavirus and taking a look at how our 2019 Readers' Choice winners are doing a year later.

Note: Local health restrictions have changed since this story was written.

'IT WAS LIKE THE WHOLE TOWN WAS IN THE STORE'

Bianchini's Market adjusts to new demands as an essential business

When news of a pending shelter-in-place order was announced in March, Bianchini's Market found itself in the center of a whirlwind as residents scoured the shelves for necessities before hunkering down at home.

“It was like the whole town was in the store,” an employee told this news organization in early May, describing that first day of shelter-in-place as “madness” inside the Portola Valley market.

Months later, even as shelter-in-place restrictions have been loosened, business hasn't returned to normal at the market: The pandemic continues to push demand above last year's levels.

While having more customers is generally a good thing, the designation of being an essential business has come at a price, according to store manager Jason Omana.

Enforcing social distancing, mask requirements and other new health restrictions while

accommodating an influx of customers can be challenging for staff, he said.

“My poor employees ... they have to act as policemen,” Omana said. “That is a lot to ask of them. That's not in their job description in any way, shape or form. All these new rules that people have to follow — the curve for that was so steep.”

At first, the rush on groceries and basic goods was overwhelming. “We've gotten used to it now,” he said.

Customers come to the store much less often now than in the early weeks of the pandemic, but when they do, they buy a lot, Omana said.

For two decades, the local community could count on Bianchini's to have their favorite cereal or salad dressing — the shelves always stocked, products always available. The pandemic has changed all that. Now, instead of pointing customers to specific

aisles, Bianchini's staff sometimes have to explain unreliable supply chains or product shortages. And although the staff is now well accustomed to the unpredictability that has accompanied COVID-19, the future looks less certain still.

“We've never had a holiday during a pandemic,” Omana said. “There used to be an easy playbook to follow during the holidays: You know how much broth to order, you know how much turkey to order, how much everything to order.”

The store has already seen a significant difference in holiday buying trends. Halloween candy that usually flies off the shelves was purchased slowly in October, and with travel discouraged and large family get-togethers ill advised, Omana has no idea if the store's demand will meet its supply.

A lot of the holiday inventory had to be ordered months in advance in the pre-pandemic



Sammy Dallal

Ada Braun shops at Bianchini's Market in Portola Valley during the first week of the stay-at-home order in March. As an essential business, the market has experienced an increase in customers and orders since last year.

days, Omana explained.

“Now, this hit ... basically (we need) to throw all those playbooks in the trash, because nothing can be predicted at this point,” he said.

The one thing Omana said he can count on is the community's support.

“We're pretty much a neighborhood store, and our

neighborhood has really supported us,” he said. “Some things have not gone well, and they've stuck with us. It's a good community to be a part of.”

See Readers' Choice listings on page 21 to learn how last year's Restaurant winners have responded to the pandemic.

—K.S.

'GOING FORWARD WILL BE MUCH MORE HYBRID'

Real estate software transforms museum collection into a virtual gallery

There's an art to exhibiting paintings, sculptures and a 235-ton piece of steel all under one roof — methods that curators have studied and developed over many centuries, said Susan Dackerman, outgoing director of the Cantor Arts Center at Stanford University.

“We have hundreds of years of experience of installing artworks in art museums,” Dackerman said. “Personally, I haven't had hundreds of years of experience, but there are traditions and conventions and you learn from those lessons.”

But how do you take an entire museum — originally intended

to be experienced in person — and put it online during a global health crisis?

For the Cantor Arts Center, Stanford University's home to more than 38,000 works of art, the real estate industry already had part of the answer.

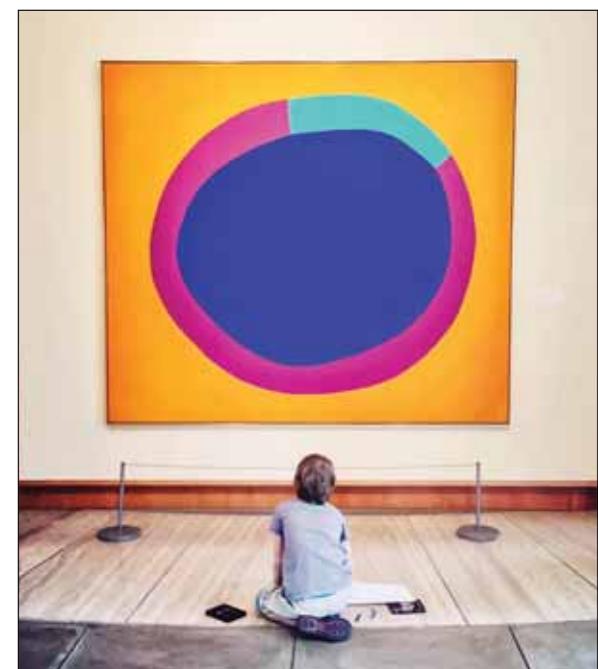
One of the problems the campus museum needed to solve was how to work around restrictions of large gatherings, and maintain itself as a resource not just for the local aesthetes, but also for the academics who look at the art center as an educational tool.

“We wanted to ensure that we had the means to support the

research and teaching mission of the university,” Dackerman said.

To do that, the museum invested in new pieces of technology — one of which is called Matterport, a 3D imaging platform that has been perfected for real estate professionals to show off commercial or residential properties online. (Clients of the Sunnyvale-based company include Coldwell Banker and Cushman & Wakefield.)

With Matterport, Cantor Arts Center is able to extract 3D renderings of the museum's space, along with its extensive



Courtesy Angela Drury

A visitor admires a painting at the Cantor Arts Center before the museum closed its doors to the public earlier this year. To keep its collections accessible to the public, the museum has launched a 3D gallery online that allows viewers to virtually walk through the art center.

collection of mid-20th century paintings of Auguste Rodin's bronze sculptures, and upload it to the museum website.

This allows viewers to virtually walk through some of the art center's 130,000-square-foot campus and, with the click of a button, zoom in on each piece of art.

The technology is not without its limitations, however. Dackerman and many other art lovers agree that current digital technology cannot fully replicate the experience of seeing all the true colors and textures of a piece of artwork in person.

"There is nothing better than a personal encounter with art; there's just so much more immediacy and intimacy that way," Dackerman said.

But the tradeoffs still come with benefits. With a large part of the museum now online, Cantor Arts Center is no longer limited to local visitors or researchers, but to anyone around the world.

"It's a really interesting proposition around museums, because it means that you can have the experience of going to the museum from your home, which

makes us more accessible to a much broader demographic," Dackerman said.

And virtual tours don't have to bear the burden of replacing the in-person experience. Instead, the museum director sees this digital initiative as an opportunity to encourage people to later seek out art in real life.

"Even after the closure is over, even after we're all moving through the world again, I think that we will have learned some really interesting lessons and that our program, going forward, will be much more

hybrid," Dackerman said. "It will be a combination of in-person and digital platforms because it really expands our base."

The art center continues to expand its virtual resources. Along with a large library of artist talks, learning guides and tours virtually led by docents, the museum will push out new exhibitions online.

Next year, for example, Cantor Arts Center plans to debut a new exhibition called "When Home Won't Let You Stay," where contemporary artists confront the issues of migration and global

movement — a particularly relevant topic when thinking about the spread of a virus, Dackerman said.

"In the last seven months or so, we've had to figure out a set of protocols for virtual tours," Dackerman said. "I would say we're still very much in the process of experimenting and learning from them."

See Readers' Choice listings on page 21 to find out how last year's Arts & Entertainment winners have responded to the pandemic.

—L.L.

'OUR TEAM IS STRONGER THAN EVER'

Iconic bookstore weathers pandemic without a single layoff

When the pandemic forced Kepler's Books & Magazines to close its doors to the public in March, the independent bookseller did what it's done many times over the past six decades: It adapted.

The Menlo Park store, facing a 40% drop in sales just two months into San Mateo County's shelter-in-place order, turned its focus to online sales and forged new relationships with its distributor and vendors to get books into customers' hands. Sales through Kepler's website quickly ballooned to more than 25 times of what the store saw pre-pandemic.

"The amount of growth has been astounding. It has blown our minds," CEO Praveen Madan said in May.

Since then, the store has been able to reopen to the public, and in-store shopping has reclaimed the majority of sales — about 60%. The bookseller, however, is still experiencing 10 to 12 times the number of online orders than it did previously.

What's more, the bookseller has weathered the pandemic without laying off a single employee.

At a staff meeting in March, while facing dismal prospects and weeks of quarantine, employees voted unanimously to reduce their hours across the board to avoid layoffs, Madan explained.

"We set a simple goal at the beginning of the pandemic that we were going to keep our team

together despite the shutdown and try to emerge stronger from this experience," he said. "This has proven to be a winning strategy. Our team is stronger than ever. We are collaborating wonderfully and able to innovate on many fronts."

While customers can once again browse the store's aisles to peruse thousands of titles in the revamped store, which has added MERV-13 medical-grade filters to its air-conditioning units to keep staff and guests safe, the bookseller is working on another shopping alternative: an open-air bookstore.

"Kepler's en plein-air," as Madan calls it, would once again transform the store to meet the needs of an ever-changing community of



Magali Gauthier

Cheryl Pan and her daughter, **Chloe Leung**, pick up a book they ordered from Kepler's Books in Menlo Park on June 2. The independent bookstore, which offers online and in-store service, plans to launch an open-air bookstore, which will be the first of its kind in the area.

booklovers by bringing books outdoors, where the risk of spreading the virus would dramatically decrease.

See Readers' Choice listings

on page 22 to find out how last year's Retail winners have responded to the pandemic.

—K.S.

'THEY'RE BRINGING US SOME REALLY NEAT THINGS'

Frame shop sees unique requests as residents get creative during quarantine

Tucked between hair salons and restaurants on Menlo Park's Santa Cruz Avenue, Peabody Gallery and Framing has fared better than many other small businesses during the pandemic.

The custom-framing and fine art gallery, which has been around for three decades, initially reopened for curbside pickup in May so customers could drop off their artwork and view samples of frame designs they had chosen online from a table set up at the front entrance.

According to owner **Elisa Spurlin**, there are rarely more than one or two people in the store during normal times, so keeping customers safe while transitioning back to business as usual hasn't posed too big of a challenge. Aside from masks and social distancing, "We haven't had to change much," she said.

As Peabody's neighbors have started letting customers come

back, she's seen foot traffic at her store increase as well.

"We are about 80% to 85% of where we were this time last year," she said.

Although the store is uniquely situated to weather the quarantine well, the business has made a few changes. The gallery, which people can still visit in person, is now accessible online.

"We are open, so people can come in and look, but in the world of trying to minimize contact, we're trying to promote the (virtual gallery) as best as we can," she said.

When it comes to framing, Spurlin has designated two tables for customers to use as home base and no longer lets them wander the store freely.

Spurlin said that after operating the store for 30 years, "you start to notice patterns, and this isn't the first time people have been hesitant to go out. There have been other times when the economy has been in a recession

and people stay home or they don't have the money to spend," she said.

Unlike the 2008 recession, when people were more hesitant to spend money on anything but necessities, the pandemic has left locals itching to improve their surroundings by making aesthetic home improvements.

"What's happened lately is people are cleaning like crazy, and they're finding things," Spurlin said.

Instead of throwing away old records or photos or even clothes that have been hidden in the attic, people are bringing them to Peabody and asking Spurlin to frame them.

"They're not traveling, so they're not getting things from vacations and stuff like that, but they are cleaning," she laughed. "They're bringing us some really neat things that have some really fun stories behind them."

She recently helped stuff and frame an old White Stag ski suit



Magali Gauthier

Elisa Spurlin, owner of Peabody Fine Art Gallery and Framing, talks as customer **Christine Tugadi** picks up a work of art in Menlo Park on May 27. Spurlin said besides requiring masks and other health mandates, the coronavirus hasn't impacted her business that much.

that is going on the wall of one customer's Lake Tahoe home.

Spurlin said she feels fortunate that she's still able to go to work every day and see her customers from a distance.

"Thank you to our community," she said. "It honestly seems like everybody out there is trying to do the right thing,

and to me, that's what's going to keep us open."

See Readers' Choice listings on page 26 to find out how last year's Service winners have responded to the pandemic.

—K.S.

See small businesses, page 20

Small businesses continued from page 19

MINIMIZING CUSTOMER INTERACTION: '180 DEGREES FROM OUR NATURAL INCLINATION'

With caviar still on the menu, Michelin-starred restaurant turns to takeout

When Village Pub servers, line cooks and dishwashers clock in to work these days, they immediately have their temperature taken. They sign a form that states in English and Spanish: "I certify that I am in good health and have had my temperature checked and recorded accurately at the beginning of my workday." They deposit the pen they used into a sleek silver container labeled "used pens," put on a mask and start their shift.

The Village Pub, located at 2967 Woodside Road in Woodside, reopened for both indoor and outdoor dining in June. While many of the signature touches of the 19-year-old Michelin-starred restaurant returned — the staff still uses handheld irons to steam wrinkles out of white tablecloths before setting the tables, caviar is still on the menu and service is paramount — much has changed in the age of COVID-19.

Diners can order on their smartphones from a digital QR code or physical menu, and the latter is sanitized after every use. The

menu was scaled down from 60 dishes to just 15, which are now offered in a \$75 per person pre-fixe model to reduce the time waiters spend at tables. Customers can only take their masks off when seated, and employees keep them on at all times. Only one employee is allowed at a table at a time unless it's to drop off dishes and leave.

The overarching goal, said Tim Stannard, founder of Bacchus Management Group, which operates The Village Pub, is to minimize the amount of interaction between employees and diners — a counterintuitive "180 degrees from our natural inclination, which is to spend as much time as we can (with customers)."

Reconfiguring The Village Pub's elegant dining room to allow for at least 6 feet of distance between tables meant operating at 50% capacity. The restaurant quickly secured the necessary permits to build an outdoor patio — which cost \$50,000 — that makes up for the lost tables. On a recent Monday evening, every table on the patio



Magali Gauthier

A masked server clears plates at The Village Pub in Woodside on July 6. To make up for lost tables indoors due to social-distancing requirements, the restaurant added an outdoor patio.

was full while a scarce number of parties sat inside. Stannard said the split between outdoor and indoor seating requests is about 70/30.

Plenty of people still want the traditional dine-in experience, he said. When Bacchus was discussing whether to resume indoor dining, they talked to staff, investors and customers. There was a "pressure — not a pressure," he

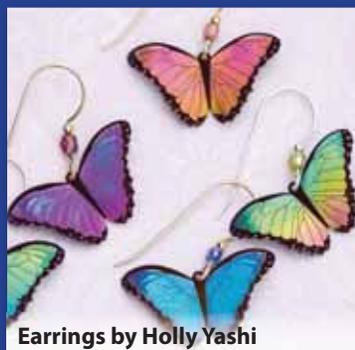
corrected himself, "but interest," from the community in reopening the dining room. It's sold out nearly every night since reopening, Stannard said in July.

The pandemic forced a major shift for The Village Pub, an upscale restaurant that places high value on the experience of dining in, into takeout. Pre-coronavirus, to-go orders generated less than

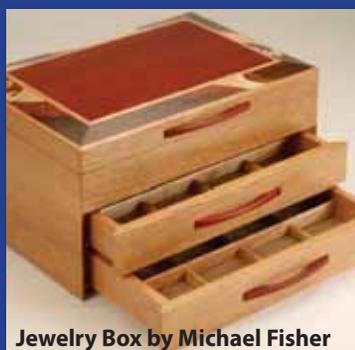
2% of sales for the restaurant, Stannard said. Now, delivery accounts for about 30% of sales — a number that's held since the restaurant reopened for indoor and outdoor dining.

See *Readers' Choice listings on page 21 to find out how last year's Restaurant winners have responded to the pandemic.* ■

—E.K.



Earrings by Holly Yashi



Jewelry Box by Michael Fisher



Necklace by Judi Eichler

Shady Lane

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READERS' CHOICE WINNERS: HOW ARE THEY DOING A YEAR LATER?

A lot has changed over the past year since readers voted for their favorite local places to eat, shop, work out or spend time with family and friends for The Almanac's annual Readers' Choice edition celebrating small businesses. The Almanac recently surveyed our 2019 winners to see how they are doing a year later. (Note: With ever-shifting public health guidelines, some services listed below may be modified. Check with the business before you go.)

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

Cafe Borrone

For decades, Cafe Borrone has been a beloved neighborhood destination, so when it was forced to close its doors due to hardships created by the pandemic, more than 700 patrons rallied together to raise \$110,000 to reopen the downtown landmark. The cafe is now open and serving food and drinks in its outdoor plaza next to the fountain and offers to-go orders and delivery.

1010 El Camino Real,
Menlo Park, 650-327-0830;
cafeborrone.com

2019: Place to Meet People
2019: Independent Coffee & Tea House
2019: Casual Dining
2019: Outdoor Dining

Flea Street Cafe

Jesse Cool's Flea Street Cafe is well known for its sustainable menu that only includes fresh, in-season, organic and local ingredients. During the pandemic, the Menlo Park restaurant has also become known among local hospitals for feeding dozens of frontline workers through its Meals of Gratitude program that Cool launched with Stanford University associate professor of medicine Holly Tabor. The program serves about 1,000 meals — funded by community donations — to Stanford Health Care workers each week. For patrons, the restaurant now offers its high-end dishes to go and also recently reopened its covered, heated outdoor deck.

3607 Alameda de las Pulgas,
Menlo Park, 650-854-1226;
cooleatz.com

2019: Place for a Date

Left Bank

Since it opened in 1998, Left Bank has been the go-to place for French cuisine and drinks served in a fun European



Courtesy Jesse Cool

A chef preps salad with the newly founded Meals of Gratitude, which is delivering meals from Flea Street Cafe in Menlo Park to local health care workers.

environment. During the pandemic, the restaurant is offering outdoor dining, limited indoor dining, curbside pickup and delivery service. All employees and vendors receive health screenings before entering the building and employees have been retrained and certified for new hygiene, sanitation and safety standards, according to the restaurant's website.

635 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park,
650-473-6543; leftbank.com

2019: Happy Hour
2019: French Restaurant

Menlo Tavern

Located at the Stanford Park Hotel, Menlo Tavern has won a place in the hearts of those who love great food and live music. The menu features American cuisine that follows the seasons. The restaurant is temporarily closed due to the pandemic.

100 El Camino Real,
Menlo Park, 650-330-2790;
menlotavern.com

2019: Live Music
2019: American Food

FOOD & DRINK

Amici's

Amici's has been serving up pizza — along with pasta, soup and salad — to Menlo Park patrons for the past decade. The thin-crust New York-style pies are cooked in traditional brick ovens next to an open flame.

Diners can now eat outdoors or order food for pickup or delivery.

880 Santa Cruz Ave.,
Menlo Park, 650-329-8888;
amicis.com

2019: Pizza

Baskin-Robbins

Longtime downtown ice cream shop Baskin-Robbins offers traditional ice cream and frozen yogurt in cups and cones, as well as sundaes, milkshakes, parfaits and ice cream cakes. The shop is currently open for pickup and delivery.

863 Santa Cruz Ave.,
Menlo Park, 650-323-9335;
baskinrobbins.com

2019: Ice Cream/Frozen Yogurt

Bianchini's Market

Since 1998, shoppers have counted on Bianchini's Market for fresh local produce, gourmet cheeses and groceries from small producers whose items aren't found at chain stores. The family-operated market has remained open throughout the pandemic as an essential business. In response, the market has implemented new health and safety policies, offers delivery in as little as one hour.

3130 Alpine Road, Portola
Valley, 650-851-4391;
bianchinismarket.com

2019: Place to Buy Meat
2019: Sandwiches
2019: Grocery
2019: Produce

Buck's of Woodside

The eclectic and quirky decor inside Buck's of Woodside is legendary — whimsical figures and aircraft hanging from the ceiling, floor and tabletop gewgaws and oddities, even a Statue of Liberty presiding over tables. Now, during the pandemic, patrons can explore the restaurant's museum-like collection from afar: Buck's has created a virtual, 3D replica of its entire dining room, which can be explored in detail on its website. The restaurant is open for outdoor dining and takeout.

3062 Woodside Road,
Woodside, 650-851-8010;
buckswoodside.com

2019: Breakfast
2019: Dining with Kids

Carpaccio

Ever since Ristorante Carpaccio opened in downtown Menlo Park in 1988, it has consistently won Readers' Choice for best Italian restaurant. Carpaccio features weekly lunch and dinner special menus, while also offering a full range of appetizers, soups, salads, pastas and meat and fish dinners. The restaurant is offering outdoor bistro dining, limited indoor dining and curbside to-go service.

1120 Crane St., Menlo Park,
650-322-1211; carpaccios.com

2019: Italian Restaurant

Cafe Del Sol

Cafe Del Sol in downtown Menlo Park offers extensive lunch and dinner menus with traditional Mexican fare such as enchiladas, tacos and burritos, as well as a range of chicken, fish and vegetarian dishes. The restaurant is now open for dine-in, takeout and delivery.

1010 Doyle St., Menlo Park,
650-326-2501

2019: Mexican Restaurant

Chef Chu's

Since opening in 1970, Chef Chu's specialty dishes, including its homemade potstickers and Beijing duck cooked in a cast-iron Chinese oven, have attracted a who's who list of diners from near and far, including Serena Williams, Steve Young, Justin Bieber and JFK Jr. Chef Chu's is open for drive-thru, takeout and delivery.

1067 N. San Antonio Road,
Los Altos, 650-948-2696;
chefchu.com

2019: Asian Food

See **READERS' CHOICE**, page 22



Magali Gauthier

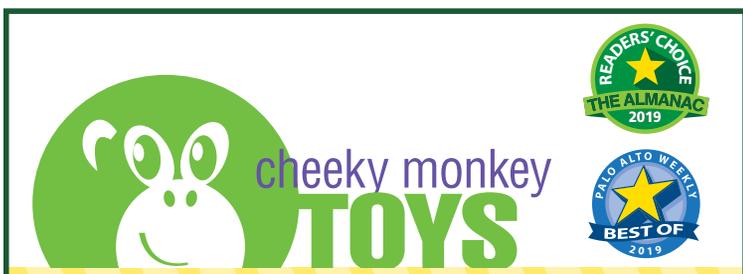
Patrons raised \$110,000 to keep Cafe Borrone from shuttering during the pandemic.



A heartfelt Thank You to our loyal customers. Your continuing support this year is helping us in our efforts to remain viable. Besides our full menu we are still offering our innovative special menu. Good wishes to you and your families during the holidays.

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www.carpaccios.com



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www.cheekymonkeytoys.com



Sammy Dallal

Jamis MacNiven, the recently retired owner of the longtime Buck's in Woodside, has launched a virtual tour of the quirky, museum-like collection in his restaurant until indoor dining resumes.

READERS' CHOICE
continued from page 21

Chef Kwan's

Located in the former Su Hong to-go space, Chef Kwan's offers a full menu of traditional dishes and lunch plates made to order. The restaurant is open for takeout seven days a week.

630 Menlo Ave., Menlo Park,
650-322-4631; chefkwans.com

2019: Takeout

Draeger's

The bakery at Draeger's Market has been a part of the Menlo Park community for 64 years, offering a variety of breads and sweets baked from scratch from favorites like German chocolate cake, vanilla coconut cake and s'mores cheesecake to wedding cakes. The bakery is open for service with new health practices. Groceries also can be picked up on site or purchased through third-party delivery services.

1010 University Drive,
Menlo Park, 650-324-7700;
draegers.com

2019: Dessert

Jeffrey's Hamburgers

With meat ground fresh every day and numerous patty options for those who don't eat beef, Jeffrey's Hamburgers has been a longtime favorite for those looking to binge on burgers. Jeffrey's also offers salads, soups, sandwiches, fish and chips, milkshakes and root beer floats. The restaurant is open for pickup and delivery seven days a week.

888 El Camino Real,
Menlo Park, 650-322-1959;
jeffreysburgers.com

2019: Hamburgers

Koma Sushi

Family-owned Koma Sushi Restaurant is where Japanese food cravings will be answered with customer favorites like flounder, sashimi, grilled squid, ahi sashimi and a nigiri combination plate. The restaurant is accepting dine-in and takeout orders Monday through Saturday.

211 El Camino Real,
Menlo Park, 650-321 5662;
komasushi.net

2019: Japanese Restaurant

The Village Bakery & Cafe

The Village Bakery & Cafe in Woodside offers breakfast, lunch, brunch and dinner, as well as specialty cocktails and spirits and wines by the glass and bottle. In addition to takeout and delivery, outdoor dining rooms are open for dinner nightly, and brunch on Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, according to the cafe's website. To keep guests safe, the Village Bakery has "carefully configured" its dining areas to accommodate guests at a safe distance. A limited number of reservations are accepted and walk-ins are welcome.

3052 Woodside Road,
Woodside, 650-851-5555;
tvbwoodside.com

2019: New Restaurant

The Village Pub

The Village Pub is an upscale Michelin Star restaurant that places high value on the experience of dining. Even during the pandemic, the upscale restaurant kept many of its signature touches — including

white tablecloths and caviar — as it resumed indoor dining at a reduced capacity in the restaurant's elegant dining room and expanded outdoor dining and takeout service.

2967 Woodside Road,
Woodside, 650-851-9888;
thevillagepub.net

2019: Romantic Restaurant

Woodside Bakery

Woodside Bakery offers pastries, cakes, cookies and other baked goods that have kept customers coming back for more than 35 years. The family-owned European bakery makes its baked goods from scratch every day. The shop is open for in-store pickup.

325 Sharon Park Drive,
Menlo Park, 650-854-6207;
woodsidebakery.com

2019: Bakery

RETAIL

Menlo Velo Bikes

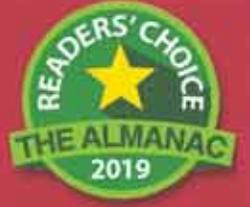
"Business has been through the roof" at Menlo Velo Bikes as the pandemic has fueled a surge in bike sales and ridership, according to owner Rainer Zaechlein, whose shop provides a wide variety of bicycles, rentals and maintenance services. The shop is currently open for curbside drop-off and pickup.

433 El Camino Real,
Menlo Park, 650-327-5137;
menlovelobicycles.com

2019: Bicycle Shop

See **READERS' CHOICE**, page 24

Bianchini's Market is your Readers' Choice for Best Place to Buy Meat, Best Produce, Best Grocery and Best Sandwiches.



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Magali Gauthier

Anna Chow, co-owner of Cheeky Monkey Toys, checks orders assembled for pick up in the downtown Menlo Park store on April 15 when the shop launched its pickup and delivery service after having to close to the public due to coronavirus health mandates.

READERS' CHOICE

continued from page 22

Kepler's Books & Magazines

Kepler's Books & Magazines has weathered the good, the bad and the unprecedented for the past 65 years. Although the independent bookseller looks a lot different than it did when it was the hangout for the counterculture in its early days in the 1960s, it has remained a beloved cornerstone in the community, offering a broad collection of books, magazines and literary events. In response to the pandemic, Kepler's nonprofit arm, the Kepler's Literary Foundation, created Refresh the Page, a series of online conversations, classes and seminars for adults and youth. The store is now open and also offering plaza pickup service.

1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park, 650-324-4321; keplers.com

2019: Bookstore

Shady Lane

From hand-carved Zuni necklaces and luminescent art glass to troll beads, Shady Lane has been offering one-of-a-kind pieces ever since artist Alice Deutscher opened the boutique more than four decades ago. The boutique is open for limited hours for in-store shopping three days a week and offers online shopping and curbside pickup. The store also offers gift wrapping.

325 Sharon Park Drive, Menlo Park, 650-321-1099; shadylanegallery.com

2019: Boutique
2019: Place to Buy Jewelry

Menlo Flooring & Design

Family-owned and operated Menlo Flooring & Design has been providing expert flooring design and installation for Peninsula residents for more than 20 years. During the pandemic, the store has opened its state-of-the-art showroom by appointment only.

905 El Camino Real, Menlo Park, 650-384-6326; menloflooring.com

2019: Floor Coverings

Portola Art Gallery

Portola Art Gallery has been showcasing local artists for 14 years at its current location in the Allied Arts Guild complex. After shutting down for three months during the shelter-in-place order, the gallery is again open for guests to view paintings, photos and pottery in person. It also has artwork displayed online. Although events have been canceled, artists are now visiting the gallery to answer visitor questions in person.

75 Arbor Road, Menlo Park, 650-321-0220; portolaartgallery.com

2019: Frame Store/Art Gallery

Ladera Garden & Gifts

Ladera Garden & Gifts is a one-stop shop for garden, gifts and flower arrangements. Juan and Mercedes Navarro, who have operated the full-service nursery for 39 years, have re-opened their business for in-store shopping Tuesday through Sunday.

3130 Alpine Road, Portola Valley, 650-854-3850; laderagardenandgifts.com

2019: Gift Shop
2019: Nursery
2019: Florist

Menlo Hardware

Menlo Park Ace Hardware has been the go-to hardware store for home, garden and building supplies since it opened in 2005. In addition to offering housewares and tools, the independently owned shop offers services, including key cutting, custom glass and acrylic sheet cutting, blade sharpening, window screen repair, propane exchange and product assembly and delivery. In-store shopping is available seven days a week.

700 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park, 650-325-2515; menlohardware.com

2019: Hardware Store

Flegel's Home Furnishings

Flegel's Home Furnishings has been a downtown Menlo Park fixture for 65 years. The family-owned furniture and interior design store has helped generations of clients create inviting home environments ever since Art and Cleora Flegel opened the furniture store at its original location on Santa Cruz Avenue. The shop, which moved into a new location on El Camino Real at the start of March just before the shelter-in-place went into effect, has reopened its doors for business.

1010 El Camino Real Suite 90, Menlo Park, 650-326-9661; flegels.com

2019: Home Decor & Furnishings

See **READERS' CHOICE**, page 26



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READERS' CHOICE

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Fleet Feet

Fleet Feet in Menlo Park is committed to enhancing local running and walking communities and helping customers find products that improve their fitness experience. They assess foot type and gait cycle and have 3D scanners to measure feet, making their footwear recommendations uniquely tailored to each customer. The Fleet Feet store has been reconfigured to allow for social distancing, and for those who prefer to shop online, they're offering virtual shoe fittings via Zoom. They are now closed on Mondays to allow for extra time to clean.

859 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park, 650-325-9432; fleetfeet.com

2019: Place to Buy Shoes

Cheeky Monkey Toys

Cheeky Monkey Toys is a family-owned shop that specializes in finding "just the right toy" for each customer. Since opening its doors in Menlo Park in 1999, the shop has provided interactive toys designed to stimulate children's minds to generations of local families. When all non-essential businesses were ordered to close in March, Cheeky Monkey Toys quickly pivoted to a direct

delivery-only service, dropping off toys within a 10-mile radius of the store. Cheeky Monkey has reopened for in-store shopping and also offers curbside pickup and delivery.

640 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park, 650-328-7975; cheekymonkeytoys.com

2019: Specialty Store

SERVICES

A Touch of Elegance Nail Care

Customers can expect quality service, a friendly staff and reasonable pricing at A Touch of Elegance Nail Care, a longtime favorite of Almanac readers. In addition to manicures and pedicures, A Touch of Elegance also offers facials and other services. The salon is open for in-person services with stations indoors that are spaced to comply with social-distancing guidelines.

1150 Crane St., Menlo Park, 650-321-0679

2019: Manicure/Pedicure

Guy Plumbing & Heating

Guy Plumbing & Heating is a fourth-generation family-owned business that provides a wide

range of services and operates a full-service showroom specializing in the sales and installation of Toto washlet bidet seats, as well as parts for Hansgrohe, Kohler and Grohe. Since the COVID-19 outbreak, the company has been taking measures to confirm the health status of customers and its staff before scheduling each appointment. Plumbers are wearing protective masks, gloves and shoe covers as well as maintaining social distance while on the job.

1265 El Camino Real, Menlo Park, 650-323-8415; guyplumbing.com

2019: Plumber

Jane Weston, MD

Dr. Jane Weston has been bringing expertise in plastic surgery to Bay Area patients since 1985. A graduate of Stanford Medical School, Weston offers plastic surgery for the face, breasts and body, as well as a range of medspa services, including Botox, fillers, laser, threads and body contouring. Weston now offers virtual consultations for those who want to limit face-to-face contact. For in-person appointments, all clients will have their temperatures taken upon entering the building, and additional safety measures are in place for patients who need to remove their face mask during an appointment.

1047 El Camino Real, Menlo Park, 650-457-6291; janewestonmd.com

2019: Plastic Surgeon

Ladera Cleaners

Ladera Cleaners offers one-day dry cleaning, mending and reweaving services, as well as alterations for wedding dresses and other items. Check the company's website for updated service changes.

3130 Alpine Road, Portola Valley, 650-854-2291; laderacleaners.net

2019: Dry Cleaner

Menlo Park Barber Shop

The barbers at Menlo Park Barber Shop pride themselves on developing close relationships with clients, giving excellent cuts and "blending craft and tradition with a strong dose of humor." The shop has reopened for in-person indoor visits, and barbers also are making house calls. Masks are required for all appointments.

2100 Avy Ave., Menlo Park, 650-391-9008; menloparkbarbershop.com

2019: Barber

Olive Hill Salon

Its charming setting and commitment to its clients are just a few of the reasons why readers voted Olive Hill Salon the best hair salon last year. Olive Hill specializes in hair cuts, coloring and styling. The salon is open with protective barriers between stations, enhanced sanitation measures and contactless payment options.

2920 Woodside Road, Woodside, 650-851-1150; olivehillsalon.com

2019: Hair Salon

Portola Valley Garage

Portola Valley Garage's skilled technicians have been providing minor tuneups and major overhauls since 1948. In addition to repair services, the garage offers 24-hour vehicle drop-off, online appointments and loaner cars. The shop is open for service.

4170 Alpine Road, Portola Valley, 650-851-7442; pvgarage.com

2019: Auto Repair

Stanford Park Hotel

Stanford Park Hotel describes itself as an "oasis" that offers its guests "genuine tranquility." This luxury hotel features a pool and spa, complimentary in-room snacks and fireside

spots for reading. Check the hotel's website for updated service changes.

100 El Camino Real, Menlo Park, 650-322-1234; stanfordparkhotel.com

2019: Hotel

Studio K-Fit

Studio K-Fit offers high-intensity but low-impact workouts focused on strength, mobility and cardio through high-intensity interval training (HIIT). Class sizes are small so that instructors can focus on each individual. The studio also offers lifestyle coaching, personalized nutrition guidance and Zoom and Facebook Live workouts.

3708 Florence St., Redwood City, studiokfit@gmail.com; studiokfit.com

2019: Fitness Classes

2019: Gym

Studio Rincon

Studio Rincon has been our Readers' Choice for best yoga studio since 2012. Studio Rincon offers a variety of different yoga and fitness classes for all levels, as well as ballet and hip-hop classes for children. Adult classes include gentle, power, and vinyasa yoga, as well as Zumba and cardio hip-hop. The studio ensures small class sizes so that instructors can focus on each individual, and classes are designed to be fun while still providing a good workout. The studio is streaming yoga and fitness classes online during shelter-in-place orders.

3536 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, 650-861-0242

2019: Yoga

Watercourse Way

Inspired by the natural hot springs of Tassajara, Watercourse Way now offers concierge massages that can be booked in clients' backyards. The spa is open for outdoor gazebo massages, facials and spa treatments as well as indoor massages and limited hot tub service. All rooms are equipped with Dyson air purifiers and UV lights. Hand sanitizer stations have been installed throughout the building. Masks are required for clients and therapists, and all staff undergo temperature checks before each shift.

165 Channing Ave., Palo Alto, 650-462-2000; watercourseway.com

2019: Day Spa

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About the cover: Carolee Hazard, a bookseller at Kepler's Books, prepares orders inside the Menlo Park store in June. Photo by Magali Gauthier.

To our Stanford Medicine Community

For months, we have faced the challenges of living through this pandemic together. And while we have more reasons to hope with each passing day that we will eventually defeat this virus, it is clear the crisis is far from over.

The number of COVID cases in the San Francisco Bay Area, as well as much of California, has soared over the past few weeks. Recently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention urged Americans to avoid large gatherings in an effort to stop the rapid spread of COVID-19. Hospitals across the nation are filling their beds more quickly, and our frontline healthcare workers are facing exhaustion.

This is a dangerous situation to be in, and we need everyone's help to fix it.

Even with so much uncertainty, the science is clear. We know what works to stop the spread of COVID-19:

- **Wear a mask.** Masks can save lives, including your own.
- **Wash your hands.** Thorough handwashing stops the virus from spreading.
- **Keep your distance.** Avoid gatherings and stay 6 feet apart from those you don't live with.

We know you have heard all of these recommendations before, but they are more important than ever.

Stanford Medicine is here for you, as always, and committed to being a part of the solution. We know you are counting on us, and we have mobilized everyone—our care teams, researchers, students, and staff—to rise to this challenge.

But we need you to know that we are counting on you, too. It is your help that will make the difference and determine whether or not we can slow the spread of the virus in the weeks and months ahead. It is your care and thoughtfulness that will save lives and shape the future.

We are here for you and with your help, we will get through this together.

Lloyd Minor, MD

Dean, Stanford School of Medicine

David Entwistle

*President and CEO
Stanford Health Care*

Paul King

*President and CEO
Stanford Children's Health*





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