

# The Almanac

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

DECEMBER 18, 2020 | VOL. 56 NO. 15



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## San Mateo County now under regional stay-at-home order

As ICU capacity drops, entire 11-county Bay Area region must comply with state restrictions

By Sue Dremann

Calling the human toll of the COVID-19 pandemic “devastating,” San Mateo County announced it will enforce the state’s regional stay-at-home order starting Thursday, Dec. 17, at 11:59 p.m., officials said on Wednesday. The announcement came after the Bay Area’s intensive care unit capacity plunged to 12.9%, which triggered the state’s mandated order.

The order will affect 10 counties. Regions around the state must employ the stay-at-home restriction on businesses and activities when ICU capacity drops below 15%. The order aims to reduce the number of hospitalizations and deaths from COVID-19 infection and to prevent overwhelming the health care system.

Most Bay Area counties fast-tracked the stay-home order on Dec. 4 after Santa Clara County’s ICU capacity dropped below 15%, as a precautionary

measure. Health officials anticipated their counties would soon follow. San Mateo County did not join the early restrictions, but under the state guidelines, it must now comply.

The order prohibits private gatherings of any size, except for outdoor church services and political demonstrations. Restaurants must stop offering in-person dining, even outdoors, and can only offer takeout and delivery services. Salons and barbershops must close. Retail businesses can remain open with 20% capacity. All retail establishments must have entrance metering and can’t have eating or drinking within stores. Nonessential travel, hotels and short-term rentals for leisure are banned.

The order is less sweeping than previous lockdowns instituted last spring, the county noted. People can continue essential activities such as grocery shopping, visiting a doctor

See **HEALTH ORDER**, page 16



Magali Gauthier

**Gina Hampton** styles Kathy Berra’s hair at DJ’s Hair Design Inc. in Menlo Park on July 8. As of this week, hair salons must close for the next three weeks under the state’s regional stay-at-home order.

## Police: Latest Atherton burglaries may be tied to 2018-19 crimes

Council member says there is lead in theft of \$800K worth of jewelry

By Angela Swartz

Almanac Staff Writer

Police have reason to believe recent home burglaries in Atherton — including the theft of \$800,000 worth of jewelry taken from a home on Dec. 8 — are linked to a crime spree in town two years ago, they told residents during a meeting on Dec. 9 over Zoom, which 212 people attended. Police may also have a lead on the culprits, Atherton City Council member Rick DeGolia told The Almanac.

One of the town’s new license plate readers captured the

vehicle associated with the Dec. 8 jewelry theft, DeGolia said in an email Tuesday. Police have linked the same car to two other thefts in the Bay Area, he said.

The most recent burglaries, which police described in a Dec. 15 press release, took place between Dec. 7 and Dec. 15. They are among the nine burglaries in town since Oct. 1.

During a November 2018 to February 2019 spree, millions of dollars’ worth of goods were stolen in 20 residential burglaries over a four-month period.

Police said gang members in Southern California, who were

arrested, jailed or deported, were the culprits then. They may still be communicating with others to commit crimes, possibly including the nine burglaries in town that have taken place since Oct. 1, said Atherton Police Chief Steve McCulley.

“It appears that they are back,” he said. The break-in method on Dec. 8 on Greenoaks Drive is notably consistent with the prior string of burglaries, in which thieves climbed up to the second story of homes to gain entry.

Burglars struck again last week. Sometime between the

early afternoon on Dec. 9 and 4 p.m. on Dec. 12, an unknown suspect smashed a second-story window at a home on Serrano Drive near Stockbridge Avenue, according to police. The burglar(s) appeared to have used a patio couch turned on its side to climb to the second story, police said.

There is security footage from the Dec. 8 burglary, and police are hopeful they will capture images of the suspects, McCulley said. Unfortunately, if it is the same crew from two years ago, they often make themselves unidentifiable on camera, wearing hoodies and

face masks, he said.

The same group likely broke into homes up the Peninsula in Hillsborough, McCulley said. They tend to burglarize residents mid-week or mid-evening and come when there is still daylight, and wait until it gets dark to see which homes do not have lights on and appear to be unoccupied.

“The burglary last night (Dec. 8) fit that MO (modus operandi) exactly,” he said, noting the burglary happened between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. and burglars entered through a

See **BURGLARIES**, page 16

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Help local families in need 10

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# 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 remain open even during shelter-in-place and continue to care for patients safely.

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**

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**Paul King**

*President and CEO  
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*—Cece’s mom, Kristin*

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# Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY



Olivia Treynor

**A conductor** boards a southbound Caltrain at the Atherton station on its last day of rail service on Dec. 13. Town officials and Caltrain inked an agreement to end use of the station after 158 years.

## All aboard for the last stop at Atherton's train station

By **Angela Swartz**  
Almanac Staff Writer

It was the end of the line for rail service in Atherton last weekend. The final train stopped in town on the evening of Sunday, Dec. 13. Caltrain opted earlier this month to discontinue service in town in favor of nearby Menlo Park and Redwood City stations, which have much higher ridership and where denser developments are projected to generate higher levels of future

demand for rail service.

The Atherton City Council voted to shut down the historic station at the end of October because of low ridership over the years and a desire to safeguard the town from future legislation similar to the recent Senate Bill 50, which would have required cities to allow high-density housing development near public transit.

"I have very mixed reactions to the Caltrain decision to close the Atherton station and to stop scheduled stops in Atherton

after 158 years," said Council member Rick DeGolia in an email. "On the one hand, it is sad that Caltrain has chosen to close the station due to low ridership because the station is a real asset to Atherton, and Atherton has been involved with the train for more than 150 years. It is sad to see the elimination of a train stop that is so convenient. On the other hand, time creates change and with the center of business

See **CALTRAIN**, page 13

## First FDA-approved COVID-19 vaccine reaches Midpeninsula

Pfizer-BioNTech going out to health workers, seniors in care facilities

By **Sue Dremann**

After the Food and Drug Administration on Dec. 11 authorized the first COVID-19 vaccine by Pfizer-BioNTech, doses began to be distributed in the United States.

The FDA's emergency authorization allows the vaccine to be given to anyone age 16 and older. The Bay Area started getting shipments of the vaccine this week, with Santa Clara County receiving 17,550 doses in the initial distribution, county health leaders said.

San Mateo County was initially allocated 5,850 doses of the Pfizer vaccine and county officials expect to receive five to six times that many Pfizer and Moderna vaccines by the end of the month, according to a statement. The county also received two sub-zero freezers to be used for storing vaccines on Wednesday, Dec. 16. The vaccines must be stored at ultra-cold temperatures to remain effective.

San Mateo County's first vaccines arrived Tuesday, Dec. 15, and will be distributed to the six general acute hospitals in the county to be administered to staff, according to a county media advisory.

The first 5,850 doses of the vaccine arrived in Santa Clara County at about 7:30 a.m. Tuesday, offering what battle-weary public health leaders called "a glimmer of hope in the long fight" against COVID-19. The remaining doses are being shipped from the manufacturer directly to the hospitals this week, including the Veterans Affairs Palo Alto Health Care System, which began giving shots on Wednesday.

FDA Commissioner Dr. Stephen M. Hahn hailed the vaccine's authorization as the beginning to control the deadly virus.

"The FDA's authorization for emergency use of the first COVID-19 vaccine is a significant milestone in battling this devastating pandemic that has affected so many families in the

United States and around the world. Today's action follows an open and transparent review process that included input from independent scientific and public health experts and a thorough evaluation by the agency's career scientists to ensure this vaccine met FDA's rigorous, scientific standards for safety, effectiveness, and manufacturing quality needed to support emergency use authorization. The tireless work to develop a new vaccine to prevent this novel, serious, and life-threatening disease in an expedited time frame after its emergence is a true testament to scientific innovation and public-private collaboration worldwide," he said in the statement.

The totality of the available data provides clear evidence that the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine may be effective in preventing COVID-19, the agency said in its statement.

"The data also support that the known and potential benefits outweigh the known and potential risks, supporting the vaccine's use in millions of people 16 years of age and older, including healthy individuals. In making this determination, the FDA can assure the public and medical community that it has conducted a thorough evaluation of the available safety, effectiveness and manufacturing quality information."

### How it works

The vaccine contains a small piece of the severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2) virus' messenger RNA (mRNA), which is a piece of genetic material that instructs cells in the body to make the virus' distinctive "spike" protein. The body of a person who receives the vaccine produces copies of the spike protein, which triggers the immune system to react defensively and produce an immune response against SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19 disease. Pfizer's vaccine showed a 95%

See **VACCINE**, page 17

## High school students won't go back to classrooms next semester

By **Angela Swartz**  
Almanac Staff Writer

Sequoia Union High School District students will not return to classrooms for learning when the spring semester rolls around on Jan. 4.

Given the COVID-19 pandemic's current "fluidity," district officials decided to start next semester under the current distance learning model, the district website states.

"I hope this is the last semester we ever do (distance learning)," said Georgia Jack during a Dec.

9 meeting, her last as a trustee before her term expired Dec. 16. "I wish we (the district) would have been more creative. I think we really allowed tradition to push us forward and we weren't really taking the opportunities that were presented to us; I understand everyone is in a crisis."

Jack and other school board members agreed that it would benefit students socially to come to campus for club meetings or athletic conditioning, even if there isn't academic instruction in person. Some students are

already training for sports in person in small cohorts.

The district submitted a plan to the San Mateo County Office of Education this month to prepare for an eventual reopening of schools for in-person instruction. The plan includes an option to have some students learn over Zoom in a room on campus while others would continue lessons through Zoom at home. Those students returning to campus would be selected based on their internet

See **HIGH SCHOOLS**, page 19

**TOWN OF WOODSIDE**

2955 WOODSIDE ROAD, WOODSIDE, CA 94062

**INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR  
ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE REVIEW BOARD**

The Architectural and Site Review Board reviews and makes recommendations to the Planning Director regarding community character, site planning, building design and landscape elements on residential and commercial applications.

Meetings are held on the first and third Monday of each month at 4:30 p.m. Appointments are for a four-year term, expiring February 2024.

Interested residents may request information and applications from the Town Clerk, Jennifer Li, by e-mailing [jl@woodsidetown.org](mailto:jl@woodsidetown.org).

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: Friday, January 29, 2021, by 5 p.m.**

**INTERVIEW AND APPOINTMENT BY TOWN COUNCIL:  
Tuesday, February 9, 2021, 7:00 p.m.**

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING  
BEFORE THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF  
THE WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a public hearing will be held before the Board of Directors of the West Bay Sanitary District at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 13, 2021, at the District Offices, located at 500 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, California to consider the adoption of an ordinance amending Section 209 "Board Member Compensation" of the District's Code of General Regulations to increase the amount Board Members shall be compensated for attendance at meetings of the Board or for each day's service rendered as a Director by request of the Board from \$230.00 per day up to \$240.00 per day, not to exceed six days in any calendar month.

**WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT**

By: /s/ Sergio Ramirez  
Sergio Ramirez  
District Manager

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To request delivery, or stop delivery, of The Almanac in zip code 94025, 94027, 94028 and the Woodside portion of 94062, call 854-2626.

**COMMUNITY BRIEFS****Superior Court suspends jury trials until Jan. 8**

All jury trials in San Mateo County Superior Court have been suspended through Jan. 8, court officials announced Monday.

The order was made "Due to the significant surge in COVID-19 cases statewide, the corresponding orders for residents to stay at home," and an emergency order from state Supreme Justice Tani Gorre Cantil-Sakauye.

The San Mateo court has also closed most clerk's offices to the public and suspended walk-in transactions to minimize foot traffic.

Certain in-person hearings are also suspended. Documents filed electronically, or via mail or on-site drop boxes, will still be accepted.

The Juvenile Clerk's Office at the Youth Services Center will remain open to the public.

"The closures and suspension of services are unfortunate, but are necessary to minimize public interaction and contact, which are the chief risks of community spread of the coronavirus," said Neal Taniguchi, San Mateo County's court executive officer.

He said staffing shortages due to the state's budget crisis contributed to the suspension and curtailing of Clerk's Office services.

For more details visit [sanmateocourt.org](http://sanmateocourt.org) or contact the court at (650) 261-5016.

—Bay City News Service

**Fire district hosts virtual visits with Santa**

This year, it turns out even Santa Claus is doing some of his work over Zoom, but instead of taking calls from the North Pole, he has set up shop at a local firehouse. The Woodside Fire Protection District is arranging for video chats with Kris Kringle on Dec. 22 in a virtual substitute for the traditional visit to sit on Santa's lap.

To participate, send a letter to Santa and include an email address and phone number. The letter can be dropped off in one of the special "Santa" mailboxes at Station 7, 3111 Woodside Road, Woodside; Station 8, 135 Portola Road, Portola Valley; or Station 19, 4091 Jefferson Ave., Woodside. Letters can also be emailed or sent by regular mail, but all letters must be received by Dec. 19. Then Santa's helpers will get in touch to set up a chat.

To make sure everyone has a chance to video chat with Santa, calls will be limited to five minutes each.

For more information or to email a letter, contact Selena Brown at [selenab@woodsidefire.org](mailto:selenab@woodsidefire.org).

—Heather Zimmerman

**New Caltrain schedule**

Caltrain's new schedule aims to improve service for essential workers and others dependent on public transit who have continued riding the agency's trains amid the COVID-19 pandemic that has reduced overall ridership by 95%.

The new schedule, which took effect Monday, Dec. 14, includes more frequent off-peak and weekend service. Nine months into the pandemic, riders tend to be essential workers who may travel during off-peak times.

There will be 68 trains on weekdays, with two trains per hour, per direction running throughout the day, allowing for 30-minute frequency at stations in higher demand, including the connection with BART at Millbrae.

On the weekends, Caltrain will run hourly local service, improving on the current 90-minute frequency, among other changes. The agency says weekend riders make up 17% of overall ridership, three times more than before the pandemic.

According to Caltrain, about 3,600 riders currently ride its trains on weekdays, and the agency does not expect ridership to fully recover in the new year.

The new schedule can be found at [tinyurl.com/  
caltrain-new-schedule](http://tinyurl.com/caltrain-new-schedule).

—Bay City News Service

**County offers free mental health app**

For individuals who are experiencing pandemic-related stress and anxiety right now — and frankly, who isn't — San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services has partnered with Headspace to provide the Headspace app free to anyone who lives, works or goes to school in San Mateo County through August 2021.

The app provides guided mindfulness exercises, meditations,

See **COMMUNITY BRIEFS**, page 20

# Drew Combs is Menlo Park's new mayor

Outgoing Mayor Cecilia Taylor highlights accomplishments in a difficult year

By **Kate Bradshaw**  
Almanac Staff Writer

It looked different this year, but the Menlo Park City Council still managed to cram in several of its year-end traditions at its last scheduled meeting of 2020, which took place over video.

These traditions included recognizing outgoing Mayor Cecilia Taylor and outgoing council member Catherine Carlton, selecting Drew Combs as the next mayor, and swearing in new council member Jen Wolosin and reelected council member Ray Mueller. Councilwoman Betsy Nash was named vice mayor.

Taylor gave a succinct State of the City speech, highlighting the accomplishments of the city as a whole and her accomplishments as mayor. As a departure from some previous years, it wasn't in a fancy venue and didn't have free snacks, but Taylor's speech highlighted the significant accomplishments of a council and city staff hit with the biggest public health crisis in a lifetime — and its many ripple effects throughout society and the economy.

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced city operations to transition in big ways nearly overnight, Taylor said. Many staffers began working from home while others started making wellness checks and home deliveries, and in-person activities pivoted to online offerings. The library reopened for curbside pickups, she said.

In grappling with the economic impacts of the pandemic throughout the community, the council worked together to make major budget cuts and crafted programs to provide funding to those in need, such



Michelle Le

**Drew Combs** was selected on Dec. 15 to be Menlo Park's mayor for 2021.

as renters facing evictions, struggling businesses and restaurants looking to provide outdoor dining.

The year also brought growing demands to enact police reform in the aftermath of the police killings of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. The council dealt with the resignation of the city's police chief and brought on interim Chief Dave Spiller, and is holding listening sessions with community members about policing in Menlo Park.

In addition, the council passed an updated climate action plan laying out environmental and energy policies to reduce fossil fuel emissions, as well as an ordinance to make it easier to build accessory or secondary dwelling units, Taylor said.

Among the accomplishments she highlighted were working to help the unhoused population in the marshlands near Bayfront Expressway, advocating for community needs by revising the list of amenities that developers should provide the community when they construct large buildings, highlighting the potential impacts of sea level rise for the Belle Haven neighborhood, working to get air quality monitors installed in Belle Haven, and representing the historically underrepresented neighborhood on the council.

See **COMBS**, page 18

## OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include: **Robert Earl Capps**, 63, a real estate developer and former Woodside resident who died on Oct. 22; **Pat P. DiSibio**, 88, a longtime Menlo Park resident and building contractor who died on Oct. 22; **Dorothy Gravelle**, 95, an Atherton resident of more than 50 years who died on Nov. 4; **Donald Orville Young**, 88, a real estate broker and Menlo Park resident who died on Nov. 7; **Dan Pomeroy**, 77, a Menlo Park resident who died on Nov. 17; **Lois Marilla John**, 87, a former Woodside resident who died on Dec. 4; **Nancy Lou Kiesling**, 88, owner of the The Book Rack bookstore and a Menlo Park resident, who died on Dec. 9; **Norah Margaret Bretall**, 85, a former Menlo Park and Atherton resident who died on Dec. 10; and **Elizabeth Campbell Kridl**, 95, a longtime Atherton resident and active local volunteer, who died on Dec. 10.

To read full obituaries, leave remembrances and post photos, go to [LastingMemories.com/obituaries](http://LastingMemories.com/obituaries).

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### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

#### PLANNING COMMISSION – CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW TEMPORARY USE OF ATHLETIC FIELDS FOR OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES WITH TEMPORARY LIGHTING

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the Atherton Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to consider an application by Menlo School for a Conditional Use Permit to allow outdoor recreational activities at its athletic fields and associated temporary lighting at Menlo School, 50 Valparaiso Avenue, Atherton, CA, pursuant to Atherton Municipal Code Chapters 17.12, 17.36 and 17.56.

**Description:** Request for a Conditional Use Permit to allow Menlo School to utilize temporary lighting from January 19, 2021 through March 12, 2021 from the hours of 3:45 pm until 6:15 pm Monday through Friday on Cartan Field and Wunderlich Field (only as needed based on field conditions).

The proposal has been determined to be exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Sections 15301, Class 1, relating to use of existing facilities and 15323, Class 23, for normal operations of facilities for gatherings.

**NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN** that said application is set for hearing by the Planning Commission at its Special meeting on **December 28, 2020 at 6:00 PM** via teleconference/ZOOM accessible through the below-described information, at which time and place public comments will be heard and all persons interested may participate and show cause, if they have any, why the Conditional Use Permit should or should not be approved.

This meeting is being held in compliance with the Governors Executive Order N-25-20 issued on March 4, 2020, and Executive Order N-29-20 issued on March 17, 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 tele or video conferencing. The public may participate in the Planning Commission Meeting via: Zoom Meeting.

**Join Zoom Meeting:** <https://zoom.us/j/147031861>

**Meeting ID:** 147-031-861

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**Remote Public Comments:**

Meeting participants are encouraged to submit public comments in writing in advance of the meeting. The following email will be monitored during the meeting and public comments received will be read into the record.

**Email:** [jgarcia@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:jgarcia@ci.atherton.ca.us)

**IF YOU CHALLENGE** the Conditional Use Permit in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the Planning Commission at, or prior to, the public hearing.

An aggrieved party may appeal the decision of the Planning Commission to the City Council, in writing, within 10 days of the date of the decision.

If you have any questions on the item please contact Lisa Costa Sanders, Town Planner, at [lcostasanders@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:lcostasanders@ci.atherton.ca.us) or 650-333-0248. Any attendee who wishes accommodation for a disability should contact the Lisa Costa Sanders at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

Date Posted: December 18, 2020

ATHERTON PLANNING COMMISSION

/s/ L. Costa Sanders

Lisa Costa Sanders, Town Planner

# Coronavirus central: State health officials update recreational sports guidelines

By Embarcadero Media staff

**S**an Mateo County reported 19,330 cumulative coronavirus cases as of Tuesday. The death toll stands at 183. There were 110 people hospitalized. Santa Clara County as of Tuesday had 50,315 COVID-19 cases. The seven-day rolling average of new cases per day ending Dec. 7 is 1,056. Twenty-four more people have died, raising the death toll to 553. In addition, 528 people were hospitalized with the virus, 89 of which were new.

## California groups sports into four tiers

The California Department of Public Health revised its guidance for youth and recreational adult sports Monday, outlining which are allowed in each of the state's four pandemic reopening tiers.

The new guidelines apply to all organized sports, including school and community-sponsored programs and privately organized leagues.

Sports are grouped in each of

the four tiers by their potential for the virus to spread, with factors including how much contact players make with each other and whether a sport or activity is played indoors or outdoors.

"I know as a parent and athlete myself, how important exercise is to maintain physical and mental health, and we encourage members of the same household to do physical activities together and outdoors until the current and alarming surge passes," said Dr. Erica Pan, the state's acting public health officer.

Outdoor physical conditioning, practice and skill training are all allowed across the state, including in counties that have implemented a stay-at-home order or are under the state's stay-at-home order.

Residents in a county with a stay-at-home order are strongly encouraged to avoid exercising with people from another household under any circumstance.

"Despite how hard it has been to do this for so many months, it's imperative now more than ever that we all follow



Magali Gauthier

**Volunteers** check in people at a COVID-19 test site in Belle Haven on Dec. 13.

public health guidance by staying home and not mixing with other households," Pan said.

The new guidelines apply to counties that are not under the state's stay-at-home order, according to the CDPH, which developed the guidelines with stakeholders like the California Interscholastic Federation and the California Association of Recreation and Park Districts.

More than two dozen sports

and exercise activities are allowed in the most restrictive "purple" tier, according to the new guidelines, including biking, golf, ice and roller skating, programs like yoga and Zumba, running, swimming, skiing, snowboarding and hiking.

For sports in all four tiers, competition will not be allowed to resume statewide until Jan. 25 at the earliest.

State officials will reevaluate

that date in early January depending on the state of the pandemic and California's capacity of hospital and intensive care unit beds.

"We need everyone to take seriously their responsibility to protect their entire community, and in the meantime, we all can look forward to these activities we can resume in 2021," Pan said.

The list of which sports and activities are allowed in each tier can be found at [cdph.ca.gov](http://cdph.ca.gov).

## 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](http://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](http://tinyurl.com/c19-Almanac). **A**

*CalMatters and Bay City News Service contributed to this report.*



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# Give to The Almanac Holiday Fund

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

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

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

## Boys & Girls Clubs

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

## Ecumenical Hunger Program

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

## 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

Supports literacy programs and projects through fundraising and community awareness. Helps community members enhance their reading, writing and related skills and education to improve their economic, professional and personal wellbeing.

## 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

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.

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Changes or corrections to listings may be made by contacting Kali Shiloh at kshiloh@almanacnews.com.

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# Holiday Fund: LiveMoves assists unhoused students and their families

By **Nacole Barth-Ellis**  
Special to The Almanac



It's easy to label 2020 a year to forget, with nothing but heartbreak and hardship. But things are growing more positive with each day for Heilala and her family. She and her six family members were living in one bedroom of a friend's home. When the friend decided to sell the house, Heilala, a high school senior, and her family became homeless.

Heilala said having a roof over their heads, "a home" at Haven Family House in Menlo Park, was life-changing, especially when the family was forced to quarantine for 14 days due to COVID-19. But being homeless significantly impacted her school performance. Heilala said she didn't confide with her classmates about her living situation, but did share with her teachers and school counselors about the challenges she and her family were facing. "I struggled a lot with balancing my own needs, my family, and school. My only focus was on the fact that we were homeless. I lacked the motivation to even try at school and so I fell behind," Heilala admitted.

COVID-19 has increased anxiety among both our oldest and youngest LifeMoves clients. Moving to a remote learning format while adhering to social distance protocols has required creative solutions to ensure students are not left behind academically. Many parents are struggling with how to help their children who are learning remotely, and it's especially challenging for students who have special needs or if there is a language barrier. All LifeMoves family shelters have Children's Services Coordinators (CSCs), who are

essentially case managers for the children in our shelters. Since the shelter-in-place order was mandated in March, our CSCs have been providing extra services to ensure all school-aged children in our shelters have everything they need for remote learning.

Students at all six LifeMoves family shelters have personal computers and improved internet access for remote learning. With many children from the same family often taking classes at the same time, headphones are critically important to focus on individual lessons. Common spaces at LifeMoves shelters have been repurposed to accommodate student learners on-site.

LifeMoves is one of the beneficiaries of The Almanac's Holiday Fund. Because The Almanac and its partner the Silicon Valley Community Foundation cover all the administrative costs, every dollar raised goes directly to this year's 10 nonprofit organizations. Donations to the Holiday Fund can be made at [almanacnews.com/holiday\\_fund](http://almanacnews.com/holiday_fund).

Heilala attributes the unwavering support her family found at Haven Family House with helping her graduate from a local high school this spring, though she was sad not have been able to participate in a traditional graduation ceremony. On the advice of her CSC, Heilala is continuing her education at College of San Mateo. She credits the encouragement she received from the



Courtesy LifeMoves

**Heilala** and her family had to quarantine for 14 days due to COVID-19.

CSCs and LifeMoves' student therapist for helping her persevere. "Once confused, scared and alone, I now feel more comfortable, grateful, well-supported and willing to pay it all forward," Heilala said.

LifeMoves plans to help even more families like Heilala's in 2021. A new shelter in Mountain View is slated to open later this winter and will serve 12 families and 88 individuals. The first new shelter in Santa Clara County in many years, the space will provide 10 times the number of year-round shelter beds available in Mountain View. For more information on this project, visit [lifemoves.org/homekey](http://lifemoves.org/homekey).

LifeMoves' mission, since 1987, has been to provide interim housing and supportive services for homeless families and individuals to rapidly return to stable housing and self-sufficiency. Over the course of a year, we provide food, clothing, customized case management, and 240,000 nights of shelter — all provided at no charge to our clients. On any given night, we house more than 1,200 individuals, about one-third of whom are children.

LifeMoves operates 24 shelters and service sites within San Mateo and Santa Clara counties. To learn more about LifeMoves, visit [lifemoves.org](http://lifemoves.org) or call 650-685-5880. ■

*Nacole Barth-Ellis is a gift officer for LifeMoves.*



Courtesy LifeMoves

**LifeMoves**, a Holiday Fund beneficiary, is planning to open a new shelter in Mountain View later this winter that will serve 12 families and 88 individuals.

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# Feds, 40-plus states sue Facebook over anticompetitive practices

Social media giant could be forced to divest from Instagram, WhatsApp

By Bay City News Service

Menlo Park-based Facebook is being sued by the Federal Trade Commission and multiple states for alleged monopoly practices, California Attorney General Xavier Becerra's office said Dec. 9.

The states' suit stems from Facebook's acquisition of Instagram in 2012 and WhatsApp in 2014. Those acquisitions allegedly produced fewer options for social networking, increased ads directed at users and restricted the variety and quality of privacy measures for users.

Becerra alleges that Facebook has gained a monopoly by buying the emerging competitors. The FTC alleges also that Facebook

has been imposing anticompetitive conditions on makers of software.

"Anticompetitive behavior harms the market, whether that is a market for health care, telecommunications, or social networking," Becerra said in a statement.

"Facebook leveraged its market power to squash competition and monopolize the market, enabling greater collection and control of data and squandering innovation," he said.

Forty-six states, the District of Columbia and Guam want Facebook in the future to tell them in advance of certain mergers and acquisitions and an injunction to stop the company from any more anticompetitive behavior.

But Facebook vice president and general counsel Jennifer Newstead said federal regulators and the states have stood by now for years as Facebook has invested millions of hours and billions of dollars making Instagram and WhatsApp what they are today.

The Instagram and WhatsApp acquisitions were reviewed by the appropriate federal regulators at the time and neither regulator disapproved of the purchases, Newstead said.

"Regulators correctly allowed these deals to move forward because they did not threaten competition," she said in a statement.

This is not how antitrust laws are supposed to work, she said.

A spokesperson for the FTC

was not immediately available to respond to the apparent turnaround by the regulator.

Federal regulators said that among other measures they could take, they could break up Facebook by forcing it to divest of Instagram and WhatsApp and possibly other acquisitions.

"Our aim is to roll back Facebook's anticompetitive conduct and restore competition so that innovation and free competition can thrive," Ian Conner, director of the FTC's Bureau of Competition, said in a statement.

State prosecutors allege that testimony by Facebook executives and emails show that the company bought Instagram and WhatsApp to stop people from using those platforms

instead of Facebook.

The prosecutors also allege that Facebook kept watch on the expected growth of other applications and bought those that it thought posed a threat.

At the end of 2019, the social networking giant had revenue of nearly \$71 billion and net profit of about \$18.5 billion.

Newstead added that U.S. trade regulators looked at the Instagram acquisition twice and the second time cleared it unanimously.

Federal trade officials said in a statement Dec. 9 that the vote to seek this injunction against Facebook was three to two with Commissioners Noah Joshua Phillips and Christine S. Wilson dissenting. ▀

## Menlo Park council OKs pilot program for relief amid utility rate hikes

By Kate Bradshaw

Almanac Staff Writer

The same night the Menlo Park City Council voted to raise rates for solid waste services, council members approved a new six-month pilot program to provide relief to low-income families struggling to pay rising utility rates.

On Dec. 8, the council voted 4-1, with Betsy Nash opposed, to create a pilot program to offer a 20% discount to solid waste customers and a \$14 per month discount to water customers who are low-income and participate in PG&E's CARE program, which provides

discounted gas and electricity.

PG&E's program sets income thresholds based on household size. To be eligible, a one- or two-person household can earn no more than \$34,480 and a four-person household can earn no more than \$52,400. These amounts are lower thresholds than even the "extremely low-income" standards set in San Mateo County, which represents the 30th percentile of area median income at \$36,540 to \$41,760 for a one- or two-person household, although it's about the same, at \$52,200, for a four-person household.

The current area median income is \$143,100 for a

household of four.

City staff estimated that around 975 households throughout Menlo Park would participate in the solid waste rate discounts and fewer would participate in the reduced water rate program. In all, the program is set to cost about \$164,000 for six months, including about \$32,000 in administrative costs.

Offering utility discounts to low-income households isn't unique, said Joanna Chen, sustainability specialist with Menlo Park. Communities and agencies like San Carlos, Emeryville and Recology San Francisco offer discounts that range from 10% to 25%, and the city of Santa Clara offers a fixed \$3 per month discount for solid waste customers.

Customers who use the 20-gallon trash bins will see their monthly rates lowered from \$28.31 to \$22.65, and those who use the 32-gallon bins will see rates lowered from \$36.54 to \$29.23. Adding in 20% discounts for anticipated 64- and 96-gallon bin users, the waste subsidy was set to cost the city about \$49,000 over six months.

The council also approved a fixed water rate subsidy of about \$14 per month for qualifying households, halving the typical monthly service charge of \$28. This program, however, only applies to households that receive their water from the Menlo Park Municipal Water system — not Cal Water, which serves a large portion of the city's water customers in central Menlo Park, or other water systems serving Menlo Park residents, such as the

O'Connor Water District and Palo Alto Park Mutual Water Company. Cal Water has its own low-income rate assistance program, which customers subsidize, said Rebecca Lucky, sustainability manager.

Nash raised objections, noting that the water subsidy would only benefit municipal water customers, expressing concerns about the administrative costs and saying she wanted to provide more direct financial support to residents. She added that the city may want to continue to fund the program after six months and expressed reservations about longer-term budget impacts. Nash also favored asking Samaritan House, the San Mateo-based nonprofit that is administering the city's rent relief fund for Menlo Park residents, if it could also administer this program, but Chen said the nonprofit didn't currently have the capacity to do so.

"I share your concern with all of these little programs that come with their own costs," Vice Mayor Drew Combs said, adding that the actual dollar amount of relief that the program will provide to households is limited.

"I'm supportive of helping residents in Menlo Park, now more than ever," said Mayor Cecilia Taylor. "With providing services for people who are in need, there's always administrative costs that go along with it."

Councilman Ray Mueller said he favored keeping the program separate from Samaritan House's renter assistance program because homeowner households on fixed incomes may need the

support too, he said.

"I am concerned about getting discounts out to people in a timely way," said Councilwoman Catherine Carlton. "I think the economy is not going to get better any time soon."

### Waste pickup rates to rise substantially

The council also held a public hearing and adopted proposed rate increases for trash, recycling and organic waste pickups. The rates will hit customers with 20-gallon and 32-gallon trash bins hardest. Between now and 2025, the rate for customers with those sizes of trash bins will see a \$5.50 per month increase each year. Households with 20-gallon trash bins will see monthly costs rise from current rates of \$22.81 to \$50.31 in 2025, and for customers with 32-gallon trash bins, the rate will rise from the current \$31.14 to \$58.64 in 2025.

These increases have been somewhat mitigated with \$1.5 million in funding from the city to help smooth the cost increases. The council also committed \$500,000 to help smooth the rate increases in 2021 and \$1 million to smooth the rate increases in the years following.

The new 2021 rates are well within the range of what residents in other Peninsula communities pay, according to staff. For instance, residents in unincorporated county areas currently pay \$35 for 20-gallon pickups and \$42 for 32-gallon pickups. ▀

Email Kate Bradshaw at [kbradshaw@almanacnews.com](mailto:kbradshaw@almanacnews.com)

**TOWN OF WOODSIDE  
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**INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR  
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The Planning Commission meets on the first and third Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

Interested residents may check residency requirements, request information, and submit applications to the Town Clerk by emailing Jennifer Li at [jli@woodsidetown.org](mailto:jli@woodsidetown.org).

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: Friday, January 29, 2021,  
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Tuesday, February 9, 2021, 7:00 p.m.**

# Menlo Park lights holiday trees after all

By **Kate Bradshaw**  
Almanac Staff Writer

Menlo Park's traditional holiday tree lights, notably absent in early December, have made a comeback for 2020 after all.

More than a week into December, the Menlo Park City Council decided 3-1, with council members Betsy Nash opposed and Cecilia Taylor absent, to approve spending \$40,000 to add holiday tree lights at Fremont Park and the Onetta Harris Community Center.

Fremont Park is located at the intersection of Santa Cruz Avenue and University Drive in downtown Menlo Park, and the Onetta Harris Community Center is located at 100 Terminal Ave.

Council members held a special open meeting Dec. 9 after a closed session to discuss the matter further after it became clear there may not be a majority of support during a preliminary conversation on the matter the previous evening.

The decision reverses a council decision earlier this year, when budget cuts were being made, when members opted to eliminate funding for holiday lights.

Council members Ray Mueller and Catherine Carlton most favored installing the holiday lights. Mueller said he'd heard from community members who were "looking for some holiday cheer" and that this is a hard time for many residents who may live alone, feel isolated from family members far away, or be older and living with elevated and long-term fears that they may catch

COVID-19. Lighting the trees, he explained, may offer cheer to people needing a mental health boost.

"I think that this is one of those times where we make an investment in basically quality of life and sanity," Carlton said. "I think it's a wonderful thing to do and a great tradition to keep going."

Nash opposed installing the lights because of the costs, and expressed reservations that the lights could encourage people to gather unsafely.

"This is a really difficult season, and we may need this money next year," she said. "I see this is a prolonged economic downturn. We don't know what is ahead."

"My support is a bit strained," Councilman Drew Combs said, before voting to approve spending for the lights. The previous night, he noted that he understood the concerns about the cost, but added that, as a parent of small kids, his family has to visit another city to see a large holiday tree lit up.

The council also discussed another site where tree lights have traditionally been set up, at the corner of Ravenswood Avenue and El Camino Real, but that site was more expensive. Also, Mueller said, the Fremont Park location could help draw people to downtown businesses.

The lights went on Sunday, Dec. 13, and will remain up into the new year. People are advised to practice COVID-19 safety by wearing masks and maintaining distance from other households when they visit. ▣

Email Kate Bradshaw at [kbradshaw@almanacnews.com](mailto:kbradshaw@almanacnews.com)

## CALTRAIN

continued from page 5

moving from San Francisco to Silicon Valley and especially with the growth of online commerce, the train has been less used by Atherton residents and it is time to move on."

Crews will install fencing this week to prevent access to the tracks, said Dan Lieberman, Caltrain public affairs specialist, in an email. Caltrain employees will remove the concrete center platform soon after the closure, according to the rail service's website. Work is expected to be complete in the summer of 2021.

Before the COVID-19 pandemic, Caltrain only scheduled limited weekend-only service every 90 minutes at Atherton's station, drawing an average of 114 passengers per weekend day, according to Caltrain. Weekday service to the station was cut in 2005 by Caltrain, citing low ridership.

## Costs

The Caltrain Board of Directors voted to close the station on Nov. 5, while the same day county transit board officials approved allocating \$4.13 million to help close the station.

It will cost \$600,000 to close the station and install temporary fencing, according to Caltrain, and an estimated \$5.8 million for Watkins Avenue crossing safety improvements. Other site improvements and an access study will cost around \$400,000. The \$4.13 million is coming from Measure A transit funds and will partially fund these projects.

The initial costs of demobilizing the station, which is anticipated to be completed in February, and installing temporary fencing will be paid out of the operating budget of the 2021 JPB, Peninsula Corridor Joint Powers Board, which owns and operates Caltrain and consists of

representatives from San Francisco, San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, according to a Caltrain staff report. Other major costs of the proposed actions, which are expected to total \$6.2 million, will be funded by a combination of Transportation Authority funds and grant sources. ▣

Email Angela Swartz at [aswartz@almanacnews.com](mailto:aswartz@almanacnews.com)


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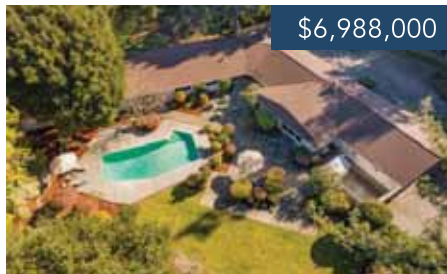
The holiday tree in Fremont Park in 2014.

December 18, 2020 ■ AlmanacNews.com ■ The Almanac ■ 13



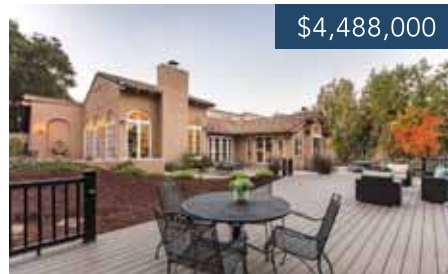
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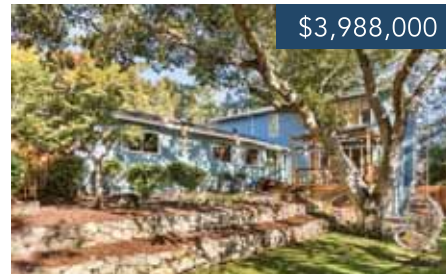
\$6,988,000

35 Edge Road, Atherton  
6 Bd | 4 Bth  
[www.35Edge.com](http://www.35Edge.com)



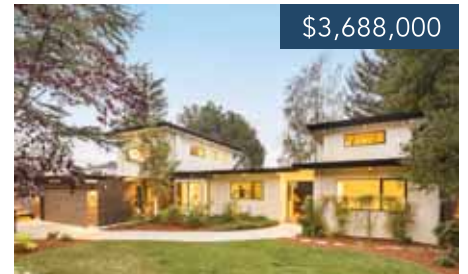
\$4,488,000

922 Lundy Lane, Los Altos  
3 Bd | 3.5 Bth  
[www.922Lundy.com](http://www.922Lundy.com)



\$3,988,000

984 Monte Rosa Drive, Menlo Park  
6 Bd | 5 Bth  
[www.984MonteRosa.com](http://www.984MonteRosa.com)



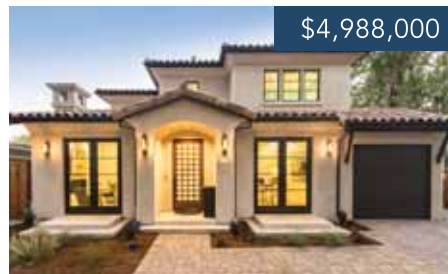
\$3,688,000

250 W. Floresta Way, Portola Valley  
4 Bd | 3 Bth  
[www.250WestFloresta.com](http://www.250WestFloresta.com)



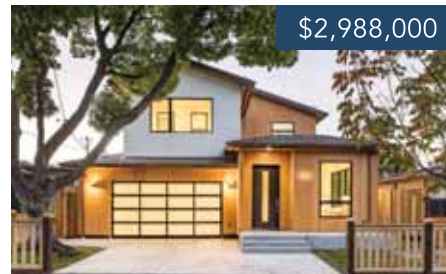
\$3,988,000

103 Stanford Ave., Menlo Park  
4 Bd | 3 Bth  
[www.103Stanford.com](http://www.103Stanford.com)



\$4,988,000

2938 Ross Road, Palo Alto  
5 Bd | 5.5 Bth  
[www.2938Ross.com](http://www.2938Ross.com)



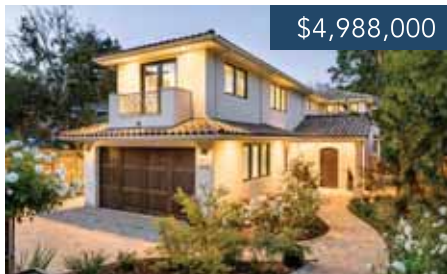
\$2,988,000

2128 Vera Avenue, Redwood City  
4 Bd | 4.5 Bth  
[www.2128Vera.com](http://www.2128Vera.com)



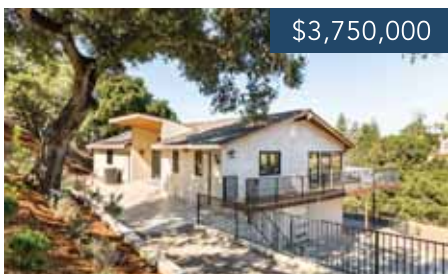
\$1,498,000

582 Manzanita Avenue, Sunnyvale  
4 Bd | 3 Bth  
[www.582Manzanita.com](http://www.582Manzanita.com)



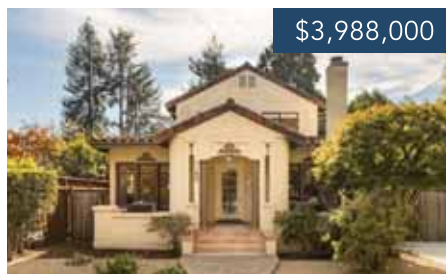
\$4,988,000

1515 Topar Ave., Los Altos  
6 Bd | 5 Bth  
[www.1515ToparAve.com](http://www.1515ToparAve.com)



\$3,750,000

25396 La Loma Dr., Los Altos Hills  
5 Bd | 4 Bth  
[www.25396LaLoma.com](http://www.25396LaLoma.com)



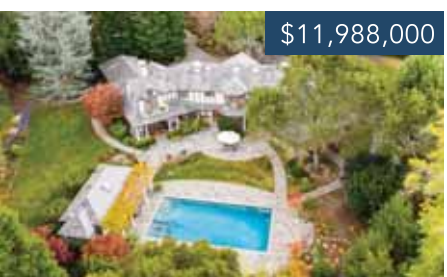
\$3,988,000

1160 Channing Avenue, Palo Alto  
4 Bd | 3 Bth  
[www.1160Channing.com](http://www.1160Channing.com)



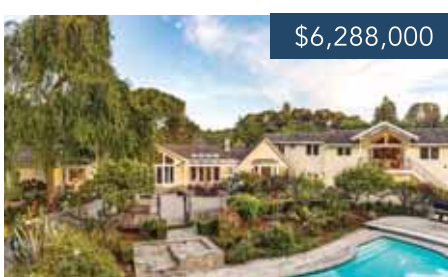
\$2,988,000

20 Prado Court, Portola Valley  
3 Bd | 2.5 Bth  
[www.20Prado.com](http://www.20Prado.com)



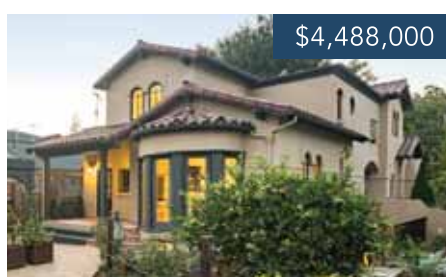
\$11,988,000

3787 Woodside Rd, Woodside  
6 Bd | 5.5 Bth  
[www.3787Woodside.com](http://www.3787Woodside.com)



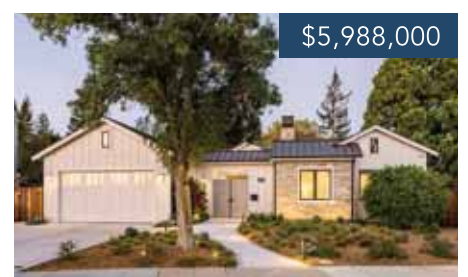
\$6,288,000

11491 Old Ranch Rd, Los Altos Hills  
6 Bd | 6.5 Bth  
[www.11491OldRanch.com](http://www.11491OldRanch.com)



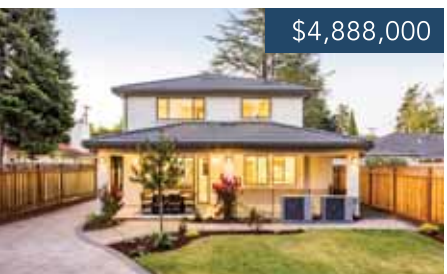
\$4,488,000

580 Addison Ave., Palo Alto  
5 Bd | 5 Bth  
[www.580Addison.com](http://www.580Addison.com)



\$5,988,000

2797 Ross Road, Palo Alto  
4 Bd | 3.5 Bth  
[www.2797Ross.com](http://www.2797Ross.com)



\$4,888,000

4152 Baker Avenue, Palo Alto  
5 Bd | 7 Bth (5 full, 2 half)  
[www.4152Baker.com](http://www.4152Baker.com)



\$39,998,000

27500 La Vida Real, Los Altos Hills  
5 Bd | 12 Bth (7 full, 5 half)  
[www.27500LaVida.com](http://www.27500LaVida.com)



\$12,995,000

237 Mapache Drive, Portola Valley  
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## 35 Edge Road, Atherton

### Renovated Home on Nearly 1.1-Acre Lot

Tucked away on a sprawling corner lot of nearly 1.1 acres, this updated home of over 3,700 square feet includes 6 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, ample privacy, and an ambiance that is undeniably Atherton. Enjoy a warm, welcoming feel in this home, as rich Mediterranean oak floors extend throughout, and natural light fills the space. Extensively renovated, this home offers a traditional floorplan that includes the dramatic living room with a spectacular wall of glass, a modern kitchen with a delightful breakfast nook, an elegant formal dining room, and the family room with a wet bar and fireplace. Numerous updates include solid core doors, Lutron-controlled lighting, high-speed coax and Cat6 data lines, and much more. Plus, you will find great space for outdoor enjoyment in the expansive backyard with a pool and hot tub. Close to numerous parks, as well as downtown Menlo Park, this home also enjoys access to top-ranked Menlo Park schools including Laurel Elementary, which is just steps away, and it is just moments to sought-after private schools (buyer to verify eligibility).

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Offered at \$6,988,000

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**BURGLARIES***continued from page 1*

second-story master bedroom by climbing up a downspout.

DeGolia noted the mode of entry and timing of the burglary Dec. 8 “absolutely” fit with the crimes that occurred in town two years ago.

Thieves are climbing up gutters or putting furniture underneath upstairs patios to pull themselves up to balconies, said police Sgt. Anthony Kockler. He said they try to enter from the upstairs level since “very few” people install alarms or motion sensors beyond the first floor of their homes.

McCulley reassured nervous residents who asked whether the burglars tend to be violent that, like most burglars, they are targeting residences when no one is home and are not harming anyone.

The town also announced Dec. 13 that the resident who



**Residents** have reported nine burglaries (and one attempted burglary) in Atherton since Oct. 1. Crime information via Atherton Police Department.

lost the \$790,000 in jewelry in the burglary earlier this month is offering a \$50,000 reward

in collaboration with police for information leading to the arrest and conviction of those

responsible. Stolen items included two men's Stanford University football Rose Bowl watches.

Anyone with information is asked to call the Atherton Police Department at (650) 688-6500.

**License plate readers**

The license plate readers that likely caught images of the car associated with the Dec. 8 burglary were first proposed as a response to the 2018-19 burglary spree.

The town installed 21 license plate readers to help deter crime and possibly capture criminals going to or leaving the scenes of burglaries.

Several residents offered to help fund additional cameras during the Dec. 9 discussion.

“It certainly gives me a lot of peace of mind knowing how deeply concerned the chief and the police force are for our safety,” said resident Ann Walker during the meeting.

Automated license plate readers (ALPRs) are mounted on police cars or on fixtures such as road signs and bridges. There were already public safety cameras at Holbrook-Palmer Park, and new police vehicles are equipped with ALPR cameras as part of their existing dashboard cameras.

In May, the City Council approved buying Flock Safety automated license plate readers at a cost of \$2,000 each starting in the 2020-21 fiscal year, which began July 1.

DeGolia noted that for a town like Atherton in which residents value their privacy, 21 cameras is a large number to have installed, but the hope is that the Flock cameras were able to capture any vehicles the burglars arrived in Tuesday night and in other instances. **A** *Almanac Assistant Editor Julia Brown contributed to this report.*

*Email Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com*

**HEALTH ORDER***continued from page 1*

and picking up medications. Outdoor activities that allow for social distancing, such as hiking, walking and bicycling, are allowed.

Schools that were already allowed to open for in-person classes under a county-approved review may stay open. Menlo Park City School District Superintendent Erik Burmeister confirmed in an email to families Wednesday that “schools will remain open with the necessary risk mitigation efforts that our staff and families have effectively followed

since we began opening schools on September 8.”

The order will stay in effect for three weeks in Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano and Sonoma counties. After three weeks, it may be lifted if the region's ICU capacity meets or exceeds 15%.

San Mateo County officials said they will comply with the state order. The county has recorded new single-day highs for cases during December. From Dec. 9 through Dec. 15, the county has recorded 2,602 new lab-confirmed cases of COVID-19, a daily average of

372 cases and the most in any seven-day period, officials said. The county's test-positivity 14-day average has significantly risen from 2.1% in November to 8.0%.

Officials acknowledged the restrictions would add to stress many people feel.

“I'm sure a lot of you are tired: tired of shutdowns, tired of staying away from friends and family, tired of seeing perhaps your business and businesses you love struggle. But the only way we are going to get through these next few months is by relying on each other more than ever. Let's all pledge to do whatever we can to stay safe, stay well and stay positive,” County Manager Mike Callagy said in the statement.

County officials said the restrictions would impact local businesses significantly and they encouraged people to support small businesses. Firms with fewer than 100 employees account for 97.4% of employers in San Mateo County. Firms with fewer than five employees account for half of all county businesses, according to county officials.

“Now, more than ever our small businesses need us,” said Roseanne Foust, president and CEO of the San Mateo County Economic Development Association. She encouraged people to order takeout from a local restaurant and make purchases from local retailers online.

The ongoing pandemic is “devastating and tragic,” Warren Slocum, president of the county Board of Supervisors, said in the statement.

“So many lives have been affected by COVID-19 across

the world and here at home. It's heartbreaking. The holidays are a time when we show our love for our friends and our families. I encourage everyone this holiday season to show your love by giving the gift of good health. Please stay home and stay safe,” he said.

Under the order, the following are allowed to remain open with safety precautions:

- Critical infrastructure (when remote option is not possible)
- Schools
- Non-urgent medical and dental care
- Child care and pre-K

**What can stay open with modifications**

**Outdoor recreational facilities** may operate only for the purpose of facilitating physically distanced personal health and wellness through outdoor exercise, without any food, drink or alcohol sales. Overnight stays at campgrounds will not be permitted.

**Retail** may operate indoors at 20% capacity, and 35% of capacity for standalone grocery stores, with entrance metering and no eating or drinking in the stores. Additionally, special hours should be instituted for seniors and others with chronic conditions or compromised immune systems.

**Shopping centers** are allowed indoor access at 20% capacity with entrance metering and no eating or drinking in the stores. Additionally, special hours should be instituted for seniors and others with chronic conditions or compromised immune systems.

**Hotels and lodgings** must

have COVID-19 mitigation and containment measures, treatment measures, and may provide accommodations for essential workers or community housing solutions such as housing the homeless.

**Restaurants** may only open for takeout or delivery.

**Offices** may only operate with remote work except for critical infrastructure sectors where remote working is not possible.

**Places of worship and political expression** such as demonstrations or protests are allowed outdoors only.

**Entertainment production** such as industries, studios and other related establishments can operate without live audiences.

**What must close?**

Under the Regional Stay Home Order all operations in the following sectors must be closed (except to the extent that their operations fall within critical infrastructure): Hair salons and barbershops; personal care services; museums, zoos, and aquariums; movie theaters (except drive-in); wineries, bars, breweries, and distilleries (with exception for production, manufacturing, distribution, and retail sale for off-site consumption); family entertainment centers; card rooms and satellite wagering; live audience sports; and amusement parks.

The full order on closures can be found online at covid19.ca.gov by clicking on “regional stay at home order.” **A**

*Email Sue Dremann at sdremann@paweekly.com*

**TOWN OF WOODSIDE  
2955 WOODSIDE ROAD  
WOODSIDE, CA 94062**

**INVITES APPLICATIONS FOR  
PLANNING COMMISSION**

**District 1**

**Term from February 2021 to February 2024**

The Planning Commission participates in the administration of the planning laws and policies of the Town. It is responsible for recommending to the Town Council ordinances and resolutions necessary to implement the General Plan and adopted development policy. The Commission also conducts necessary public hearings to administer the planning laws and policies of the Town and acts upon applications for zoning amendments, conditional use permits, variances, subdivisions, and other related functions as may be assigned by the Council.

The Planning Commission meets on the first and third Wednesday of the month at 6:00 p.m.

*Interested residents may check residency requirements, request information, and submit applications to the Town Clerk by emailing Jennifer Li at jli@woodsidesidtown.org.*

**APPLICATION DEADLINE: Friday, January 29, 2021, by 5 p.m.**

**INTERVIEW AND APPOINTMENT BY TOWN COUNCIL: Tuesday, February 9, 2021, 7:00 p.m.**

# Brian Dombkowski is Woodside's new mayor

## Dick Brown appointed mayor pro tem

By Angela Swartz  
Almanac Staff Writer

Former Woodside Mayor Ned Fluet donned an orange mayoral sash gifted to him by former Councilman Daniel Yost as he passed the metaphorical gavel to Brian Dombkowski during a Tuesday, Dec. 8, meeting over Zoom.

Woodside council members chose Dombkowski, whose term ends in 2022, to be the town's new mayor, and Dick Brown to serve as mayor pro tem, for 2021.

Fluet shared some parting words as outgoing mayor, saying it has been a remarkable, and at times, tragic year for the town amid a pandemic and wildfires

that led some residents to evacuate their homes and led to days in which smoke "blocked out the sun."

"Despite these challenges, I'm in awe of the way we handled it," Fluet said, noting how proud he is of the strength and resilience residents and town officials have shown. "We've moved our regular lives aside (because of the pandemic)."

Fluet said 2020's council was a cooperative one.

He nominated Dombkowski for the mayor's post, while Dombkowski nominated Brown for his position.

Dombkowski, who joined the council in 2018, is CEO of Sand Hill Global Advisors, according

to the town's website. He is a former member of the Woodside School Foundation and has lived in Woodside since 2005. He is also a former co-chief investment officer at RCM Capital Management.

"I'm humbled and honored (to serve as mayor)," Dombkowski said. He noted that Fluet was the "perfect mayor for the perfect storm that was 2020."

Brown moved to Woodside in 2011 and joined the council in 2018. He is a San Mateo County

Library board member and is a serial small business entrepreneur, according to the town's website. Brown's term ends in 2022 as well.

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

The council presented proclamations in honor of outgoing council members.

The town held an uncontested

election on Nov. 3, with the candidates for the four seats up for election in districts 1, 3, 5 and 7 all unopposed.

New to the council are attorney Jenn Wall, elected to the District 1 seat, and management consultant John Carvell, elected to the District 5 seat. They are replacing Daniel Yost (District 1) and Tom Livermore (District 5), who both declined to run for reelection. Yost and Livermore both offered to provide their insights to council members in the future. ■

Email Angela Swartz at [aswartz@almanacnews.com](mailto:aswartz@almanacnews.com)

## VACCINE

continued from page 5

efficacy against the virus. Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is administered as a series of two doses, three weeks apart.

The FDA noted there isn't data to determine how long the vaccine will provide protection, nor is there evidence that the vaccine prevents transmission of the virus from person to person.

The emergency authorization is not a final approval of the vaccine, but it allows its distribution in the U.S. because of the dire emergency health crisis caused by the coronavirus. Dr. Peter Marks, director of the FDA's Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research, said in the statement that "the vaccine's known and potential benefits clearly outweigh its known and potential risks. ... Efforts to speed vaccine development have not sacrificed scientific standards or the integrity of our vaccine evaluation process."

Drug trials enrolled 37,586 participants in a randomized, placebo-controlled international study, the majority of whom are U.S. participants. A total of 18,801 participants received the vaccine and 18,785 received a saline placebo. Researchers followed them for a median of two months after receiving the second dose.

The most commonly reported side effects, which typically lasted several days, were pain at the injection site, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, chills, joint pain and fever.

"More people experienced these side effects after the second dose than after the first dose, so it is important for vaccination providers and recipients to expect that there



Federica Armstrong

**Charles Davis**, a VA recreation specialist, receives a first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at the Palo Alto VA Hospital on Dec. 16. In about three weeks he'll return for the final dose of the newly approved Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine.

may be some side effects after either dose, but even more so after the second dose," the FDA noted.

The researchers analyzed 36,523 participants in the international study who did not have evidence of SARS-CoV-2 infection through seven days after the second dose. Among these participants, 18,198 received the vaccine and the rest received a placebo. The vaccine was 95% effective in preventing COVID-19. Only eight participants developed COVID-19 in the vaccine group compared to 162 in the placebo group. Of these 170 cases, one in the vaccine group and three in the placebo group were classified as severe. ■

Kate Bradshaw and Jocelyn Dong contributed to this report.

Email Sue Dremann at [sdremann@paweekly.com](mailto:sdremann@paweekly.com)

## Nancy Lou ("Lalu") Kiesling

March 25, 1932 – December 9, 2020

Nancy Lou Hunt Kiesling, Menlo Park resident and retired bookstore owner, passed away peacefully at home on December 9, 2020 after a brief illness. Her great pleasure was in introducing children to nature, including as a teaching volunteer at the Palo Alto Junior Museum, Hidden Villa Ranch, and the Jasper Ridge Biological Preserve. The Book Rack, her used paperback shop on Santa Cruz Avenue, was for 22 years a haven for those who shared her joy in reading, as well as a place for family and friends to launch their books. Faithful companions over the decades included Jane Austen and Patrick O'Brian's Royal Navy.

"Lalu," as she was lovingly known to her family, was born in Houston, Texas in March 1932, the first of four children to Wilmer Brady Hunt, a district court judge, and Eugenia Flewellyn Howard Hunt, the artistic daughter of a prominent Houston surgeon. Nancy graduated from Stanford University in 1953 and returned to Houston to teach junior high school science. In December 1955, she married fellow Houstonian Roy A. Kiesling, Jr. [1934-2012], newly graduated from Yale and about to enter the University of Texas Law School in Austin. They had three children in rapid succession, and a fourth after relocating to the eastern fringe of Palo Alto in 1960. A Master's degree from Stanford followed in 1964.

The 1960s and 70s included moving to a creaky older house in Los Altos, family camping/canoeing trips, the Junior League, but also hosting the Parapsychology Research Group, a gopher-permeated vegetable garden, and teaching Native Californian survival arts like obsidian-knapping and acorn preparation. Efforts with like-minded intellectuals to build an intentional community did not progress far, but there was service on the Coop supermarket board, Jungian analysis and similar travels, including with the Sierra Club to the Galapagos Islands and mythic tours led by Joseph Campbell. The dissolution of her marriage prompted new exploration; she spent several years in a tiny trailer, with an outhouse and majestic Bay views, atop the then undeveloped Hayfields parcel in Portola Valley.

Acquiring a row house in Menlo Park and the Book Rack (1988) meant a new structure to her life as well as a place to hang favorite paintings. Visits to far-flung offspring brought pleasure and adventure. Local theater and ballet companies, the League of Women Voters, the Academy of Sciences, and other memberships were outlets for her wide, non-judgmental curiosity. A fire in the restaurant next door put an end to the Book Rack in 2010, and heart troubles gradually made her excursions fewer and more cautious.

Nancy's Catholic faith, esthetic rather than dogmatic, enriched her life. She loved sung Latin mass, a counterpoint to her botanical Latin, and she baked uncounted hundredweights of brownies for the congregations of St. Anne's and later St. Thomas's Church. For many years, her driver to church and source of beautiful flowers was Lou Gado of Los Altos, a gentleman admirer who passed away early this year. Nancy and a few cherished friends attended the annual Bach Festival in Carmel for decades.

Nancy is survived by younger brothers Grainger Hunt, a zoologist, and Sperry Hunt, a writer-musician. A beloved sister, novelist Robin McCorquodale died in 2014. Nancy leaves four children. Daughter Eugenia (Jennie) Kiesling (spouse Peter Law) is a history professor at the U.S. Military Academy at West Point. Son Brady (Regina Tassitano) is a former U.S. diplomat, archaeologist, and writer based in Athens, Greece. Stephen (Mary Bemis), an Olympic oarsman in 1980, is a writer and magazine editor in southern Oregon. Roy (Birgit Rehder) is an industrial design/production expert in Burlingame, CA. Eldest granddaughter Lydia Kiesling (Tim Quayle) is a novelist living in Portland OR, with two young daughters; younger grandchildren Alexandra, Tim, Brady J., Casey, and Tommy, are in various stages of medical school, university, or high school.

Memorial donations may be made to St. Anthony Padua Dining Room <http://paduadiningroom.com/>



## COMBS

continued from page 7

# Donald Orville Young

August 15, 1932 – November 7, 2020

Don Young's final escrow closed November 7, 2020.

He would like everyone to know the transaction was smooth and fast, and that this permanent relocation reunites him with loved ones he has missed dearly. He is particularly happy to see his mother and father, Ruth and Clarence, brother William, and many cherished friends.

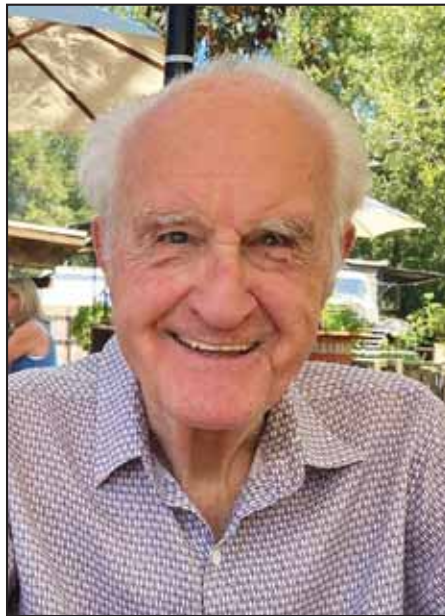
While there were no streets, buildings, or monuments named in his honor, many real estate folks in Menlo Park consider him a man worth celebrating. To his only child, daughter Brandie, he was a hero. Her daddy hung the moon and the stars and set a high standard for integrity, character, and values.

Don was proud of his working-class upbringing in San Francisco, where his father owned a barbershop in the Mission and his mother worked as a hairdresser. He grew up with a horse named Jerry and spent many a day riding around not yet developed Diamond Heights. He also had a dog named Jerry, and never could explain how the two animals came to share the same name. He maintained a deep love for the City, referring to it as "my beautiful city of St. Francis."

At 18, Don enlisted in the Navy which began three lifelong passions: sailing, Hawaii, and travel. He was stationed on the USS Tombigbee, a gasoline tanker deployed to the MidPac operating area during the Korean War. (Trivia: "Tombigbee" comes from Choctaw and means "coffin-maker.") The Tombigbee was part of the fuel supply network for aircraft and other support vehicles on Bikini, Eniwetok, & Kwajalein atoll during the AEC Nuclear weapons tests. Don was awarded a bravery medal for being on the fuel tanker while under enemy fire, but that was not a tale Don would retell. The Tombigbee and each port of call were Don's playground and the setting for stories that would delight and entertain for the next 65+ years. (Did you hear the one about driving a forklift off a pier?)

After his stint in the Navy, Don returned home to San Francisco with five tattoos and a zest for life. He and two buddies moved into a West Portal bachelor pad and somehow managed to get a pet monkey, George, "to charm the ladies." One day George ran away, but no search was conducted. As it turned out, George's propensity to toss his poop around the house was counterintuitive to the lady-charming strategy.

Fast forward to Don's start in Menlo Park real estate when Ray Spinelli offered to mentor him. For perspective on late 60's real estate, it took Don nearly an entire year to earn his Million Dollar Club briefcase, the coveted prize for \$1,000,000 in transactions over twelve months. He carried that briefcase with pride. He went on to earn his Broker's license,



which he maintained until October of this year. Don later joined forces with Bill Weseloh to start their boutique brokerage, Weseloh & Young. Don remained at the brokerage until he accepted an offer to manage the local Grub & Ellis office, which then went through several acquisitions during those early days of real estate brand consolidation. No matter the logo on the building, Don's True North was to maintain the integrity of the business, and the success of the agents. He would not waver on either.

Don loved the real estate "biz" and the difference it could make in a person's life. He was too humble to admit that he enhanced many lives throughout his career. This includes the clients who built wealth through property ownership and the agents he mentored and supported. He cherished the many dear friends and relationships cultivated throughout his career.

Don retired from real estate after nearly 40 years and promptly moved to Hawaii to live on a sailboat aptly named "The Six Percent." His first night on the boat he called Brandie to describe the gorgeous sunset he was watching "This is what it's all about, Kid. This is what I've worked for all these years." He, and the boat, moved back to California after a few years. Admittedly, he missed everyone too much to live so far away.

Real estate gave Don the means to travel, and he relished his time away from the phone. He enjoyed Greece, Italy, Mexico, and of course Hawaii, but his love of sailing made the Caribbean a favorite. Don and friends enjoyed several excursions on Windjammer Barefoot Cruises, a fleet of tall ships that took small groups out to sail the Grenadines, British Virgin Islands, and the Bahamas. Don couldn't get enough of sailing.

Above all, Don was a fiercely devoted father, raising his daughter as a single parent - unheard of in that era. His first priority was to make certain Brandie had a happy, magical childhood, and that she did. Her heart is full

of beautiful, bittersweet memories; watching her Dad climb up onto the roof to leave carrots and water for Santa's reindeer, discovering the Easter Bunny's footprints next to the basket left on the front porch, and believing he arranged the July 4 fireworks for her birthday of the same day. To celebrate her birthday in later years, Don would phone Brandie first thing in the morning, sing to her his own zippy rendition of "Happy Birthday" and then wish her a Happy Anniversary for it was "the anniversary of the day we first met." In a goodbye note left for Brandie: "You were the epicenter of my life, and I loved you a whole bunch, Kid ... God how I loved to brag about you."

Don's beloved son-in-law Mike (or as Don called him, "Chefy") will help Brandie carry on his spirit, but alas Don took his wit and endless tales of shenanigans with him. He told stories with a twinkle in his eyes that led one to believe he was telling only half the tale.

"I had a great life and not many things come to mind that I would change." While Don lived a longer than average life, his life could never be described as average. He lived by his own rules and on his terms, going as far as to leave an instruction manual for his death known as "the Death Manual."

The three-ring, section-tabbed binder contained the goodbye note referenced above, financial and account information, and detailed step by step instructions for Brandie to follow when the time came. For decades Brandie refused to acknowledge the binder's existence, appalled her beloved father could so easily publish post-demise activities. Now she sees it for what it is - a selfless gift from a selfless, generous man that always wanted to make everything easier for those he loved.

Don's ashes will be scattered in strict compliance with Death Manual instructions. Said instructions include the boat & captain, moon cycle, tide, month to scatter, location of scattering, and "guest list."

However, Brandie & Mike will defy Death Manual protocol and throw a Don-worthy celebration of life that will (naturally) feature bourbon and tall tales. The date of the celebration is TBD.

Rest in peace, you wonderful, delightful man. You were loved. They broke the mold when they made you. There will never be another man that will hold a candle to Donald Orville Young.

Instead of tears, please donate to The Humane Society, or simply do a nice thing for someone that needs some help.

"It is the secret of the world that all things subsist and do not die but only retire a little from sight and afterward return again. Nothing is dead; men feign themselves dead, endure mock funerals, and there, across the room, they stand looking out a window, sound and well, in some strange disguise."

— Ralph Waldo Emerson

"I cannot imagine any of these achievements without residents, council and staff," she added. "We are working tirelessly to keep you and your family safe and set ourselves up for a prosperous future."

She closed by sharing a quote from Henry Organ, a 90-year-old Menlo Park resident who is active in the community. "Acts of kindness should not be random but deliberate and daily."

After recognizing Taylor's contributions as mayor through an extra-challenging year, the council voted unanimously to select Combs as Menlo Park's mayor for the next year.

Combs was elected in 2018 and is a former bike and planning commissioner who works for Facebook.

"What you can expect from me as mayor — minus kids screaming in the background ... is what you've gotten over the last two years," Combs told meeting listeners, saying he planned to approach the position's responsibilities with integrity, thoroughness, fairness and sometimes doggedness. "That is me and that won't change."

"I hope that as mayor I get to see our community recover," he added.

## A farewell and a welcome

Outgoing council member Catherine Carlton received recognition from Congresswoman Jackie Speier's office and from Assemblyman Marc Berman, plus council members in other communities such as Millbrae and East Palo Alto. Council members complimented Carlton on her kind demeanor and overall composure.

"You are someone that does their homework with a thoroughness I've rarely seen over the course of my academic, professional and community service career," Combs told Carlton.

After Carlton was recognized with a proclamation and kind words from her colleagues, both recently elected council members were sworn in by their families: District 3 representative Wolosin, who is starting a first term, and District 5 representative Mueller, who is returning for a third term.

After that, council members quickly got to divvying up which committees and commissions they plan to serve on over the next year.

Email Kate Bradshaw at [kbradshaw@almanacnews.com](mailto:kbradshaw@almanacnews.com)

PAID OBITUARY

**HIGH SCHOOLS**

*continued from page 5*

connectivity issues, failing multiple classes and seniors failing classes required for graduation.

Other learning options include returning to in-person learning with instruction delivered both in person and online at the same time (with some students physically in the classroom, while others join online); and hybrid rotation, in which students rotate in-person instruction with online learning on their own time, while some learn completely online, according to a staff report prepared for the Dec. 9 meeting. The governing board is considering having teachers continue to teach distantly from home and send some students to campuses, where they would learn on laptops.

“I don’t think any of the options are close to awesome,” said Bonnie Hansen, assistant superintendent of educational services, during the five-hour board meeting. “It’s a really, really tough time and we’re working to do the best we can.”

Hansen also said that some local middle schools have been able to reopen, while fewer public high schools have been able to, because middle schools do not offer as many courses. Trustee Carrie Du Bois agreed this is a challenge.

“We don’t want to send kids back to a bad version of school, but I still want kids to go back to something,” she said. “They can’t just be at home all day.”

If district officials feel it is safe enough to have students

Zoom from campus (and teachers virtually instruct them from home), it will be a good opportunity for students to interact with others and “get out of the house,” Hansen said. The reopening plan doesn’t include a timeline of when students could potentially return to campuses.

“(They’ll be able to) take a shower, see other people they haven’t seen in a long time but the instruction is still the same,” she said.

Trustee Alan Sarver said he would prefer not to sacrifice the quality of the distance learning instruction that teachers have developed for “incremental time” on campus. This in-person instruction would not be “wildly different,” he noted.

District officials said during the meeting that they plan to test on-campus staff for COVID-19 about once a month. The district doesn’t have enough staff to administer the tests weekly, said Jacqueline McEvoy, the district’s assistant superintendent of human resources and educational services.

**Appetite for returning to campuses**

About 40% of district families took a late November survey on reopening. It found that if the county enters the red tier (substantial transmission of the virus), about 57% of parents would like to keep students at home for online learning. If the county enters the orange tier (moderate transmission of the virus), 42% would like to continue with distance learning from home.

**‘We don’t want to send kids back to a bad version of school, but I still want kids to go back to something.’**

CARRIE DU BOIS,  
SEQUOIA DISTRICT TRUSTEE

The county is currently in the most restrictive purple tier, indicating widespread virus transmission.

Karyn Bechtel, a district parent and outgoing Portola

Valley School District governing board member, said parents are “very interested” in their children returning to campus. Still, she doesn’t see the value of students returning to classrooms just to sit on their computers.

Dr. Caroline Krauskopf, a parent who has been vocal at numerous school board meetings about wanting students to return to classrooms, said at-home learning is resulting in learning loss and negative health impacts for students. In-person learning has been working in other schools across

the globe and country, with few schools becoming hot spots for COVID-19 transmission, she said.

Conversely, another parent, who identified herself only by the name Morgan, said she does not support a return to classrooms and noted many parents are not in the loop about the district’s reopening plans.

View video of the Dec. 9 meeting at [tinyurl.com/Dec9Seqmeeting](https://tinyurl.com/Dec9Seqmeeting). ■

*Email Angela Swartz at [aswartz@almanacnews.com](mailto:aswartz@almanacnews.com)*

**Dorothy Gravelle**

*April 29, 1925 – November 4, 2020*

With her camel turtleneck tucked into pressed khaki trousers and meticulously coiffured brown hair, Dorothy Gallus Gravelle’s tenderness and quiet courage made her a bedrock of strength in the lives of her family and friends. It is with great sadness that her family announce Dorothy passed away November 4th, 2020 suddenly, but peacefully, of complications from a recent illness.

Dorothy graced the lives of family and friends with her rich and storied ninety five-years. She was a treasured wife, mother, grandmother, sister, and aunt; a generous and warmhearted friend to a multitude; a truly kind and gentle soul. She embraced everyone she knew firmly in her arms and in her love. Dorothy was remarkable for her unmatched listening abilities, undivided attention, and unwavering faith, which made those in her company feel heard and cherished.

Dorothy was born in Little Falls, Minnesota in 1925, to Mary and Daniel Gallus. She was the tenth of eleven siblings in a tight-knit, musical family. Dorothy excelled at mathematics, outscoring everyone in her high school class. At the age of 19, she was recruited for this talent to work as an administrative accountant in a POW camp during WWII.

Following the war, she married her lifelong love, Charles “Chuck” Gravelle in 1949. They were married for 57-years, when he preceded her in death in 2006. Dorothy and Chuck moved to Atherton, CA in 1962 where they lived for over 50-years before they moved into the Vi in Palo Alto. They made a life for themselves, textured with hard-work, travel, sports, family fun, and tradition.

Above all, Dorothy was an extraordinary and hands-on mother and grandmother who offered indefatigable interest and support to her children Doug, Steve and Cindra, and grandchildren Kelly, Stephanie and Alex. “Nana” was their rock, the rose of their lives, and every birthday, holiday, and special occasion always found them gathered around the table.

Dorothy didn’t tell them how to live; she lived and let them learn by watching her do it. They learned the essentials of how to live a good life, from the practical lessons of sewing, ironing,

cooking, good nutrition, and keeping a tidy home, to the larger, more essential lessons of self-esteem and self-confidence. She set the example for choosing the morally right path, being a friend to everyone, helping the less fortunate, and being a giver not a taker. Above all she led with the power of faith as her cornerstone.

In addition to motherhood, Dorothy had many interests and hobbies. She traveled internationally along-side Chuck throughout his career. She explored foreign cities on her own and met up with Chuck in the evening to share her adventures over wine and cheese. She enjoyed golfing at Menlo Country Club and Hawaii, boating at Tahoe and the Delta, bridge and cards, French cooking, art and metalworking, reading, and gardening. Today, the rose garden she planted at her home on Park Lane continues to thrive under the care of its current owners.

Throughout her life, Dorothy was an active member of the Church of the Nativity. Faith, prayer, and solitude were the source of her tungsten-like strength, sustaining her through many losses during her life. Her unwavering hope and confidence that she would be reunited with Chuck, her sons Stephen and Doug, her 10 siblings, and best friend Lucille, brought her comfort to her final day.

Dorothy’s strength, elegance, and generosity live on through her daughter Cynthia Gravelle, grandchildren Kelly Nicholson, Stephanie and Alex Sliwinski, brother-in-law Richard and wife Rose Gravelle, nieces and nephews Kathy and Dan Furtado, Mary Liz Perez, Stephanie and Greg Siegel, Mike and Andrea Gravelle, Barbara and Greg Thomas, Pamela Fritz Lott, Mary and Mark Kedrowski, Tom and Patty Meagher, and Marilyn and Phil Prozinski, and 18 grand-nieces and nephews.

We look forward to sharing a celebration of her life when a gathering can be held in her honor.

Donations may be made to “Foothill Auxiliary to Peninsula Family Service,” 24 Second Avenue, San Mateo, California 94401

<https://www.peninsulafamilyservice.org/foothill-auxiliary/>



**Public Notices**

**995 Fictitious Name Statement**

HAPPY HOME  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
File No.: 285792

The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:  
Happy Home, located at 258 Lowell St., Redwood City, CA 94062, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s):  
DANIELLE MARTIN  
258 Lowell St.  
Redwood City, CA 94062

This business is conducted by: An Individual.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 6/17/20.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on November 12, 2020.  
(ALM Dec. 4, 11, 18, 25, 2020)

THE STROLLER STORE  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
File No.: 285969

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:  
The Stroller Store, located at 180 South Spruce Ave., Unit L, South San Francisco, CA 94080, San Mateo County; Mailing address: 561 Hilbar Ln., Palo Alto, CA 94303.  
Registered owner(s):

COUTURE LANE INC.  
561 Hilbar Ln.  
Palo Alto, CA 94303  
Delaware

This business is conducted by: A Corporation.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 12/03/20.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on December 3, 2020.  
(ALM Dec. 11, 18, 25, 2020; Jan. 1, 2021)

TACOS Y MARISCOS EL GORDO  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
File No.: 285894

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

Tacos y Mariscos El Gordo, located at 2315 El Camino Real, Redwood City, CA 94063, San Mateo County; Mailing address: 1525 Regent St. #6, Redwood City, CA 94061.  
Registered owner(s):  
JOSE LUIS PEREZ ESQUIVEL  
1525 Regent St. #6  
Redwood City, CA 94061

This business is conducted by: An Individual.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 11/23/2020.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on November 23, 2020.  
(ALM Dec. 11, 18, 25, 2020; Jan. 1, 2021)

For legal advertising call Alicia Santillan at 650-223-6578.

PAID OBITUARY

# Maryann Derwin becomes Portola Valley's mayor

By **Angela Swartz**  
Almanac Staff Writer

The Portola Valley Town Council members appointed Maryann Derwin as mayor and Craig Hughes as vice mayor during a meeting over Zoom last week.

Council members chose Derwin to be the town's new mayor, and Hughes to serve as vice mayor, for 2021 during the Dec. 9 meeting.

Council member John Richards

nominated Derwin, whose term ends in 2022, while outgoing Mayor Jeff Aalfs nominated Hughes.

Derwin was elected to the council in 2005. She grew up in Mendocino County and moved to Portola Valley in 1992 for the "good schools and the bucolic rural ambiance."

Hughes, whose term also ends in 2022, was elected to the council in 2013. Hughes is chief technical officer for Cognoa, a startup that uses machine learning and

diagnostic data collected on more than 10,000 children to form the basis for an algorithm to analyze a child's behavior using information provided by the child's parents.

Council members and residents also bid Ann Wengert adieu after 13 years on the council. Derwin said she might cry when describing Wengert's contributions to the town. As a woman, Wengert helped diversify the once all-male council, Derwin said.

Aalfs and challenger Sarah Wernikoff, a Portola Valley

School District volunteer with a background in web-based product management, were elected to the council in November, beating retired family physician Mary Hufty and technologist Angela Hey, who sits on the town's Bicycle, Pedestrian and Traffic Safety Committee.

View a video of the meeting on the town's website, portolavalley.net.

Email Angela Swartz at [aswartz@almanacnews.com](mailto:aswartz@almanacnews.com)

## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

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movement exercises and sleep sounds to boost mental health.

Go to [headspace.com/san-mateo-county](https://headspace.com/san-mateo-county) to sign up for free.

Get additional support by contacting San Mateo County Behavioral Health and Recovery Services at 711 or (800) 686-0101 or [smchealth.org/bhrsservices](https://smchealth.org/bhrsservices).

## Local food, clothing and toy drives

Throughout the community, the pandemic hasn't stopped local traditions of collecting food, clothing and toys for those in need during the holiday season.

Cafe Zoë is hosting a holiday fundraising drive for veterans. Normally they provide a holiday meal, clothing and gifts to psychiatric patients at the Palo Alto VA, but this year they're just planning to donate clothing to the veterans. They're seeking funding donations to purchase sweatpants, sweatshirts, socks, boxers/underwear and T-shirts. People can go to [PayPal.me/gethuman](https://paypal.me/gethuman) or [gethumaninc@gmail.com](mailto:gethumaninc@gmail.com) or go to [cafezoehub.com/music-events](https://cafezoehub.com/music-events) for information.

Menlo Park firefighters are seeking to raise \$5,000 in donations to Second Harvest Food Bank. Go to [impact.shfb.org/team/333439](https://impact.shfb.org/team/333439) to access the online fundraiser. They also received commitments from businesses, families and individuals to sponsor gifts for 419 children and expected to receive the donations by Dec. 18.

— Kate Bradshaw

## Dungeness crab season opening

State fish and wildlife regulators will open the commercial Dungeness crab fishing season statewide two days before Christmas, giving people a chance to have crabs on tables before the holiday season ends.

Saturday's announcement of the statewide opener ends delays that were put in place amid poor meat quality in northern areas and the potential for whale entanglement in coastal regions.

Officials say the Dec. 23 opener also gives anglers plenty of time for planning and to get their gear ready to have an orderly start to the fishery.

Regulators say data indicates most whales have started their annual migration out of the fishing grounds and the risk for entanglement is low.

Crabbers, however, are encouraged to avoid areas where whales are congregating, including around the canyon edges of Monterey, and between the Farallon Islands and Point Reyes.

— Bay City News Service

## Elizabeth ("Teddy") Kridl

December 20, 1924 – December 10, 2020

A long-time resident of Atherton, Elizabeth ("Teddy") Campbell Kridl died on December 10, 2020 at the Sunny View Retirement Community in Cupertino. She was just 10 days shy of her 96th birthday. She leaves behind her children Barbara of Oakland, Jean and husband David Dohn of Davis, and Tom and wife Molly of Los Altos; and her beloved grandchildren Kate (husband Mick) and Michael Dohn and Leanne and Sam (wife Terri) Kridl, and great granddaughter Kennedy Kridl. Her husband of 65 years, Andy, preceded her in death in 2013.



Teddy was born on December 20, 1924 in Detroit, Michigan, to Morse Duncan and Elizabeth (Howard) Campbell. She attended the University of Michigan where she earned a bachelor's in chemistry. While working on a master's degree at Wesleyan University in Connecticut, she met her future husband, Andrew George Kridl, an immigrant from Poland. Andy and Teddy were married on September 6, 1947 in Ann Arbor, Michigan.

After Andy received his degrees, he and Teddy moved to California, when he joined Shell Development Co. in 1950. Seven years later, he transferred to New York City where the family lived in Stamford, CT. Later they lived outside of Cleveland, Ohio, where Andy worked for Diamond Alkali Co.

But Andy and Teddy wanted to return to California. In 1967, Andy joined Raychem Corp. in Menlo Park. They settled in Atherton where they lived for 46 years. Andy finished his career as a Vice President at SRI International. After Andy's death, Teddy moved to Sunny View near Tom and Molly's home.

Andy and Teddy enjoyed traveling and seeing the world. Just before retirement, they visited New Zealand and fell in love with the country and the people. They bought a vacation home and returned there every January for more than 20 years where they made many dear friends.

Teddy was a very active volunteer her entire life, including substitute teaching, and would gladly "handle the money" as her volunteer duty. She was involved in many local organizations in Atherton and Menlo Park. She was a member of the League of Women Voters, an alumna volunteer with her sorority Alpha Phi, and a treasurer with the Atherton Dames (where she worked at the annual Holbrook-Palmer Park fair). She also enjoyed working as a volunteer at Filoli Gardens. She was an avid golfer at Santa Teresa Golf Course in San Jose and at Stanford Golf Club. She enjoyed bridge at the Palo Alto Bridge Club, playing well into her 90s. Teddy also loved her garden and her many cats over the years.

Services will be private. In lieu of flowers, donations in Teddy's name may be made to the Sunny View Retirement Community or to the Peninsula Humane Society.

PAID OBITUARY

## Robert Earl Capps

August 19, 1957 – October 22, 2020

Robert Earl Capps passed peacefully on October 22, 2020, at his home in Truckee, California, with his sister, Carol Capps DiSabatino, niece, Sophia DiSabatino, lifelong friend, Jim Lewis, and his faithful lab, Nika, by his side after a long battle with glioblastoma. Robert was born on August 19, 1957, in San Francisco, California. In 1957 his family moved to Redwood City, CA and then to Woodside, CA in 1965 where he spent his childhood. Robert attended Woodside Elementary School, Truckee High School and graduated from Woodside High School in 1975. Because of his love of skiing he attended the University of Utah for his first two years. Due to a drought and lack of snow he transferred to the University of California, Berkeley, to finish his last two years of college graduating from the UC Berkeley Haas School of Business in 1980. While at Berkeley he was a member of the Kappa Delta Rho fraternity and a member of Skull & Keys Society.



Most of Robert's friends were lifelong friends from elementary school, high school, college, and Squaw Valley where he resided for the last 45 years. It was his best friend from elementary school, Peter Ryan, who introduced him to skiing. Robert skied in freestyle competitions while in high school and later raced slalom in the Tahoe Town League. He valued and loved his friendships and held them close for the next adventure. His many friends accompanied him on his many adventures including heli-skiing around the world, hunting, mountain bike riding, and spending time on the lake. He attended Big Game every year with his buddies from Cal and Stanford. Robert also loved to fly his plane whether to work, on to more adventures, or to pick up his family to spend time together at Lake Tahoe. He loved to tease as he was speeding down the runway about to take off and say 'here we go' and after he had just lifted off the runway he would finish 'ready or not'. Robert had a wicked sense of humor to match his infectious smile.

Robert was a real estate developer and the president of Capps Homes. Throughout the last 45 years he built spec homes, developed entire subdivisions and land developments throughout the San Francisco Bay Area including Woodside, Portola Valley, Atherton, Menlo Park, Redwood City as well as Lake Tahoe, Pensacola, FL, Mesa AZ, and Elko NV.

But the love of the mountains and snow skiing always brought him home to Lake Tahoe. Robert is survived by his daughter Nicole Capps, his Mom Gloria Capps, his sister Carol Capps DiSabatino and his niece Sophia DiSabatino, his Dad S Victor, his Aunt Sandy and Uncle John, numerous cousins and many, many friends. And last, but not least, his Goddaughter Eva Merrill and his Godson Jaime Hutter. In lieu of flowers please consider a donation to a charity of your choice.

Memorial to be announced in 2021.

PAID OBITUARY

## Despite the distancing, making a connection this holiday could save a life

By Ashley Mills/CalMatters

### GUEST OPINION

The holidays are here, and it's time to put out an SOS. Much like the signal transmitted by a ship in distress, this SOS is a call to action, a request for help:

Start a conversation.

Offer a connection.

Save a life.

The 2020 holiday season is unlike any other. We won't be spending much, if any, time with loved ones beyond our immediate household. We won't enjoy the freedom to dine inside our favorite restaurants or crowd store aisles in search of deals.

But the pandemic, as dreadful as it is, gives us opportunities to do things we might not otherwise consider. Without all the travel, and with less time spent visiting face to face, why not

invest time in connecting with people through a phone call or FaceTime?

Such connections are more important than ever this year. People are lonely. People are anxious. People are unemployed, overloaded, weary of home schooling their kids, fearful of becoming ill and worried about what lies ahead. It's been a stressful year for all of us, and for some it adds up to a recipe for despair — and potential suicide.

While the threat is real, you can make a difference. The holidays are the perfect time to reach out to family and friends, especially those who may be alone, hard hit by the pandemic, or vulnerable to anxiety and depression.

Start a conversation, and when you do, listen for warning signs of possible suicide risk. Is your friend or relative communicating feelings of guilt or shame, of hopelessness, of being a burden to others, of not seeing a reason to live? Is he or she depressed, or unusually irritable, or feeling anxious and isolated? Is there talk of giving away possessions, or evidence of increased use of alcohol or drugs? Is there a mention of suicidal thoughts, or even an actual plan?

Offer a connection. Sometimes just the chance to express feelings, to say them out loud to someone else, can reduce a person's risk of suicide. You can provide that outlet, and then help expand the conversation by asking a few key questions if you sense warning signs: "Do you feel like you don't want to go on

living?" "Are you thinking about killing yourself?" Depending on the answer, you can continue the dialogue by exploring whether there's a plan for suicide, an intent to act on that plan, and any steps that may already be underway.

Save a life. Expressing compassion to those in distress is key to helping someone at risk of suicide, and help is available. Confidential support can be found at any time through the National Suicide Prevention hotline at 1-800-273-TALK (8255), or by texting TALK to 741741. (Editor's note: In San Mateo County, contact the Behavioral Health Services & Resources call center 24/7 at 800-686-0101.) This resource is not just for those in crisis; it's there to help people on the supportive end of the relationship as well. Once you've

connected your loved one to a crisis line, be sure to follow up with calls or texts. They serve as a powerful reminder that you care.

As we experience the holidays in the time of COVID-19, have a happy holiday season and let's keep the most vulnerable among us in our hearts. Let's also remember that suicide is preventable. Listen for the signs of distress and respond with your own SOS. You can save a life.

*Ashley Mills is a research supervisor for the state Mental Health Services Oversight and Accountability Commission and can be reached at ashley.mills@mhsoac.ca.gov. This piece first ran Nov. 25. CalMatters is a Sacramento-based nonpartisan, nonprofit journalism venture that works with more than 130 media partners throughout the state, including The Almanac.*

## Preventing the next epidemic

Global warming is making mosquitoes scarier, but we aren't helpless

By Elizabeth Nefferdorf and Eleanor Raab

### GUEST OPINION

Zika, dengue fever and chikungunya: These are no longer just tropical diseases — in a few years, you may find them in your own backyard. Global warming is pushing such diseases, which were previously confined to the tropics, northward. Following these changing conditions are the couriers of disease: mosquitoes. These pests have a penchant for warm, wet weather and thrive in human-dominated habitats. Some species of mosquitoes are particularly suited to transmitting human viruses.

Given the events of the last few months, we are all acutely aware of just how damaging epidemics can be to our ways of life. Therefore, towns need to immediately implement policies to more aggressively control mosquito populations in order to prevent the spread of mosquito-borne tropical diseases that will only become more frequent in the United States as global temperatures increase.

In fact, tropical mosquito-borne diseases have already begun to enter the United States. In 2016 and 2017, multiple states

reported local transmission of the Zika virus. We should be particularly scared of viruses like Zika, because they do not cause serious symptoms in adults, but cause serious malformations of fetuses. Adults who do not feel very ill are more likely to go outside and expose themselves to mosquitoes, which will pass the disease on to other adults. This could result in the harm of many fetuses by this virus if it is allowed to spread unchecked through the American populace. West Nile virus poses a similar threat and is currently the leading cause of mosquito-borne disease in the continental United States. The vast majority of those infected do not feel ill, however about 1 in 150 people will develop a serious, and sometimes fatal, illness. These two diseases have a relatively low death rate, but what happens when a disease that is much more serious inevitably makes its way into the American mosquito population? How do we protect ourselves from mosquito-borne tropical diseases?

There are measures homeowners can take to protect their community from mosquitoes. A small

act that keeps mosquitoes at bay is eliminating standing water. Some species of mosquitoes can breed in pools of water as small as a bottle cap. This means birdbaths, buckets and Frisbees shouldn't be left outdoors to collect rainwater, unless you want to invite mosquitoes to your home. Another simple way to repel these insects is to grow plants that naturally oppose them. Herbs such as basil, lavender, lemongrass, rosemary and lemon balm contain compounds that are highly toxic to several species of mosquito larvae. If you're more into flowers, marigolds and common lantanas have similar compounds.

However, mosquito control cannot be solely left up to the individual; we need swift action from our state and local governments to mitigate the threat that climate change-driven mosquito diseases imminently pose. There are several movements across the globe that are controversially experimenting with genetically modified mosquitoes. With the knowledge that only female mosquitoes bite, the male mosquitoes are modified to carry a protein that will kill off any female offspring before they reach maturity. This experiment has seen success in the Cayman Islands in

2009, and more recently Brazil, reducing mosquito populations by over 92%. Environmentalists have warned that such eradication techniques could have unintended, adverse effects on the environment, yet in the 10 years since the initial experiment, the Caymans have yet to see any such effects.

In 2021, Florida plans to release 750 million genetically modified mosquitoes over a two-year period. Though this may seem

like a drastic course of action now, it may just be the thing that prevents a mosquito-borne epidemic from wreaking havoc on our country. More towns should consider genetically modified mosquitoes as a possibility. If you could have prevented COVID-19 at the source, wouldn't you have acted?

*Eleanor Raab is a Menlo Park resident, and Elizabeth Nefferdorf lives in Warrenton, Virginia.*

### What's on your mind?

From City Hall politics and the schools to transportation and other pressing issues, the Almanac aims to keep readers informed about their community. But we also want to hear from you.

Tell us what's on your mind by sending your letters to letters@AlmanacNews.com. Or snail-mail them to: The Almanac, 450 Cambridge Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94306.

Letters should be no longer than 300 words.

You can also submit a longer piece of 450 to 600 words for consideration to publish as a guest opinion column.

Questions? Email editor@AlmanacNews.com, or call 650-223-6537.

The Almanac

# Title Pages

Ring in the holidays  
with these  
fictional families



Getty Images

Eight heartfelt children's books to spend time reading while traditional celebrations are on hold

By Chris Saccheri

Kids have missed out on a lot this year: in-person school, birthday parties, play dates and sleepovers. And while friends and extended family have been kept at a distance, most immediate family members have been closer than ever (maybe closer than anyone ever wanted).

That's why it seems fitting to focus on books about families as we share some of our favorite children's books of 2020 for this year's recommended holiday reading list.



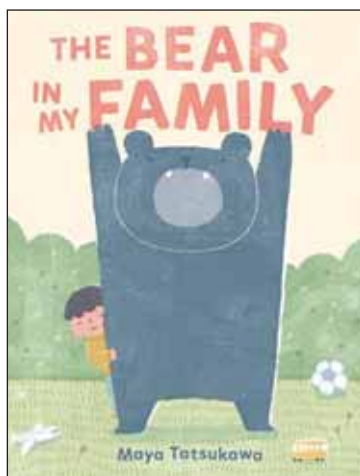
"Lift"

Little, Brown Books for Young Readers

◆ **"Lift"** by Minh Li, illustrated by Dan Santat; Little, Brown Books for Young Readers; \$17.99; ages 4-8.

Iris always pushes the elevator button. Until the day her little brother beats her to the punch. Frustrated, Iris retreats to her room and finds a mysterious, magic button that opens a door to an amazing new world. But is it more fun to go alone or share the adventure?

Li's text paired with Santat's striking comic book-style illustrations lead us through Iris' journey from jealousy to empathy. Her realization that joy can come from sharing something special makes this book perfect for new big brothers and sisters.



"The Bear in My Family"  
Dial Books

◆ **"The Bear in My Family"** by Maya Tatsukawa; Dial Books; \$17.99; ages 4-8.

You think you have it tough? Try living with a bear! This story's young narrator can't understand how his parents don't see what he sees: The bear is loud, messy, and bossy, yet they still treat it like family. But when he encounters some bullies at the playground and the bear comes to his rescue, he realizes that maybe the bear isn't so bad after all. A sweet, charming story about dealing with an overbearing older sibling.



"Everyone's Awake"  
Chronicle Books

◆ **"Everyone's Awake"** by Colin Meloy, illustrated by Shawn

Harris; Chronicle Books; \$17.99; ages 5-8.

This raucous and hilarious bedtime book introduces us to a family that should be sleeping but, instead, is doing everything else:

"The dog's into the eggnog; Mom's tap dancing to Prince while Dad is on the laptop buying ten-yard bolts of chintz."

Their activities get wilder and weirder as the night goes on, leading to waged battles and blimps made out of underpants. The vibrant illustrations are full of clever details (see if you can find the frogs on every page) and match perfectly with the clever, rhythmic text. This is a book that demands to be read aloud.



"The List of Things  
That Will Not Change"  
Wendy Lamb Books

◆ **"The List of Things That Will Not Change"** by Rebecca Stead; Wendy Lamb Books; \$16.99; ages 8-12.

Bea is no stranger to change: Two years ago, her parents divorced after her father came out as gay. Now her dad and his boyfriend are getting married and Bea is thrilled — not just because Jesse is fantastic, but because she'll finally get what she's always wanted: a sister.

But Jesse's daughter, Sonia, doesn't share her excitement, and blending these two families may be tougher than Bea imagined.

Stead does a masterful job capturing Bea's worries and anxiety in a relatable way. An uplifting story about family, love and how change can be exciting and terrifying at the same time.



"Twins"  
Graphix

◆ **"Twins"** by Varian Johnson, illustrated by Shannon Wright; Graphix; \$12.99; ages 8-12.

Twin sisters Francine and Maureen Carter are used to doing everything together. But as they start middle school, Francine yearns to stand out — choosing a new nickname, new look and new opportunities — while Maureen just wants to fit in. When they wind up running against each other for class president, the competition threatens to tear them apart.

A sweet, authentic graphic novel about twin sisters facing the challenges of middle school, coming into their own, and learning to accept each other for who they are as individuals. Highly recommended for fans of Raina Telgemeier and anyone looking for graphic novels with Black protagonists.



"Black Brother,  
Black Brother"

Little, Brown Books for Young Readers

◆ **"Black Brother, Black Brother"** by Jewell Parker Rhodes; Little, Brown Books for Young Readers; \$16.99; ages 8-12.

A powerful coming-of-age story about a biracial family where one brother presents as white, the other as Black, and the ways the world treats them differently. Darker skinned than his older brother Trey, Donte finds himself on the receiving end of every joke, microaggression and accusation at their elite private school. When a bully pushes Donte too far, Donte decides to beat him at his own game: fencing.

Rhodes deftly addresses complex topics like colorism and institutional racism in a way that's easily accessible to middle-grade readers. (Bonus points for being the rare, middle-grade sports book about fencing!) An essential read for 2020.

See **FICTIONAL FAMILIES**, page 25

# Here come the Holidays



CELEBRATE THE HOLIDAYS WITH US!

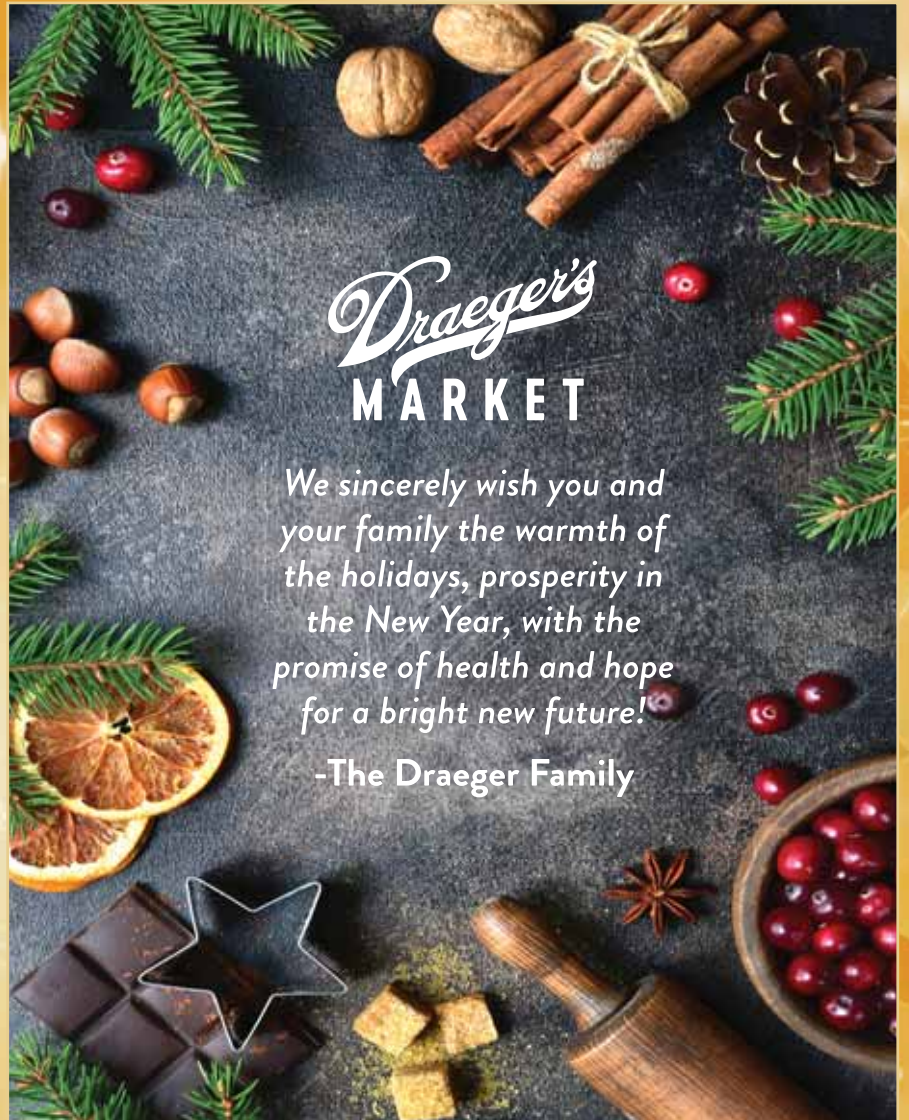


You may not be able to join us in person this year, but we can still attend to every detail as you enjoy a stress-free holiday dinner with friends and family at home!

Open from 12-8 pm on Christmas Eve and 12-9 pm on New Year's Eve for pickup and delivery of our four course prix fixe.

Visit us online for menus, more details, and to order today!

Call or Order Online for Pickup and Delivery  
635 Santa Cruz Ave | Menlo Park  
leftbank.com | 650.473.6543



## Draeger's MARKET

We sincerely wish you and your family the warmth of the holidays, prosperity in the New Year, with the promise of health and hope for a bright new future!

-The Draeger Family



### WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT PRESENTS SANTA CLAUS AT THE FIREHOUSE! DECEMBER 22ND

SANTA WILL BE MAKING ZOOM CALLS!  
DROP OFF A LETTER TO SANTA AT ONE OF OUR  
FIRE STATIONS IN THE "SANTA" MAILBOX:

ST. 7 - 3111 WOODSIDE RD, WDS

ST. 8 - 135 PORTOLA RD, PV

ST. 19 - 4091 JEFFERSON AVE, WDS

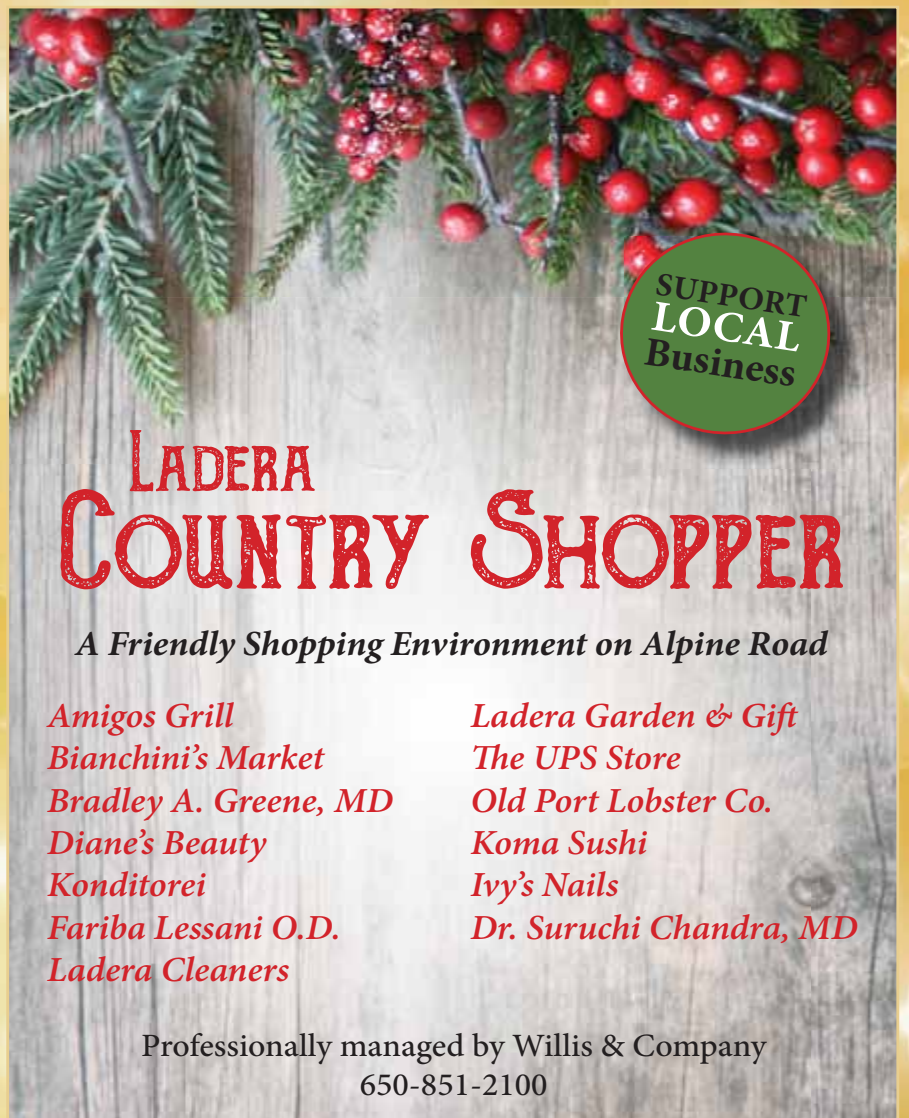
LETTERS MUST INCLUDE AN EMAIL ADDRESS AND  
PHONE NUMBER. LETTERS MUST BE RECEIVED  
BY DECEMBER 19TH. YOU CAN ALSO  
EMAIL OR MAIL YOUR LETTER.



YOU WILL BE CONTACTED BY  
SANTA'S HELPERS TO SET UP YOUR VISIT VIA ZOOM!

To accommodate everyone, Zoom appointments  
will be no longer than 5 minutes.

To email your letter or for more info contact -  
Selena Brown - selenab@woodsidefire.org



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Bradley A. Greene, MD  
Diane's Beauty  
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Fariba Lessani O.D.  
Ladera Cleaners

Ladera Garden & Gift  
The UPS Store  
Old Port Lobster Co.  
Koma Sushi  
Ivy's Nails  
Dr. Suruchi Chandra, MD

Professionally managed by Willis & Company  
650-851-2100

# Here come the Holidays

## Christmas At Trinity Church

An Episcopal community in Menlo Park

Please join us online for our celebration  
of the birth of Christ.

### A Celebration for the Longest Night and the Promise of Light

Sunday, December 20th at 5:00 p.m.

### Christmas Eve

Our joyful pre-recorded Christmas Eve service  
will be available online all day on Christmas Eve  
and Christmas Day.

### Our Sunday Morning Services

Services are live streamed every Sunday morning  
at 10:00 and are available on You Tube.

For information on how to join these services,  
please visit our website: [www.trinitymenlopark.org](http://www.trinitymenlopark.org)



*We wish you Christmas joy!*

330 Ravenswood Ave., Menlo Park  
(650) 326-2083  
[www.trinitymenlopark.org](http://www.trinitymenlopark.org)

Give your parents a gift that helps them  
live better in their own home... A Gift  
Membership in Avenidas Village!



An Avenidas Village membership provides peace  
of mind for you and a community of support and  
resources for your loved ones to help them stay  
independent and secure. They will enjoy joining  
a network of active seniors sharing resources for  
handling life's transitions.

**Act now** to support the independent path your parents  
have chosen with a personalized gift certificate. For more  
info or to purchase, visit [www.AvenidasVillage.org/gift](http://www.AvenidasVillage.org/gift) or  
call (650) 289-5405 today! Redeem by 12/31/20 to lock in  
lower 2020 rates.



[www.avenidasvillage.org](http://www.avenidasvillage.org)



.....from members of Constant Growth Business  
Network International (BNI) in Menlo Park. We provide  
reliable, trusted services to improve your life &  
your business in many ways. Here are a few of us.

Julie Bottarini, Physical Therapy  
[JulieBottarini.com](http://JulieBottarini.com)

James Orr, UBS Financial Services  
[James.Orr1@UBS.com](mailto:James.Orr1@UBS.com)

Joanne Castillo, Fitness Trainer  
[InfalibleFit.com](http://InfalibleFit.com)

Charlie Porter, Farmers Insurance  
[CPorter2@FarmersAgent.com](mailto:CPorter2@FarmersAgent.com)

Michelle DeWolf, Health Coaching  
[MichelleDeWolf.com](http://MichelleDeWolf.com)

Ann Stoner, Rodan & Fields  
[AnnStoner@gmail.com](mailto:AnnStoner@gmail.com)

Trish Mitchell, Men's Clothing  
[TrishMitchell.JHilburn.com](http://TrishMitchell.JHilburn.com)

Jennifer Williams Taylor  
[AvalonCollegeAdvising.com](http://AvalonCollegeAdvising.com)

Karen Mittlestadt, Acupuncture  
[PortolaValleyAcupuncture.com](http://PortolaValleyAcupuncture.com)

Elisa Yu, Business Coach  
[BrainSHAREcoach.com](http://BrainSHAREcoach.com)

Dan Zlony, Real Estate Advisor with Compass  
[DanZlony.com](http://DanZlony.com)

Contact one of us above to learn more about other members who  
might assist you, or about joining BNI Constant Growth.



# Get local for the holidays

An easy and  
affordable way  
to advertise in  
print and online  
for the holidays

Contact your Almanac Sales Rep  
to learn how you can reach local markets  
with your holiday message.

The Almanac 650-326-8210

**FICTIONAL FAMILIES**

*continued from page 22*

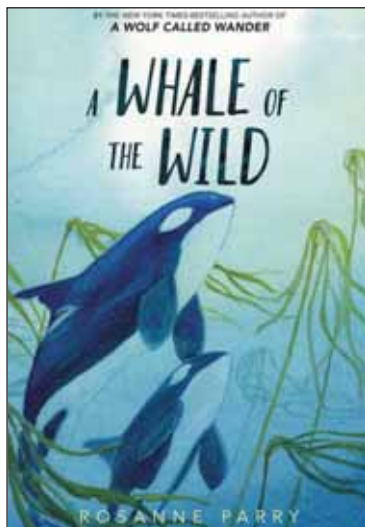
◆ **“The Time of Green Magic”** by Hilary McKay; Margaret K. McElderry Books; \$17.99; ages 8-12.

Abi’s life is turned upside down when her father remarries and she suddenly becomes the middle child in their new, blended family. Sandwiched between sticky-handed Louis and moody teenager Max, Abi retreats into her books as the family moves into an old, ivy-covered house in North London. Before long, magic starts to creep up on them: first, with Abi falling literally into her books and then with a mysterious creature that comforts Louis when his mother is away.

The book is an enchanting blend of realistic fiction and fantasy, but at its heart, this is a story about a family struggling to adapt to a new situation. The parents are stressed and over-worked, but trying their best to hold it all together; the kids are fully realized and relatable,



“The Time of Green Magic”  
Margaret K. McElderry Books



“A Whale of the Wild”  
Greenwillow Books

but working through their own unique challenges. Any modern family will relate to them.

◆ **“A Whale of the Wild”** by Rosanne Parry; Greenwillow Books; \$17.99; ages 8-12.

Orcas live in a matriarchal society and young Vega is honing her skills so that one day she will be trusted as the family’s way-finder. But when a devastating earthquake separates her and her young brother from the rest of their family, she must rely upon her instincts to lead them back home in this dramatic and emotional story.

Based on the author’s own research trips to the Salish Sea, this beautiful book explores family bonds, survival, global warming, and a changing seascape. Perfect for fans of animal stories like Sara Pennypacker’s “Pax” or Parry’s previous book, “A Wolf Called Wander.”

*Chris Saccheri is co-owner of Linden Tree Children’s Books in Los Altos. He can be emailed at [csaccheri@lindentreebooks.com](mailto:csaccheri@lindentreebooks.com).*

# Don’t Go It Alone for The Holidays

You are not alone. This time of year can normally be very stressful, let alone during a pandemic when we are asked to shelter in place and minimize contact with family and friends.

**If you are struggling, you can turn to Avenidas Care Partners (ACP) for help.**

Call (650) 289-5438 to request a crisis intervention, an elder care consult, family mediation and emotional support during these challenging times.



**Avenidas**  
Care Partners

[www.avenidas.org](http://www.avenidas.org)

**We are here for you.**



**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

**PLANNING COMMISSION – CONDITIONAL USE PERMIT TO ALLOW TEMPORARY USE OF ATHLETIC FIELDS FOR OUTDOOR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES WITH TEMPORARY LIGHTING**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the Atherton Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to consider an application by Sacred Heart Schools for a Conditional Use Permit to allow outdoor recreational activities at its athletic fields and associated temporary lighting at Sacred Heart Schools, 150 Valparaiso Avenue, Atherton, CA, pursuant to Atherton Municipal Code Chapters 17.12, 17.36 and 17.56.

**Description:** Request for a Conditional Use Permit to allow Sacred Heart Schools to utilize temporary lighting from January 19, 2021 through March 12, 2021 from the hours of 4:30 pm until 7:00 pm Monday through Friday on Palatella Football field (parallel to Valparaiso) and Dollinger Soccer Field (parallel to Park Lane).

The proposal has been determined to be exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to CEQA Sections 15301, Class 1, relating to use of existing facilities and 15323, Class 23, for normal operations of facilities for gatherings.

**NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN** that said application is set for hearing by the Planning Commission at its Special meeting on December 28, 2020 at 6:00 PM via teleconference/ZOOM accessible through the below-described information, at which time and place public comments will be heard and all persons interested may participate and show cause, if they have any, why the Conditional Use Permit should or should not be approved.

This meeting is being held in compliance with the Governors Executive Order N-25-20 issued on March 4, 2020, and Executive Order N-29-20 issued on March 17, 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 tele or video conferencing. The public may participate in the Planning Commission Meeting via: Zoom Meeting.

**Join Zoom Meeting:**  
<https://zoom.us/j/147031861>  
**Meeting ID:** 147-031-861  
**One tap mobile**  
+16699006833,,147031861# US (San Jose)  
**Dial by your location**  
+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)  
**Meeting ID:** 147 031 861

**Remote Public Comments:**  
Meeting participants are encouraged to submit public comments in writing in advance of the meeting. The following email will be monitored during the meeting and public comments received will be read into the record.  
**Email:** [jgarcia@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:jgarcia@ci.atherton.ca.us)

**IF YOU CHALLENGE** the Conditional Use Permit in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the Planning Commission at, or prior to, the public hearing.

An aggrieved party may appeal the decision of the Planning Commission to the City Council, in writing, within 10 days of the date of the decision.

If you have any questions on the item please contact Lisa Costa Sanders, Town Planner, at [lcostasanders@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:lcostasanders@ci.atherton.ca.us) or 650-333-0248. Any attendee who wishes accommodation for a disability should contact the Lisa Costa Sanders at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

**Date Posted:** December 18, 2020

ATHERTON PLANNING COMMISSION  
/s/ L. Costa Sanders  
Lisa Costa Sanders, Town Planner



**NOTICE INVITING BIDS**  
**TOWN OF ATHERTON, CA**

The Town of Atherton will accept bids for construction of the following public work:

**JAMES AVENUE OVERLAY PROJECT**

Removal and replacement of 2 inches of asphalt concrete pavement on James Avenue (between Middlefield Road and Magnolia Drive). Once roadway is grinded down, the contractor and the Town’s project engineer shall identify any pavement failures for repairs. Grind and replace approximately 10,000 square feet of asphalt to a 4-inch depth; then contractor shall perform crack sealing (per specification). Some hand work around utility access-hole covers will be necessary. Repave the entire street with a self-propelled paver & finish per Town Standard Specifications. Striping and pavement marking installation is also included in this project.

Plans & Specifications may be obtained at <http://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/bids.aspx> at no cost. The Contractor shall be responsible for any addendums that may be posted on the Town’s website.

SEALED BIDS will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 150 Watkins Ave. (Temporary Trailers), Atherton, California 94027, **until 1:30 p.m.** Pacific Standard Time on **Thursday, January 21, 2020**, at which time bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.

Bids must be for the entire work, and shall be submitted in sealed envelopes clearly marked: “Bid of (Contractor) for **JAMES AVENUE OVERLAY PROJECT**”, along with date and time of bid opening.

# Food & Drink



Magali Gauthier

**Beverage director Eusebio Pozos** uses epazote syrup and Nixta Licor de Elote to recreate the smells of a Mexico City market in the Central de Abastos cocktail at San Agus Cocina Urbana & Cocktails in Palo Alto on Dec. 3.

## Beyond margaritas: How San Agus in Palo Alto is crafting a new Mexican cocktail experience.

**By Zack Fernandes**  
Special to The Almanac

The aisles of Central de Abasto, Mexico City's largest outdoor market, are lined with vendors selling vegetables, herbs, bread and elote — the iconic Mexican street corn snack. It's this dish and a memory of the market that are embodied in the eponymous drink at San Agus Cocina Urbana & Cocktails in downtown Palo Alto.

San Agus' cocktail menu is entirely composed of drinks designed to transport you to Mexico City: there's the La Merced, named after another one of Mexico City's markets and the Xochimilco, which is inspired by a city borough. Notably absent from the cocktail list, though, is Mexico's most significant contribution to the canon of cocktails: the margarita.

"It's really hard having craft cocktails at a Hispanic restaurant," said beverage director Eusebio Pozos. "In most people's heads, the only thing they picture are margaritas."

Armed with a desire to nudge his customers off the beaten path, San Agus has deliberately omitted the classic cocktail from the menu to make room for the

diversity of Mexico's flavors.

"If I put a margarita on the menu, 60% of the cocktails I'm gonna sell are gonna be margaritas," Pozos tells me.

He wants his customers to explore a broad range of Mexican spirits other than tequila, and tries to introduce them to newer imports like destilado de pulque. Distilled from the traditional Aztec fermented agave drink pulque, this higher-proof version is difficult to find in the United States, and San Agus carries a version made by Juerte, the first company to import it here. Pozos' home state of Tlaxcala, a few hours outside of Mexico City, is especially renowned for its pulque, and Pozos remembers how it's all his father would drink during his childhood. "That (pulque) was the replacement for water," he told me with a chuckle as he described the drink's ubiquity, saying, "they would drink it and keep working in the farm."

While most of his customers are unfamiliar with pulque, Pozos says that many of them have been excited by some of the other spirits on offer. "I was surprised that Palo Alto was so into mezcal," he said, while noting that even the most knowledgeable of his customers were likely

to find something new to taste at San Agus. In an effort to support independent producers, Pozos sources from smaller mezcateros that are not widely distributed, such as Tres Tiempos, which produces small batches of mezcal in the state of Oaxaca. San Agus also carries raicilla and bacanora; more specific versions of mezcal that have received official designations as appellations and are protected and regulated by the Mexican government in the same way that many European countries regulate wine. Pozos is fond of the comparison to wine, often telling new mezcal

drinkers that the two are more alike than one would think.

"You have a diversity of agave just like you have a diversity of grapes," Pozos said. He explained that, like wine, agave spirits can also express terroir, a sense of place which factors heavily into the spirits he chooses to carry. San Agus also serves a range of spirits not made from agave. Sotol, a distillate made from the desert spoon shrub, rum distilled from sugar cane grown in the hills of Michoacán, and whiskey made from heritage Oaxacan corn all feature on the San Agus spirits list.

In addition to base spirits, San Agus is also exploring Mexican liqueurs that add flavor, texture, and complexity to their cocktails. Ancho Reyes, made by infusing neutral cane spirit with ancho chiles from Puebla, adds smokiness and depth to the La Merced cocktail, while Ancho Reyes Verde, made with fresh poblano chiles, adds more of an herbal and spicy kick to the Tepito. Since Mexican twists on classic cocktails can often feature spiciness, Pozos is keen to expand that narrow view of the country's influence on cocktails by incorporating liqueurs made with Mexico's vast varieties of herbs and edible flowers, like D'Aristi Xtabentún liqueur. Produced from the fermented honey of bees that pollinate the xtabentún flower in Yucatán state, Pozos uses the liqueur's honeyed notes of anise to round out the intense herbal notes of housemade epazote syrup in the Central de Abasto cocktail. To counter the sweetness of maple-tobacco syrup in the Bellas Artes, Pozos uses Granada-Vallet, a Mexican take on classic bitter Italian liqueurs, made with pomegranate and colored a bright red with natural cochineal dye from Oaxaca.

The least Mexican part of San

Agus' beverage menu is its wine selection, which features selections from Argentina, California, France, Italy and Spain, but not Mexico. "It's getting bigger and bigger," Pozos says of the wine-producing culture in Mexico. But after importation and distribution, these small batch wines can end up costing as much as \$24 to sell by the glass, and Pozos has to balance his desire to highlight these Mexican wines against the biases of some customers who simply aren't willing to pay that much for wine from a region they have never tried. Pozos remains hopeful that San Agus will carry Mexican wine one day based on the response wine enthusiasts have had to the appearance of Mexican producers on the menu at San Agus' sister restaurant, La Viga, in Redwood City.

As winter approaches, Pozos is beginning recipe development for the next iteration of San Agus' cocktail menu, which will be the restaurant's third since it opened in May. Pozos takes a seasonal approach to San Agus' cocktails, incorporating local produce that he feels might work well with Mexican flavors and accounting for the weather.

As the mercury drops, he says he'll trade the fall flavors of persimmon-infused gin for a warming mezcal-based ponche, a traditional Christmastime Mexican punch sweetened with piloncillo, an unrefined Mexican cane sugar, and spiced with cinnamon. For more adventurous drinkers, Pozos will include a mezcal cocktail infused with huitlacoche, an edible fungus that grows on corn, often harvested as a culinary delicacy. "The cocktail looks a little scary," Pozos says with a chuckle, owing to its color and cloudiness, but he remains confident that San Agus patrons will enjoy it as much as he does. ▣



Magali Gauthier

**A selection of cocktails** currently featured at San Agus Cocina Urbana & Cocktails in Palo Alto: Xochimilco, left, Central De Abastos, center, and La Merced, right.



**2199 Clayton Drive, Menlo Park**  
Offered at \$5,500,000  
Shena Hurley · 650.575.0991  
Lic. #01152002



**32 Palm Court, Menlo Park**  
Offered at \$4,800,000  
Mary Bee · 650.343.9999  
Lic. #00882849



**2131 Oakley Avenue, Menlo Park**  
Offered at \$3,295,000  
Penelope Huang · 650.281.8028  
Lic. #01023392



**21 Willow Road Unit #44, Menlo Park**  
Offered at \$1,225,000  
Barbara Telesco Curley · 650.861.2488  
Lic. #01837664



**555 Byron Street #301, Palo Alto**  
Offered at \$2,000,000  
Lucy Berman · 650.208.8824  
Lic. #01413627



**50 Amador Avenue, Atherton**  
Offered at \$9,500,000  
Emily Smith-Silvestri · 650.346.1361  
Lic. #01927979



**121 Ash Lane, Portola Valley**  
Offered at \$33,000,000  
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Lic. #01121795  
Noelle Queen · 650.427.9211  
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**40 Firethorn Way, Portola Valley**  
Offered at \$28,750,000  
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Lic. #01121795  
Noelle Queen · 650.427.9211  
Lic. #01917593



**3 Redberry Ridge, Portola Valley**  
Offered at \$16,800,000  
The Campi Group · 650.917.2433  
Lic. #00600311



**2 Acorn Street, Portola Valley**  
Offered at \$3,795,000  
Chris Iverson · 650.450.0450  
Lic. #01708130



**750 Mountain Home Road, Woodside**  
Offered at \$48,000,000  
Gary Campi · 650.917.2433  
Lic. #00600311  
Mary Beth Holman · 650.269.9977  
Lic. #01943311



**25 Preston Road, Woodside**  
Offered at \$7,900,000  
Shena Hurley · 650.575.0991  
Lic. #01152002



**6 Friars Lane, Woodside**  
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4 BEDS      5+2 BATHS      .85 ACRE LOT

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- Studio guest house with kitchenette and 1 bath
- Detached 3-car garage with EV charging
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- Pool, spa, sport court, playground, barbecue kitchen, and synthetic lawn
- Gated lot of approximately 0.85 acre
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