

# The Almanac

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

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## Dr. Seuss' godson weighs in on the 'culture wars' uproar

Late author's estate decided to stop publishing several books containing racist images

By **Kate Bradshaw**  
Almanac Staff Writer

Michael Thompson knew his godfather as Uncle Ted.

But to many, many others, Theodor Seuss Geisel was best known by his pen name, Dr. Seuss.

Thompson, who now lives in Redwood City, said he was around 3 years old when Geisel dedicated his book "If I Ran the Zoo" to him.

That book is one of the six that the Seuss estate, Dr. Seuss Enterprises, announced on March 2 that it has decided to stop selling. "These books portray people in ways that are hurtful and wrong," Dr. Seuss Enterprises said.

Specifically, some illustrations of Asian and Black people in those books are considered to be crude racial stereotypes. The other books that will cease to be

published and licensed are "And to Think That I Saw It on Mulberry Street," "McElligot's Pool," "On Beyond Zebra!," "Scrambled Eggs Super!" and "The Cat's Quizzer," the announcement said.

The announcement has triggered an uproar. Some have decried it as an example of "cancel culture" run amok while others have argued that Seuss came from a culture that was white supremacist, and that children's books today should not just avoid containing harmful racial stereotypes, but should better represent positive protagonists from different races.

In the meantime, some of the titles to cease publication have skyrocketed in demand and price. Amazon now lists copies of "If I Ran the Zoo" selling between \$500 and \$800.

In an interview with this



Magali Gauthier

**Michael Thompson** holds a copy of "If I Ran the Zoo" by Dr. Seuss in his Redwood City home on March 8. The late author, Theodor Seuss Geisel, was Thompson's godfather.

See **DR. SEUSS**, page 18

## Are the kids alright? Teens speak out about the emotional toll of a year in isolation

By **Elena Kadvany**

Nine months into the global pandemic, Riley Capuano told a grid of faces on a Zoom screen why she and her peers need schools to reopen.

"I've never seen this many students struggling with mental health," the Los Altos High School junior said during a virtual school board meeting on Dec. 14. "Being cooped up in your home all day is really, really tough. I'm a pretty happy kid usually, but I've never struggled more than I have this year because of being fully online."

Capuano said she'd hit a low point last fall, just before



Riley Capuano

Thanksgiving break. She felt lost. She stopped running, even though she loves cross country and hopes to compete in college. She was going to bed late for no reason.

"I felt like I was just tired of waiting for it to end. I lost all interest in any schoolwork. I didn't find any of it interesting," she said. "I was sick of just waking up, talking to my parents, doing school, being too lazy to run and then repeating (it all over again)."

Capuano didn't feel hopeless, she said, but like there just "wasn't anything good" on the horizon.

She is one of a vast many local teenagers who have been feeling this way in the last year since their lives have mostly shrunk to the walls of their homes and computer screens. Normally motivated students have become withdrawn and disconnected, and parents and health experts

have been increasingly concerned about youth well-being as the coronavirus pandemic has kept most local schools closed for months longer than anyone anticipated. Desperate parents have called into school board meetings, describing children of all ages who are listless and disengaged. In February, one Palo Alto parent told the school board her children are "empty, zombie-like shells of what they once were."

From April to October 2020, hospitals across the U.S. saw a 31% increase in the proportion of mental health emergency visits by youth ages 12 to 17, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Locally, Santa Clara County's suicide prevention hotline saw a significant increase in calls from young people last year, particularly from those between 15 and

25 years old. In 2020, there were about 34,500 calls from youth to the hotline, compared to about 27,000 in 2019 — a 28% rise, according to data provided by the county.

"At the beginning of the pandemic we could still tell them, 'Hang in there. Eventually we will get out of this.' ... but now it seems endless," Suicide and Crisis Services Manager Lan Nguyen, who is often on the other end of the line with teens calling into the hotline, said in January. "They say, 'When is this going to go away? When will I be able to see my friends again? When can I go back to school? When is it going to end?' And unfortunately we can't answer that question for them."

While local schools are slowly starting to reopen this spring, life for teenagers is still far from normal, and many of them are

*Any person who is feeling depressed, troubled or suicidal can call the National Suicide Prevention Hotline at 800-273-8255 or can reach trained counselors at Crisis Text Line by texting 741741. More resources are listed at the bottom of this story.*

still grappling with the ripple effects of sheltering in place for a year.

### Turning to advocacy

As her high school's student school board representative, Capuano has assumed the role of spokesperson for her peers. She's consistently advocated for reopening campuses even as some of the adults in the room,

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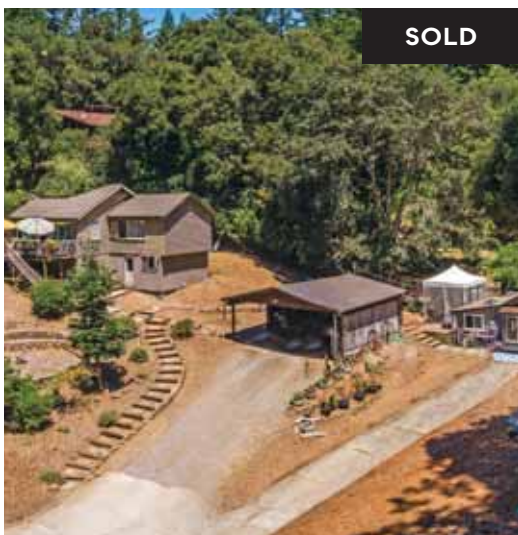
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# Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY

Daylight Saving Time is starting.

Set your clocks ahead one hour at 2 a.m. this Sunday



Magali Gauthier

## Back in the swing of things

Juniors Callista Mille and Lila Motamedi play doubles for Menlo-Atherton High School's varsity tennis team against Carlmont High School at M-A's Atherton campus on Feb. 25. Following a long hiatus due to the coronavirus pandemic, student athletes are facing short, compressed seasons now that competitions for outdoor sports were allowed to resume at the end of January.

## San Mateo County could move to less-restrictive orange tier next week

Astrid Casimire/Bay City News Service

Low recent COVID-19 case rate and positivity rate mean San Mateo County could advance to the less restrictive orange tier of the state's reopening framework next week.

San Mateo County stayed in the red Tier 2 of the state's Blueprint for a Safer Economy this week. Based on data for the week ending Feb. 27, the county had an adjusted case rate of 3 new cases per 100,000 and a positivity rate of 1.2%. For census tracts in the lowest quartile of the Healthy Places Index (HPI), the positivity rate was 2.3%.

These numbers meet the criteria for advancing to the orange Tier 3 following the county's could required three-week stay in the red tier.

Being in the orange tier would mean that amusement parks and theme parks could reopen, and bars and breweries could open outdoors only after being closed in the red tier. The orange tier would also loosen capacity restrictions for restaurants, places of worship, gyms and

fitness centers, some stores, movie theaters and museums.

During a presentation to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors Tuesday, Chief of San Mateo County Health Louise Rogers encouraged people to continue wearing face coverings, social distancing and getting tested at the first sign of COVID-19 symptoms.

"I want to take this opportunity to reconfirm that testing access remains important as we must continue to understand the spread of the virus in our community and be vigilant about potential increases," Rogers said.

The county continues to provide free testing at various locations. A full testing schedule is available at [smcgov.org/testing](http://smcgov.org/testing).

While case rates decline, the county's vaccination numbers continue to inch forward. As of Monday, 177,967 people or 27.7% of the county's eligible population have received at least the first dose of the vaccine.

Those eligible for the vaccine include health care workers, residents of long-term care facilities, individuals 65 years and older and workers in the

food and agriculture, education, child care and emergency response sectors.

Rogers said the county's vaccination efforts have been focused on census tracts in the lowest HPI quartile of the county.

However, the state's plan to dedicate 40% of its vaccine supply to zip codes with the lowest Health Places Indexes does not benefit San Mateo County as Rogers said only 10 zip codes in the Bay Area are included in that count and none of them are in San Mateo County.

"If vaccine supplies to California do not increase, the result of this change would be a concerning flattening of our supply, which is already, as you all know, insufficient to meet the demand locally," Rogers said.

Regardless, the county continues to focus vaccination efforts on its own low HPI census tracts by working with local health centers and community partners to set up vaccine clinics.

Dr. Anand Chabra, San Mateo County Health COVID-19 mass vaccination section chief, said on Tuesday that the county

See **ORANGE TIER**, page 20

## Teacher vaccine sign-ups ramp up

By Angela Swartz  
Almanac Staff Writer

San Mateo County educators are beginning to have an easier time signing up for COVID-19 vaccines since they first became eligible — along with law enforcement officers and farmworkers — on Feb. 22.

At first, it was easier for teachers already in classrooms to get appointments, since they were prioritized for county vaccination events.

"I think people are finding it easier now than in the past two weeks to get scheduled — there was a lot of confusion initially around the requirements in different counties, especially if you live in one and work in another," said Edith Salvatore, president of the Sequoia Union High School District's teachers union. "Members said the first weeks were like 'The Hunger

Games,' stalking websites and frantically refreshing to see if appointments were available. But now that both FEMA sites (Levi's Stadium and Oakland Coliseum) and all of the county sites are online, it seems to be going more smoothly."

The Sequoia district, which is slated to have teachers return to classrooms on April 5, has been able to offer around 55% of all staff the chance to be vaccinated through the San Mateo County Office of Education, said Interim Superintendent Crystal Leach in an email March 5. The district does not have the exact percentage of staff vaccinated available, but said it would be receiving vaccine priority access codes for staffers to use this week, she said.

### Priority groups, local teacher vaccination rates

The county has prioritized vaccinations for school staff working in person with

students with the greatest needs and those from households with limited financial resources, those learning English and those who are homeless or in foster care. There are about 5,000 teachers employed countywide and the state has dedicated 10% of its vaccine supply to educators.

In local school districts with in-person instruction, most teachers and staff members have already received their first shots. These teachers, who returned to classrooms in the fall, had lobbied to get priority status.

All 450 of Menlo Park City School District's staff, substitute teachers and child care workers have been offered the opportunity to receive the vaccine, or schedule an appointment, said Parke Treadway, the district's public information officer in a March 4 email. Just 18 have yet to secure vaccination appointments and were

**'The first weeks were like "The Hunger Games," stalking websites and frantically refreshing to see if appointments were available.'**

EDITH SALVATORE,  
TEACHERS UNION PRESIDENT

expected to do so within the next week, she said. All students stayed home for remote learning during the county's Feb. 24 vaccination clinic at the event center so that teachers would be able to attend, according to a Feb. 22 email

to district families.

Some 84% of staff in the Portola Valley School District have received one or both of the doses, said Superintendent Roberta Zarea in a March 3 email.

By March 7, 94% of staff were vaccinated with either the first or second dose. By the second week of April, 94% of staff will have both vaccines, according to Zarea.

"County Superintendent Nancy Magee and the superintendents of the 23 districts worked so hard to make this happen for our staff, and I could not be prouder or more relieved," said Zarea.

In the Las Lomas Elementary School District, Superintendent

See **VACCINES**, page 12



## NOTICE INVITING BIDS TOWN OF ATHERTON, CA

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

### EVENT MANAGEMENT SERVICES AT HOLBROOK-PALMER PARK

The Town of Atherton is seeking proposals from qualified companies or individuals to provide event management services at Holbrook-Palmer Park, 150 Watkins Avenue, Atherton California. The successful vendor will be responsible to market, advertise, plan, schedule, manage, operate, and conduct events in Holbrook-Palmer Park and its facilities.

The Request for Proposals may be obtained at <http://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/bids.aspx> at no cost. The vendor shall be responsible for any addendums that may be posted on the Town's website.

PROPOSALS will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 150 Watkins Avenue, Atherton, California 94027, **until 2:00 p.m. Pacific Standard Time on Wednesday, May 4, 2021.**

Interested parties are advised that the Town of Atherton has also released a companion Request for Proposals seeking qualified Café operators for the Town of Atherton Library Café located at 2 Dinkelpiel Station Lane. The companion Request for Proposals is available on the Town of Atherton website or by contacting the Town of Atherton Public Works Department.

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# The Almanac

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## CRIME BRIEF

### Unlicensed teen crashes truck, damages fire station

Three teenagers in a Dodge pickup truck nearly rammed into an East Palo Alto fire station on March 2, hitting the rail of the wheelchair access ramp that also protects the structure.

No one was injured, according to a press release from the Menlo Park Fire Protection District, which provides fire protection and emergency services for East Palo Alto.

Around 3 p.m. on March 2, firefighters at Station 2, located on the corner of University Avenue and Runnymede Street, heard tire screeches and a "loud bang" by the station's public entrance, the press release said.

When investigating the scene, firefighters found three teens inside the vehicle, including an unlicensed 17-year-old behind the wheel. The driver told firefighters that he had "borrowed" his dad's truck, according to the press release.

The passenger side of the front of the truck was left with extensive damage.

"These kids are lucky no one was on the sidewalk and that they weren't injured themselves," fire Chief Harold Schapelhouman said in the press release.

The truck avoided hitting the building, but the fire district said the station sustained "thousands of dollars of damage," with broken concrete and metal pedestrian handrails.

According to the fire district, the incident is the third time since the station was rebuilt in 2016 that a vehicle nearly hit the building. Shapelhouman credits the careful thinking behind the building's design for leaving the station unscathed every time.

"We added concrete bollards to protect the corner of the new structure when it was rebuilt and they have twice done their job extremely effectively," he said. "We also raised the overall height of the station compared to the height of the street and sidewalk, which appears to have helped as well."

The fire chief added that the station will be looking into placing "bollard style bases" by the handrail since the March 2 crash was the closest time a vehicle has gotten to striking the building.

—Lloyd Lee

## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

### Belle Haven vaccine clinic on Saturday

A clinic to inoculate Belle Haven residents who meet current state and county COVID-19 vaccination criteria will be held Saturday, March 13, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Onetta Harris Community Center at 100 Terminal Ave.

The clinic, organized by local nonprofit Belle Haven Action, the Ravenswood Family Health Center and the county of San Mateo, will prioritize available vaccines for Belle Haven residents who are health care workers, residents of long-term care facilities, 65 and older, or work in sectors that are currently eligible for vaccination, including agriculture and food service work, education and child care and emergency services.

"San Mateo County has committed to vaccinate our residents equitably, when they are eligible. This new and innovative approach brings the vaccine to where people reside and will make the vaccination process as seamless as possible for them," said San Mateo County Supervisor Warren Slocum in a press statement.

COVID-19 cases among residents of Belle Haven — a single neighborhood in Menlo Park located north of U.S. 101 — accounted for 50.3% of 1,488 total cases reported in the city, as of Feb. 26. The neighborhood is home to nearly 16% of the city's population overall and 90% of its minority residents, according to a statement from Belle Haven Action.

"The majority of our residents are hard-working families in front-line jobs. They are the ones working in our markets and performing other vital jobs and services that keep our community running," said Luisa Buada, CEO of the Ravenswood

See **COMMUNITY BRIEFS**, page 24

## CORRECTION

In the "One year in" story on Francisca Vazquez in last week's issue of The Almanac, her sister Zamantha De La Luz's first name was misspelled in a photo caption.

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# Sequoia district teachers approve deal to return to classrooms next month

By Angela Swartz  
Almanac Staff Writer

Sequoia Union High School District teachers overwhelmingly approved a plan last week to return to teaching in person on April 5.

Some 91% of the teachers union, the Sequoia District Teachers Association, voted in favor of the deal, which gives students the option of in-person learning starting next month if San Mateo County remains in the less restrictive “red tier,” said union President Edith Salvatore.

District officials reached a tentative agreement with the district’s teachers union on Feb. 23. A simple majority vote of teachers in the union was needed to make it official. Teachers voted on the agreement March 3-5.

Locally, the district operates Menlo-Atherton and Woodside high schools, as well as TIDE and East Palo Alto academies. The district’s classrooms have been closed for in-person learning except for small cohorts of at-risk students since March 16, 2020.

## Agreement details

If the county moves back into the more restrictive “purple tier,” when virus spread is substantial, or there is an outbreak of COVID-19 at one or more school sites, teachers will return to 100% distance learning, the agreement states. Teachers are also able to work from home on Wednesdays during so-called asynchronous learning (when students work independently) to allow for deep cleaning and sanitizing of rooms between cohorts of students, according to the agreement. Schools will close if there are more than three outbreaks in a two-week period and more than 5% of the school population has been infected.

Students would not spend time on campus for a typical Monday through Friday schedule, Interim Superintendent Crystal Leach said. The district has chosen a concurrent learning model, known as “Zoomers and roomers,” which means some students would

be learning from teachers in the classrooms, while others would be home and attending via video. With social distancing requirements, classrooms can have students at 25% capacity, according to the agreement. If the county enters the “orange tier,” indicating moderate spread of the virus, classrooms can go up to 50% capacity. A sample two-week cycle of in-person learning states that a quarter of students would attend classes on Mondays, while three-fourths would attend remotely.

The district will be required to conduct monthly COVID-19 tests for staff members who interact with students.

## Students rally to return, while teachers bring up concerns about equity

The district’s decision comes after a coalition of over 100 students, parents and teachers rallied at the district office on Feb. 23 to resume in-person instruction. State Sen. Josh Becker, D-Menlo Park, also



Magali Gauthier

**Sequoia Union High School District** families and staff stand outside the district office to demand schools reopen for in-person learning when San Mateo County entered the state’s “red tier” in Redwood City on Feb. 23.

called for schools to reopen once the county entered the red tier on Feb. 23.

Parents have spoken about the need for students to return to classrooms for their mental health.

Conversely, teachers have shared their fears about returning to classrooms and noted some community

members are concerned about widespread COVID-19 cases in some parts of the school community. Regardless, the school board announced at a Feb. 24 board meeting the intent to reopen classrooms in April. ■

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

## Coronavirus central: California sets aside vaccines for hardest-hit communities

Stadiums, entertainment venues and amusement parks allowed to reopen at limited capacities

By Embarcadero Media staff

San Mateo County as of Tuesday had 39,184 cumulative cases of COVID-19, with 525 deaths. There were 27 people hospitalized. Santa Clara County as of Tuesday had 112,036 cumulative COVID-19 cases and 1,830 deaths. There were 151 people hospitalized, 23 of which were new.

### State shifts COVID-19 vaccines to hardest-hit communities

Seeking an “equity” approach to allocating COVID-19 vaccine doses across the state, California health officials announced Thursday that 40% of vaccine doses will be reserved for low-income and minority communities that have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

The preference will roughly double the allotment to ZIP codes and census tracts with poor health outcomes and higher rates of COVID-19 cases and deaths. The state has administered 10 million doses of the vaccine to date, but just over

one-third of those shots have gone to residents in wealthier, healthier communities.

Health officials say the new focus will be essential for reopening the economy and recovering from the pandemic, and its success will directly affect when counties will be able to enter the less-restrictive red, orange and yellow tiers.

“This is a key strategy to keep the pressure off of our health care delivery system,” said Dr. Mark Ghaly, California’s

secretary of the Health and Human Services Agency. “As we achieve higher levels of vaccines in the hardest hit communities, we feel more and more activities across the state can occur.”

The initial goal is to vaccinate 2 million California residents who are in the lowest quartile of the state’s so-called Healthy Places Index (HPI), which maps communities based on everything from chronic diseases and air quality to income and education level. In Santa Clara County, the

lowest quartile includes a dozen census tracts located in San Jose. There are no census tracts in San Mateo County in the lowest quartile.

Ghaly said the plan must go beyond an increased allotment, and that the state will lean on community clinics, public hospital systems and trusted pharmacies in the communities to act as liaisons. It also means reserving appointments for residents who are “severely impacted” by the pandemic, and a boost in funding for safety net providers responsible for doing the outreach.

With an expected increase in supply and a third vaccine by Johnson & Johnson now approved, Ghaly said the shift in availability shouldn’t reduce the number of shots available to communities that don’t fall under the lowest HPI quartile. It will slow the increase in available shots, however. The new priorities will not affect plans to extend vaccine eligibility to people with disabilities and high-risk conditions on March 15.

Once the state hits its 2 million vaccine benchmark, the

plan is to lower the threshold for counties to go from the most restrictive purple tier to the red tier. Counties will only need to reduce daily cases to 10 per 100,000 residents — rather than seven — in order to be reclassified.

Ghaly called the change a “small but meaningful step” that adjusts to a new normal, following a dark stage of the pandemic in which case counts, hospitalizations and deaths surged over the winter months. But he hesitated to say the state is rushing to reopen, and said that California will maintain some of the strongest public health restrictions in the country.

“We will keep our foot on the brake, not on the gas,” he said.

### More than 200K educators, child care workers get vaccine

More than 200,000 educators and child care workers received a coronavirus vaccine dose over the last week, more than double the goal set by the state of



Natalia Nazarova

**Outdoor venues** like Shoreline Amphitheatre in Mountain View will be allowed to reopen with limited capacity.

See **CORONAVIRUS**, page 12

# State settles teens' lawsuit, allowing for indoor competitions

An Atherton student also filed suit, saying rule was unfair to high school athletes

By **Angela Swartz**  
Almanac Staff Writer

California's high school athletes are allowed to resume indoor sports competitions after the state settled a lawsuit by a group of Southern California youth athletes on March 4.

A similar lawsuit was filed by an Atherton teen represented by the same law firm in San Mateo County last month urging state and county officials to loosen prohibitions.

The settlement, which allows all sports to operate using similar protocols to those in place for college and professional athletes, resolves a lawsuit filed last month in San Diego County by high school football players.

Their attorney, Stephen C. Grebing, a managing partner of Wingert Grebing of San Diego, said the settlement allows competitions in all sports in counties with case counts below 14 per 100,000.

Previously, indoor sports

such as volleyball and basketball would only be permitted if a county was in the yellow tier, which indicates minimal spread of the coronavirus, with fewer than one COVID-19 case per 100,000 people. No county in the state has reached that tier yet.

San Mateo and Santa Clara counties are in the second-most restrictive red tier, which means there are fewer than seven cases of COVID-19 per 100,000 residents.

"We are very happy with the decision and grateful for those who were willing to really look at all the data on safety of sports rather than be stuck in fear," said Heather Buch, mother of Stella Buch, 14, a volleyball player at Menlo School and Atherton resident. "The fight for equal opportunities for kids to better themselves through sports continues now at the local levels, in particular where some sports are getting much longer seasons than others due to CIF (California Interscholastic Federation) section schedule rigidity."

"This is great news for youth

sports throughout California: (the) settlement will be to allow for indoor and outdoor sports to resume — ahead of their color tier — if they follow the same guidelines as college sports," said Sam Singer, who represents Stella Buch.

Athletes will be required to be tested weekly for COVID-19, the same as high-contact outdoor sports in counties with case rates between seven and 14 per 100,000. Coaches, staff and players on the bench are required to wear masks, but athletes are not required to wear them while playing, Grebing said.

The ban violated equal protection because there is no medical evidence that competing in indoor team sports is safe for college and professional athletes but not safe for high school athletes, Buch said in the court filing on Feb. 26. Her lawsuit emphasized the disparate impact an indoor team sport ban has on female athletes.

On Feb. 19, the California Department of Public Health issued guidance on youth and



Courtesy Stella Buch

**Stella Buch**, a Menlo School freshman, at the Colorado Crossroads tournament about a year ago before the shelter-in-place order took effect. adult recreational sports banning all indoor high school sports in counties in the purple and red tiers, effective Feb. 26. ▀

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

## OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include **Judith Wood**, 88, whose daughter is longtime Almanac contributor Barbara Wood, on Feb. 2; **John Lester Chin**, 68, a Menlo Park resident and geologist for the U.S. Geological Survey, on Feb. 18; **Michael Collins Brown**, 73, director of communications for the San Francisco Archdiocese and longtime Portola Valley resident, on Feb. 21; **Barbara Brandon Varenhost**, 92, former counseling psychologist at Palo Alto Unified School District and Portola Valley resident, on Feb. 23; and **Therese Hamilton**, 87, a longtime Atherton resident and member of the Junior League of Palo Alto, on Feb. 26.

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

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# Menlo Park: Man shot in 'Triangle' homeless encampment

Firefighters have responded to the site more than 100 times in the past few years, fire chief says

By Sue Dremann

A man who was reportedly shot in the Menlo Park "Baylands Triangle" area was taken to the hospital after being found in cardiac arrest on Monday, March 8, Menlo Park Fire Protection District Chief Harold Schapelhouman said in a statement.

Firefighters responded at 11:38 a.m. in the Triangle, which covers about 60 acres of open nature preserve located at the edge of East Palo Alto along University

Avenue, Bayfront Expressway and Willow Road near Facebook's Menlo Park headquarters. A caller told Menlo Park police dispatchers that "someone was shot" near westbound Highway 84 at University Avenue, Schapelhouman said.

Menlo Park police officers who first arrived found a man bleeding out from a gunshot to his left thigh. Officers quickly applied a tourniquet and moved him from a homeless encampment closer to an abandoned rail line. They started chest compressions

because he wasn't breathing, Schapelhouman said.

Capt. Scott Blandford on Menlo Engine 2 arrived with his crew at 11:42 a.m. and parked on University Avenue at the abandoned Dumbarton Rail line, using the elevated rail bed to travel to the patient, who was about 500 feet from the roadway. The area, also known as the Ravenswood Triangle, is fraught with hazards from trash, trenches and latrine pits, some as deep as 10 to 12 feet, often hampering fire and police access, he said.

Firefighter/paramedics moved the man onto the flat elevated rail bed and looked for additional bullet wounds. The man had suffered significant blood loss from the single entry wound into his thigh. Paramedics also suspected he had a broken femur. Emergency personnel worked to compensate for his massive blood loss and performed CPR and used a defibrillator to monitor his heart and try to save his life, Schapelhouman said.

The man was taken to Stanford Health Care's Emergency Trauma Center at 12:07 p.m., where he

received emergency trauma care and was hospitalized in critical condition.

The shooter remained at large as of Monday.

Schapelhouman has sought for years to have the city of Menlo Park and state and county agencies restrict access to the Triangle, which has been the location of multiple fires from homeless encampments and significant environmental damage. Menlo Park officials recently reported

See **SHOOTING**, page 21

# Menlo Park water rates proposed to rise over next five years

By Kate Bradshaw

Almanac Staff Writer

Customers of the Menlo Park Municipal Water services will soon be receiving notices that their water rates could increase over the next five years under newly proposed rate hikes.

Under the law, the city has to notify all customers 45 days before a public hearing on the matter, which is currently scheduled for May 11, according to a staff report.

The rate increases, set to run for the next five fiscal years

— from 2022 to 2026 — would go into effect July 1 if approved. For the increases to not go forward, a majority of property owners served by the water system have to submit written protests.

The Menlo Park Municipal Water system serves about half of the city and about 4,400 customers of various types, including residential, commercial, industrial, institutional, irrigation-related and fire services-related. The water comes from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission and is delivered to the Sharon Heights

neighborhood and the area north and east of El Camino Real.

On March 9, the Menlo Park City Council took action to move the process forward by authorizing the city to notify customers of the proposed rate hikes. In addition, it decided that it favored a three-tier system for water rates, with one rate for those using less than 6 cubic feet, or 748 gallons, a second rate for those using between 6 and 12 cubic feet, and a third rate for those using more than 12 cubic feet.

They also agreed that a

separate capital surcharge that customers will be required to pay be noted separately on customer bills for the sake of transparency.

The capital surcharge would be based on water use to help fund capital projects. A master plan for the water system adopted in 2018 said that the water system needs around \$90 million in improvements to its infrastructure to limit water main failures, water outages and potential future liability, according to the staff report. Of that, \$27 million is expected to be paid for through the city's water

fund.

A rate study by the consulting firm Black and Veatch prepared for the city indicated that if the city opts to take loans to pay for some of the infrastructure improvements, as is recommended, then consumption charge rates would be increased 5% for the next five years; otherwise rate increases could rise to 12%.

Generally, a customer's bill includes a fixed meter charge, a consumption charge and a capital surcharge, according to

See **WATER RATES**, page 24

# Reflections on racial inequities that persist in Menlo Park

Local community organizers share lessons from presentations on discrimination in the city

By Angela Swartz

Almanac Staff Writer

On the same January day that rioters stormed the U.S. Capitol, 180 Menlo Park City School District community members gathered on Zoom to discuss how government policies and practices in Menlo Park have led to segregation.

The discussion was part of an ongoing series, started in 2019, focused on Richard Rothstein's book "The Color of Law: A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America." The workshops, put together by local nonprofits Menlo Together, a group of Peninsula residents who envision a city that is integrated and diverse, multigenerational and environmentally sustainable, and Community Equity Collaborative, a group focused on education equity and early learning in Menlo Park.

The Almanac spoke with organizers of these events about reactions they've gotten, epiphanies they've witnessed and why

they do this work.

During workshops, organizers have touched on issues such as redlining in the 1930s, in which banks refused home loans to people because they lived in an area deemed to be a poor financial risk, instead making loans to segregated, "racially harmonious" communities, according to the presenters. When assessing loans, the federal government took into account risk factors such as proximity to other homes with "freakish architectural design," "nuisances" such as billboards, service stations or stables, and whether the neighborhood included mixed racial or social groups.

But many residents often don't realize that there are still policies in place which help perpetuate lack of access to housing.

"We hope that this community, which is fairly liberal, yet votes against policies like affordable housing throughout the city, realize that (not supporting affordable housing) continues to contribute to segregation and economic inequity," said Menlo Together member

Karen Grove. "We're helping people to connect policies to their values."

Belle Haven resident Pam Jones said some people at workshops have learned how they benefited from the redlining. For example, their family may have lived in Menlo Park since the '50s and passed down property that's grown in value.

"That's why history is so important; it can help us make sense of why we are where we are today," she said. She said it also can help people understand "why those people over in Belle Haven are so angry."

Shame, anger and sadness are just a few of the emotions that come up during the presentations, organizers said.

A housing covenant from the 1920s to 1940s in the Willows neighborhood, for example, restricted people of "Black, Japanese, Chinese and Mongolian descent" from living in the area unless they were residing on a property of their white employer, according to the presentation.

In 1945, Black veterans were

barred from accessing the same low-interest home loans as white veterans did as part of the GI Bill.

During an in-person workshop by Menlo Together on the topic in 2019, Katie Hadrovic, a Menlo Park Library commissioner, said her jaw dropped "lower and lower" as she learned about the systemic practices that created segregated communities.

"It was really powerful information that was the past of the community I live in and has powerful residuals," she said. "I don't think anyone wants to know they still currently benefit from something they abhor."

Jones said many residents come away discovering things "about your sweet little city that aren't very nice."

In 2006, many Belle Haven residents lost their homes to foreclosure after refinancing their mortgages with subprime loans in the 1990s, when predatory lenders went door to door to segregated minority neighborhoods to promote the risky loans. A 2013 study found that "at the height of the housing

boom, Black and Hispanic families making more than \$200,000 a year were more likely on average to be given a subprime loan than a white family making less than \$30,000 a year."

Jones said during the presentation in January that barriers began to physically isolate East Palo Alto and the Belle Haven neighborhood from the rest of Menlo Park. Growing up in East Palo Alto she used to easily cross the area that is now U.S. 101 (the state widened the highway in the 1950s).

"We no longer had access because of this concrete," she said.

The NAACP called the barrier the "Concrete Curtain."

It wasn't until recently that a new bike and pedestrian bridge over 101 between Newell Road and Clark Avenue in East Palo Alto now gives the formerly isolated residents of the Woodland Park area easier access to the rest of the city's services on the other side of the highway.

See **INEQUITIES**, page 20

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**CORONAVIRUS**

*continued from page 7*

California, Gov. Gavin Newsom said Monday.

Last week, the state began reserving 10% of the vaccine shipments sent to local health departments and multi-house health care entities for educators and child care workers in an effort to hasten the reopening of schools across the state.

That 10% allocation will total at least 75,000 vaccine doses per week, Newsom said.

“This is welcome news for teachers, students and parents as more and more schools reopen safely across the state,” Newsom said in a statement. “We will continue working with our local partners to accelerate this effort in communities across the state so that all school staff have access to a vaccine within weeks.”

Newsom touted the effort, saying that the increase in vaccinations for workers like teachers

and school staff allowed all 58 of the state’s counties to vaccinate educators throughout the week. Prior to that, 35 counties had opened vaccine eligibility to teachers and child care workers.

To date, 10.5 million vaccine doses have been administered across California, according to state officials.

**State allows outdoor venues to reopen, with limits**

For the first time in roughly a year, Bay Area residents will be able to attend outdoor sporting and entertainment events and amusement parks, state officials announced March 5.

The state’s new guidance for large events would allow up to 20% capacity for sports stadiums and up to 15% capacity for amusement parks once the county in which a stadium or park sits is out of the purple tier of the state’s pandemic reopening system.

Stadiums in counties that remain in the purple tier would be capped at only 100 attendees and would also be barred from selling concessions.

The new stadium and amusement park guidance will take effect April 1, Ghaly said.

“We have, for many months, drawn a strong distinction between outdoor activities being much less risky than indoor activities,” Ghaly said during a briefing on the new guidance.

Stadium and amusement park attendance will be subject to various coronavirus mitigation measures like mask wearing and physical distancing, and attendees will only be allowed if they are California residents, according to state officials.

Ghaly also noted that the state’s travel advisory suggesting that residents refrain from traveling more than 120 miles from their home still remains in effect.

Ghaly and Dee Dee Myers, a senior adviser to Newsom, framed the new guidance for outdoor stadiums, venues and amusement parks as another step toward lifting the tiered reopening system, formally dubbed the Blueprint for a Safer Economy, entirely as the state continues vaccinating more residents and case rates continue to fall across the state.

“The goal here is planned obsolescence around the Blueprint

more broadly,” Myers said. “We’d like to see it go away but not until it’s safe to do so.”

The new guidance, paired with last week’s announcement of the state’s planned modification of the case thresholds at which counties are moved in and out of tiers, sets the stage for fans to attend when the Oakland Athletics and San Francisco Giants begin the Major League Baseball regular season on April 1.

Bay Area amusement parks like California’s Great America in Santa Clara and the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk would also be eligible to reopen.

San Francisco, Santa Clara, Alameda and Santa Cruz counties are all in the red tier as of March 10.

**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.*

**VACCINES**

*continued from page 5*

Beth Polito said March 4 that about 80% of teachers and staff have gotten the vaccine (mostly first doses).

About 90% of Woodside Elementary School District staff members have received their first shots, said Superintendent Steve Frank.

Some 54 staff members participated in a vaccination event through the Office of Education and the county health department Feb. 24. An additional 23 staff members were vaccinated through other opportunities for educators, he said.

**Events**

The Office of Education sent out invitations to teachers and child care workers to attend vaccination events at the San Mateo County Event Center on March 5 and 6, according to Patricia Love, executive director of strategy and communications. Kaiser Permanente also held special clinics for teachers from the priority list on those dates, she said.

So far, the Office of Education has received 500 vaccine access codes from the state, Love said. **A**

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

**Your COVID-19 vaccine questions — answered**

We’ve compiled a list of who can currently get vaccinated in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, plus answers to common questions and links to resources. Access the page at [tinyurl.com/COVIDvaccinequestions](http://tinyurl.com/COVIDvaccinequestions). Have a question? Send it to [editor@paweekly.com](mailto:editor@paweekly.com) and we’ll do our best to answer it.

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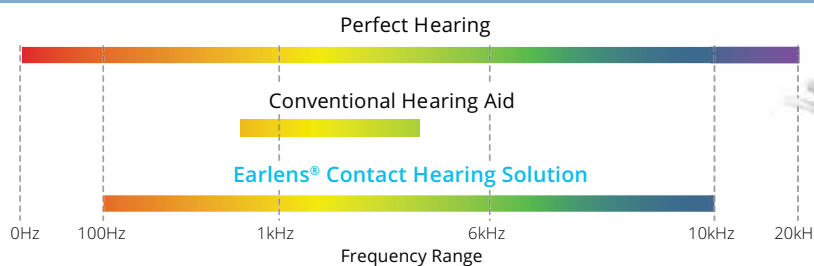
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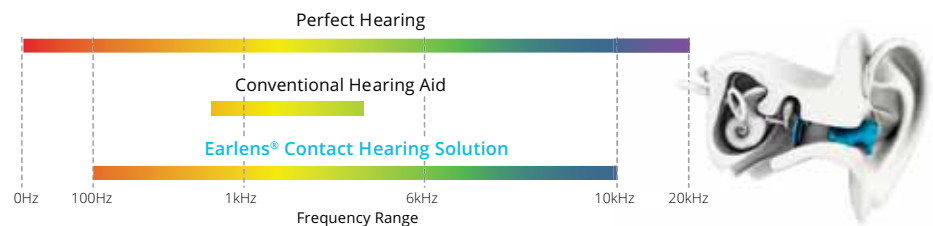


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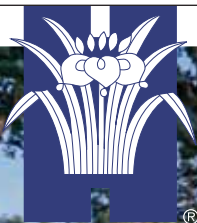
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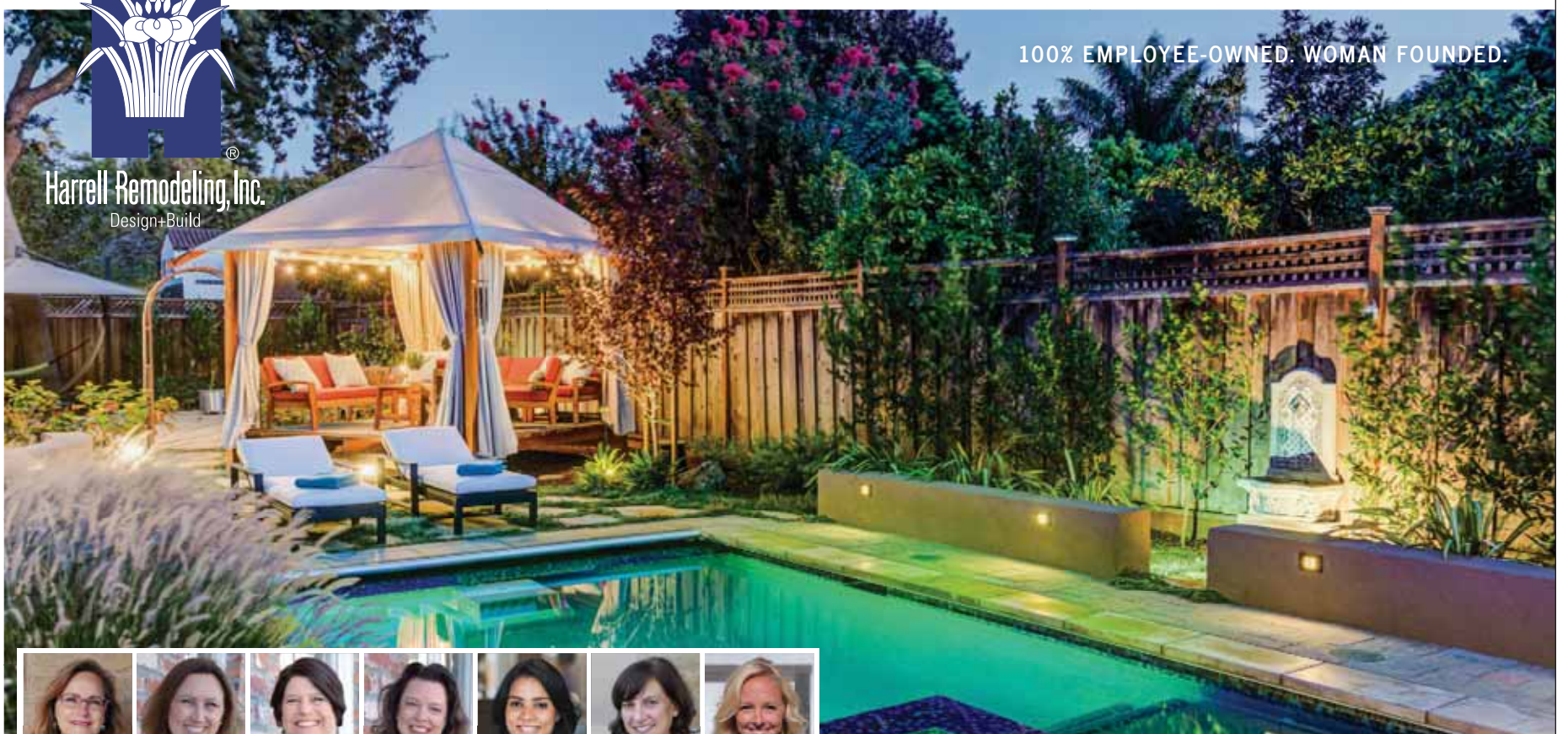


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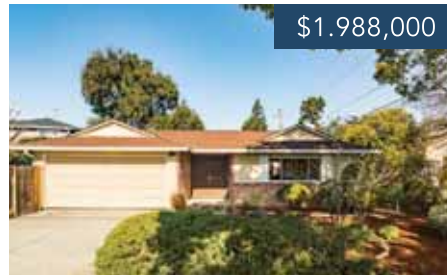
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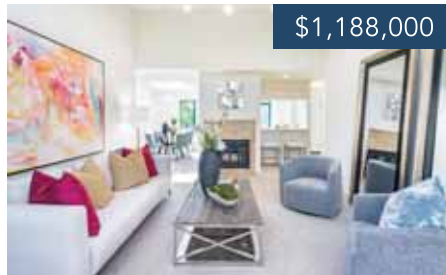
\$3,498,000

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



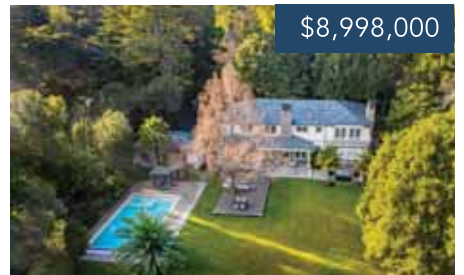
\$1,988,000

909 Loma Verde Avenue, Palo Alto  
3 Bd | 2 Bth  
[www.909LomaVerde.com](http://www.909LomaVerde.com)



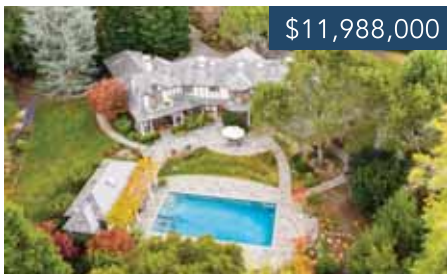
\$1,188,000

4250 El Camino Real #C328, Palo Alto  
2 Bd | 2 Bth  
[www.4250ElCamino.com](http://www.4250ElCamino.com)



\$8,998,000

242 Oak Grove Ave., Atherton  
5 Bd | 6.5 Bth  
[www.242OakGrove.com](http://www.242OakGrove.com)



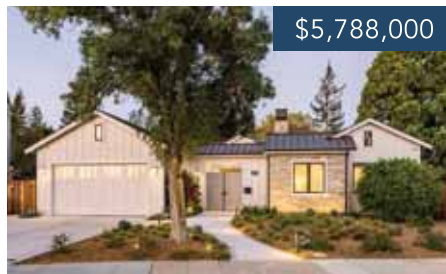
\$11,988,000

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



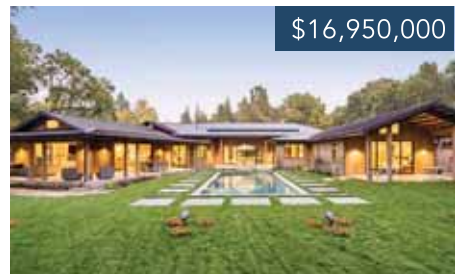
\$12,998,000

55 Irving Avenue, Atherton  
8 Bd | 11 Bth (9 full, 2 half)  
[www.55Irving.com](http://www.55Irving.com)



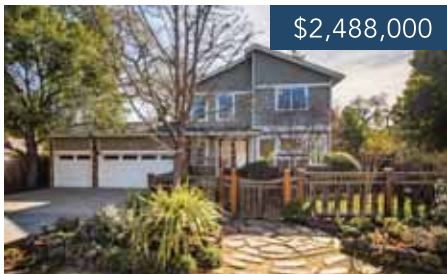
\$5,788,000

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



\$16,950,000

199 Mapache Dr, Portola Valley  
5 Bd | 6.5 Bth  
[www.199Mapache.com](http://www.199Mapache.com)



\$2,488,000

500 8th Avenue, Menlo Park  
4 Bd | 3.5 Bth  
[www.500EighthAvenue.com](http://www.500EighthAvenue.com)



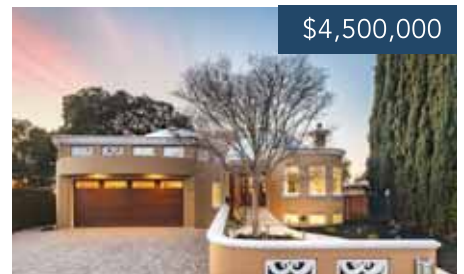
\$6,988,000

26946 Dezahara Way, Los Altos Hills  
4 Bd | 4.5 Bth  
[www.26946Dezahara.com](http://www.26946Dezahara.com)



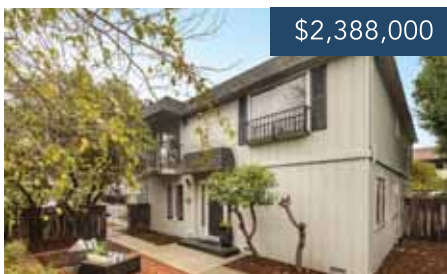
\$2,488,000

3756 Starr King Circle, Palo Alto  
3 Bd | 2 Bth  
[www.3756StarrKing.com](http://www.3756StarrKing.com)



\$4,500,000

628 Maybell Avenue, Palo Alto  
4 Bd | 3.5 Bth  
[www.628Maybell.com](http://www.628Maybell.com)



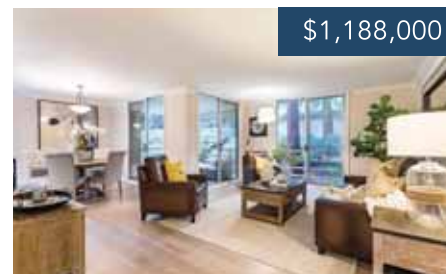
\$2,388,000

3796 Park Blvd., Palo Alto  
6 Bd | 4 Bth  
[www.3796Park.com](http://www.3796Park.com)



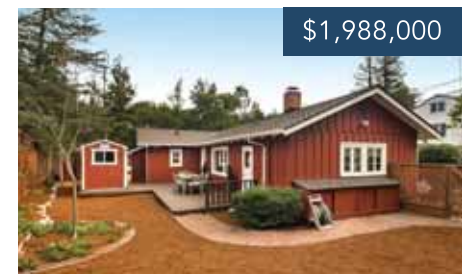
\$6,488,000

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3 Bd | 3 Bth  
[www.1170MayBrown.com](http://www.1170MayBrown.com)



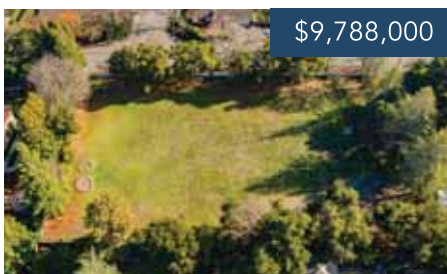
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1100 Sharon Park Dr #9, Menlo Park  
2 Bd | 2 Bth  
[www.1100SharonParkDr.com](http://www.1100SharonParkDr.com)



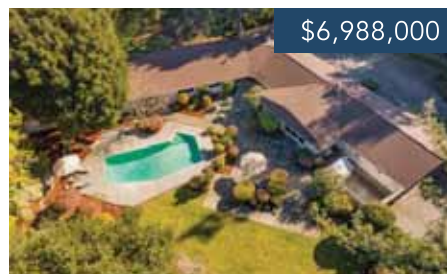
\$1,988,000

11691 Par Avenue, Los Altos  
3 Bd | 2 Bth  
[www.11691Par.com](http://www.11691Par.com)



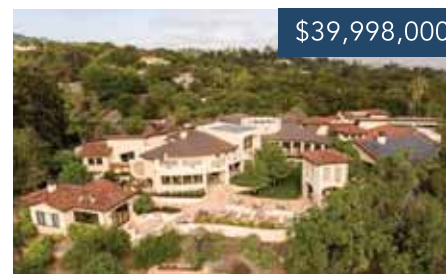
\$9,788,000

97 Santiago Avenue, Atherton  
1.43 Acre Lot  
[www.97Santiago.com](http://www.97Santiago.com)



\$6,988,000

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



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For more information contact: Audrey Sun, DRE #01933274 電話: 650.785.5822 我們精通國語和粵語  
Managing Broker: Michael Repka, DRE #01854880 | [www.deleonrealty.com](http://www.deleonrealty.com) | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224



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**TOWN OF WOODSIDE**  
2955 WOODSIDE ROAD, WOODSIDE, CA 94062  
**PLANNING COMMISSION**  
MARCH 17, 2021 6:00 PM

This meeting is compliant with the Governor's Executive Order N-25-20 issued on March 4, 2020, allowing for deviation of teleconference rules required by the Brown Act. The purpose of this is to provide the safest environment for staff and the public while allowing for public participation. The meeting will be held by teleconferencing. The public may participate via: Zoom meeting or by coming to Independence Hall, 2955 Woodside Road, where a microphone and speaker will be available to allow for participation.

PLANNING COMMISSIONERS PARTICIPATING BY TELECONFERENCE: BILDNER, BRUCH, DARE, KUTAY, LONDON, AND VOELKE.

**Join Zoom Meeting:**

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+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)  
+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

**Meeting ID:** 835 4062 8268

**Weblink:** <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83540628268>

**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:** [sharper@woodsidetown.org](mailto:sharper@woodsidetown.org)

1. Joanne Kagle

1. LLAJ2021-0001/GPAM2021-0001/ZOAM2021-0001

3900 Sand Hill Road/ Vacant Lot APN 072-380-020

Planner: Sage Schaan, Principal Planner

Presentation and recommendation of approval, conditional approval, or denial, to the Town Council of a proposal for a Lot Line Adjustment (LLA) between two existing lots: a developed lot at 3900 Sand Hill Road (APN 072-380-010) (Lot 1) with an existing residence eligible for listing as a Historical Resource (no changes are proposed to the existing residence), and a vacant lot fronting Mountain Home Road (APN 072-380-020) (Lot 2). The Lot Line Adjustment would provide a transfer of land from Lot 1 to Lot 2; and would require a General Plan Amendment of the transferred land from Residential (R) to Residential/Environmentally Sensitive Area (R/ESA), and a rezoning of the transferred land from Rural Residential (RR) to Special Conservation Planning, 5-acre Minimum (SCP-5).

THE APPLICATION MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW BY CONTACTING PRINCIPAL PLANNER, SAGE SCHAAN AT [SSCHAAN@WOODSIDETOWN.ORG](mailto:sschaan@woodsidetown.org)

**DR. SEUSS**

*continued from page 1*

publication, Thompson shared his memories of the late children's author and how he's feeling about the Seuss estate's decision to no longer publish the author's book dedicated to him.

"I'm sad I can no longer wander into a bookstore and take a copy off the shelf and see my name there, but that's OK," he said.

**'Kind, loving and obviously immensely talented'**

Thompson said he has fond memories of his godfather.

His parents were friends with Geisel and his first wife in Manhattan before the couple moved to La Jolla, and the two families maintained a long-term friendship despite the distance.

Geisel would regularly visit New York City to meet with his editors and publishers at Random House, and one evening while out at dinner, Thompson recalled Geisel criticizing the publishing house's books for early readers. Geisel had said at the time that he believed he could come up with better stories using limited vocabularies, and that's how Seuss' foray into writing "Beginner Books," which would come to include his famous "The Cat in the Hat" book began, Thompson said.

As a child, Thompson also recalled Geisel saying his full name — Michael Gordon Tackaberry Thompson — and telling him that it "scans." Thompson didn't know what that meant at the time, but later learned that the term applies to how the stresses of each syllable are distributed — a relevant observation by someone so well known for his rhyming abilities.

His godfather encouraged him to travel — by land. As a college student, Thompson said he took a trip to California to visit friends and made a stop at the Geisels' home. His godfather asked him how he planned to return to New York City and Thompson replied that he planned to fly.

"He said, 'Hmm, you know, you don't really get a sense of the United States just by flying over it. Let's see if we can't set you up with something better,'" Thompson remembered Geisel telling him.

So Geisel called his travel agent and booked Thompson a seat on the train from Seattle to Chicago, and then Thompson flew the rest of the way home.

"I'll never forget that trip," he said. "That was the kind of person he was. I just knew him as a kind, loving and obviously immensely talented person."

"He's had a big impact on my life and I'm grateful that I knew

him," he added.

**'Maybe their time is past'**

While Thompson can reminisce fondly of his godfather, he can also see the point the Seuss estate is making by discontinuing to publish or license certain books.

His godfather did do propaganda work during World War II, and as was not uncommon during that time period, he said, "it was very anti-Japanese propaganda."

One 2019 study found that only 2% of the human characters depicted in 50 Dr. Seuss children's books were characters of color. Of those, they were all male and were "only presented in subservient, exotified or dehumanized roles," the study stated.

Thompson said he's come to think about the situation as something like a #MeToo reckoning in recent years at his former boarding school. As he described it, a previously well-liked headmaster was found to not have taken appropriate measures when a teacher was rumored to have sexually abused a student. In response, the school erased the headmaster from public recognition.

"My feeling was, while it made me very sad, if by taking that action, one or more victims might feel that they had been listened to or heard, or apologized to, then it's probably worth it."

"If there were aspects of Ted's books that caused offense to people today — which they probably do — then this is probably OK."

It might be an easier attitude for him to simply say that Dr. Seuss Enterprises is overreacting, but, he said, "I don't think that's an honest view. We have been so insensitive to so many people for so many years, we have a long way to go before we overreact."

"I don't think it's enough to say that when they did these things, there was nothing wrong with them," he added.

Still, he said, there will be some loss, especially of the pride he used to get from being able to point out his name in a Dr. Seuss book. One time, he said, he went into Linden Tree Books in Los Altos, a local children's bookstore, and mentioned his connection to Dr. Seuss.

"They just about swooned," he said. "Who doesn't take some joy and happiness from that?"

Of his godfather's literary creations, he added, "I think they're wonderful, and how widespread they've been is a testament to that. The rhyming is so amazing, and a fun aspect of the way he told the stories," he said. "But the flip side is, if it made parents or children uncomfortable, or made them angry or hurt or something, then maybe their time is past." ■

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

**MENTAL HEALTH***continued from page 1*

including the president of the teachers union, have taken the opposite position. When the district lacked students' opinions on the prolonged shutdown, she and the Mountain View High School student board representative conducted their own survey on student engagement and mental health during distance learning. Of the roughly 270 students who responded, over 60% rated their motivation as lower during online school, though about 18% said the opposite — that they're more motivated with distance learning.

About 58% of students rated their current mental health at a one or a two on a scale of one to five, while about 20% of students said their mental health is better now than when they're attending school in person. Students reported both positive aspects of distance learning — waking up late, more independent work and “school from bed” — as well as the downsides, including too much screen time, difficulty paying attention and connecting with teachers, and “feeling cooped up at home.”

Gunn High School senior Andrew Kim's personal struggles during the shutdown also spurred him to action. Kim is the vice president of Advocacy Through Art, a student-led nonprofit that uses art to raise awareness about issues like mental health and race. The group organized a webinar this month featuring health professionals and teens and are hosting artist workshops in May to give students an opportunity to express themselves — and distress — through art.

“We want to help lessen the stigma of youth mental health during the pandemic,” said Emily Chan, a junior at Castilleja School and president of Advocacy Through Art. “We've been stuck at home with our family and we're using Zoom eight-plus hours a day. I feel like it's affected our outlook.”

Before the coronavirus, Kim was an outgoing teenager. Social interactions — meeting up with friends, casual conversations in the hallways between classes and at lunch — were a given in his day-to-day life. Since last March, though, socializing has required more effort than he often can summon. Eventually, he said, he stopped reaching out to friends and withdrew.

“That left me in a pretty dark place personally. That's how it became pretty bad because at first I didn't — I'm not somebody who talks about my emotions a lot,” he said. “It's so easy to get lost in yourself.”

While the barriers to reaching out for help ordinarily can feel high, several teens described this sense that seeking help has

felt insurmountable during shelter in place.

“When you're talking to someone face to face in person you can tell how they're feeling ... but over Zoom or over text, you can't tell,” said Mira Devgan, a junior at Menlo School. “Everybody is going through new things right now, but I think people are feeling really scared to reach out and admit it. For me, that's definitely been hard — not only to admit to other people that I'm struggling but to admit to myself I'm not in a good place right now.”

Like Kim and Capuano, Devgan has also channeled her struggles into advocacy. She's on the youth board at SafeSpace, a youth mental health organization in Menlo Park. With SafeSpace, she helped to produce a film documenting teens' quarantine experiences and a podcast featuring student conversations about well-being.

**Greater hardships**

Moana Kofotua's difficult pandemic journey landed her in the hospital.

When school moved online last spring, Moana Kofotua went from being a passing student to a failing one nearly overnight.

Then a sophomore at Menlo-Atherton High School, she had a hard time navigating Zoom. Without a computer and Wi-Fi at home, she relied on a laptop and hot spot from the school, but the hot spot internet was patchy. She, too, lost motivation and focus. It was hard to get out of bed, much less participate in classes. An after-school support program that was helpful pre-pandemic just wasn't the same over Zoom.

“I couldn't function, going online,” Kofotua said.

She didn't feel supported by her teachers, who contacted her only when she didn't turn in assignments. In December, she fell ill from anemia and was hospitalized. While there, she was also diagnosed with depression.

Kofotua doesn't feel comfortable talking about depression with her parents, both recent immigrants who don't understand mental health, she said.

“I had to go through it on my own,” she said.

In February, Kofotua transferred to Redwood High School, a small continuation school where she's been able to attend classes in person. She feels more welcome there and has also found a support system at Youth United for Community Action (YUCA), a grassroots community organization for youth of color in East Palo Alto. Kofotua and her brother go to YUCA to do homework and participate in conversations around restorative justice.

“We've opened up the space for students who don't feel safe or comfortable at home and want

to come and do homework here,” YUCA Program Director Kenia Najjar said. “We see the difference between them being on Zoom with us versus being in person.”

The shutdown has been challenging for all teenagers but disproportionately so for those who lack the resources at home and, without being at school in person, are at risk of falling through the cracks. School closures have deepened the achievement gap — many private schools reopened before public schools did.

“Educational inequities have the potential to translate into a lifelong barrier and a staggering number of life years lost,” a group of UCSF health professionals wrote in an open letter in January calling for the reopening of schools. “School districts around the country are reporting higher rates of students failing classes, a phenomenon which has been disproportionately seen among low-income Latinx and African American children.”

The coronavirus itself has also infected Hispanic people to a greater magnitude, and the extra burden of caring for ill parents has fallen on local teenagers like Monica Reyes Lopez, a junior at Los Altos High School.

Over the holidays, both of her parents contracted COVID-19. Her father is a landscaper and they think he may have been infected first. Her mother stopped going to her job as a house cleaner. Reyes Lopez's throat felt dry but she ignored it as she tried unsuccessfully to find testing appointments for her parents. Soon, she was sick, too — body aches, chills, fever.

Reyes Lopez recovered, but her mother's health worsened. Second semester started and her father went back to work, so Reyes Lopez had to balance school with taking care of her mother. She'd get up early, before her classes, to make her mother breakfast and bring her medicine. She'd put a mask on and crack open the door to check on her mother. She didn't tell any of her teachers what was going on at home, and only told one friend. She felt guilty and like she'd be blamed for getting infected.

When the anxiety and stress got to be too much, she'd go to the garage and break down. Reyes Lopez's room is next to her parents', and she didn't want them to hear her.

“There were moments where I felt very exhausted and stressed — especially because it was the start of the new year and I already went through a lot in 2020,” said Reyes Lopez, a serious, first-generation student with high standards who became overwhelmed and anxious in the distance learning environment. “I just wanted a fresh start in 2021. I just wanted this year to be more peaceful for me.”

Her mother eventually

**In distress over COVID-19? There is help.**

Anyone who is experiencing depression or heightened anxiety because of the public health crisis can find help through local resources.

If you are experiencing an emergency, call 911 immediately.

**In Santa Clara County:**

- 24/7 Behavioral Health Services Department Call Center: 800-704-0900.
- Crisis Text Line: Text RENEW to 741741.
- 24/7 Suicide and Crisis Hotline: 855-278-4204.

**In San Mateo County:**

- Behavioral Health Services & Resources - 24/7 Access Call Center - Toll-free number: 800-686-0101 | For the hearing impaired: 800-943-2833.

*For seniors, people with disabilities:* The Institute on Aging has a Friendship Line for people ages 60 and older and adults with disabilities who feel isolated: 800-971-0016.

*For youth:* A list of local resources for young people who need mental health support, as well as their family and friends, can be found at [tinyurl.com/resources-PAO](https://tinyurl.com/resources-PAO).

recovered. Reyes Lopez again feels productive and proud of her schoolwork, though her anxiety still ebbs and flows.

She knows her experience is just one of many among her peers, whose voices she feels have gotten lost in the heated debates among adults over reopening schools.

“Being a high school student right now is crazy. Each student has their own story and their own take on how they deal with the pandemic and distance learning,” she said. “I think it's important that we hear them.”

**Mobilizing support for students**

Both schools and community organizations have taken steps to reach students and families who may be struggling during the pandemic. In San Mateo County, mental health nonprofit StarVista started new, affordable telehealth groups for middle and high school students struggling with social isolation. (To participate, call 650-355-8787 or email [nancy.fang@star-vista.org](mailto:nancy.fang@star-vista.org).)

The Palo Alto school district contracted with Care Solace, a free, online service that helps connect people to local mental health services based on the issues with which they're struggling, insurance options and other criteria. (To access Care Solace, go to [caresolace.com/site/pausdfamilies](https://caresolace.com/site/pausdfamilies).)

The Mountain View-Los Altos school district expanded its partnerships with mental health nonprofits, hired a new district social worker and launched a student support group with Community Health Awareness Council (CHAC).

Children's Health Council in Palo Alto, which has seen a 150% rise in calls during the pandemic, is already preparing for the next phase in teens' emotional recovery. The slow reopening of schools

and the relaxation of public health restrictions, while positive, won't be a silver bullet for mental health challenges, Chief Clinical Officer Ramsey Khasho said. For some teenagers — especially those with social anxiety, who are on the spectrum or have been bullied at school — distance learning has been a respite.

“While we're excited about the reentry, we're also a little concerned that people are seeing this as a panacea for youth wellness,” Khasho said. “In fact we feel like there's going to be a pretty jarring reentry and recalibration period that's going to impact kids.”

The long-term effects of the pandemic on teens remain unknown, but experts' best guess at this point is that it will linger in trauma-like symptoms, Khasho said.

He anticipates mental health providers will see upticks in requests as schools reopen, both from students adjusting to campuses that don't function like they used to and from teachers and coaches who notice issues in kids they may have only interacted with online.

He encourages parents to reach out to CHC if they have any concerns. CHC requires no evaluation or family commitment to services.

To meet current and future demands, CHC is using a new \$2.5 million grant from Jack Dorsey's COVID-19 relief initiative to hire more providers (CHC has already hired seven new clinicians in the last seven months) and to bolster financial aid and free counseling services provided in communities like East Palo Alto.

“Hopefully, what this pandemic has taught us, because none of us have gotten out of this unscathed, is to really focus on our wellness and mental health,” Khasho said. ■

*Email Elena Kadavy at [ekadavy@paweekly.com](mailto:ekadavy@paweekly.com)*

## Dr. Barbara B. (Ebright) Varenhorst, Ph.D.

June 4, 1928 - February 23, 2021

With loving family by her side, Dr. Barbara B. (Ebright) Varenhorst, Ph.D. of Portola Valley, slipped peacefully into the arms of her Lord on Tuesday evening, February 23, 2021. Barbara was born in Omaha, Nebraska on June 4, 1928 to Oak Wood and Mary Louise (Davidson) Ebright.

As the daughter of a Lutheran minister, Barbara grew up in a strong Christian family, shaping her purpose in life and desire to help others. She attended schools in Kansas and Nebraska, graduating from Lincoln High School in 1946. She conducted her undergraduate work at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minnesota, graduating in 1950. A fellowship at Syracuse University allowed her to continue her education, and ultimately earn her master's degree in 1952. Required to read extensively about youth counseling and guidance, Barbara attributed

the clear vision that she would later develop about peer counseling to her time at Syracuse University. While at Syracuse she would also meet her future husband, Vernon D. Varenhorst.

Barbara and Vern were married in 1953 in Pasadena. They moved to the Palo Alto area, where she began teaching and counseling in the Palo Alto Unified School District (PAUSD). In 1964, she earned her Ph.D. from Stanford University in Counseling Psychology and returned to PAUSD as a counseling psychologist for two high schools. While there during the early 1970s, Dr. Varenhorst began to recognize that students were looking to their friends and peers, rather than the adults in their lives, when they needed help in decision making or problem solving. This was her inspiration for developing her Peer Counseling curriculum, to train and collaborate with young people to be more effective in helping their peers.

Dr. Varenhorst always felt that the most important aspect of her career was developing the Palo Alto Peer Counseling Program. In the years since, thousands of young people across the country have been trained in communication skills, human dynamics, and when to seek assistance from caring adults through Peer Helping programs, Peer Ministry, and other programs that came from this original work. Dr. Varenhorst has been acknowledged as the "Mother" of the peer helper movement and a founding member of the National Peer Helpers Association. Her impact has been far reaching and will continue to touch others for years to come.

In addition to her work in the Palo Alto Unified School District, Dr. Varenhorst was a visiting instructor at the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Stanford University, California Polytechnic State University, San Francisco State University, University of

Victoria, and Johns Hopkins University. Her publications were extensive and well-regarded, including the book *Real Friends: Becoming the Friend You'd Like to Have* (1983).

She was especially proud of her roles as Co-Founder and Past President of the National Peer Helpers Association, and held affiliations with the California Association of Peer Programs, the Board of Regents at St. Olaf College, Search Institute, and the College Board. Dr. Varenhorst was also elected to the Vesper Society Board of Directors in 1977. She served there in many leadership positions, including interim president from 1996-1999. Barbara and Vern joined Valley Presbyterian Church in the mid 90's where Barbara served as an Elder, founded and nurtured an Adult Education program and made many strong friendships.

Barbara will be remembered not only for the impact she had on countless youth, but also as a mentor and friend. She was known for her kindness and generosity, and her beautiful, bright smile. Even after a stroke four years ago caused her to transition away from independent living, her compassion, curiosity, and kindness towards others continued unabated. Her warm smile always remained the same.

Barbara is survived by many longtime friends, who were like family, as well as her sister-in-law, Virginia Barrows, and several nieces, nephews, great-nieces, and great-nephews, all who loved their Aunt Barb dearly. She was preceded in death by her parents, her husband Vern, brothers John C. Ebright and William D. Ebright, sister Dorothy Meyer, nephews David Oak Ebright, Donald Barrows, and Larry Barrows, and brother-in-law Ernest Barrows.

Our family would like to express our sincere thanks to the nurses, doctors and caregivers at the Healthcare Center at The Forum for the loving care they gave Barbara these last four years. We'd also like to thank her many kind friends, who visited her regularly and sent her cards and letters with warm, caring thoughts.

Because of the pandemic restrictions in place, a Celebration of Life will be planned for a later date when friends and family are able to safely travel and gather together. Skylawn is in charge of her arrangements. Memories of Barbara may be shared at their website, Skylawn.com. In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made to The Barbara and Vernon Varenhorst Fund, Search Institute, 3001 Broadway Street NE, Suite 310, Minneapolis MN 55413 or at [www.search-institute.org/donate](http://www.search-institute.org/donate); The Vernon and Barbara Varenhorst Endowed Scholarship at St. Olaf College, either by check to St. Olaf College, 1520 St. Olaf Avenue, Northfield, MN 55057 or at <https://wp.stolaf.edu/giving>; or a charity of choice.



PAID OBITUARY

### INEQUITIES

continued from page 10

#### Educational inequities persist

In 1967, the NAACP national magazine included an article about the dispute over new school district boundaries that created a mostly Black high school — Ravenswood in East Palo Alto, which closed in 1976 because of declining enrollment, 18 years after it opened, and a mostly white high school — Menlo-Atherton.

When Ravenswood High shuttered, students were bused to three high schools (one was a 45 minute bus ride away). Finally, in 2013 the Sequoia Union High School District governing board voted to allow East Palo Alto youth to attend nearby Menlo-Atherton.

Belle Haven resident Deadra Lampkin of Menlo Together said during the January workshop that her son was zoned to attend school in the Ravenswood City School District. She didn't want him to attend its schools since she finds them to be underperforming and unsafe. He was accepted into the Tinsley Volunteer Transfer Program, but he was assigned to a school in San Carlos.

The Tinsley program came about as the result of a lawsuit filed in 1976 by parents in the Ravenswood City School District and neighboring districts. The suit was settled in 1985 by requiring Peninsula school districts to transfer some minority students from the Ravenswood

district into their districts each year. The Peninsula districts include Menlo Park, Las Lomitas, Woodside, Portola Valley, Palo Alto, Belmont-Redwood Shores and San Carlos.

Each district has a maximum number of Ravenswood students it must take each year. If more than the maximum apply, students are chosen by lottery.

"I tried to get him into the Menlo Park City School District and wasn't able to, so I didn't enroll him because we didn't want him on a one-hour bus ride at 7 a.m.," Lampkin said. "Being Black, my son was born with one negative already. I couldn't afford to play Russian roulette with his education."

She is glad she is able to enroll him in private school.

"In order for him to get a good education, we have to pay tuition," she said. "Thank God I live with my grandmother."

Menlo Together member Karen Camacho said hearing Lampkin's story put into greater context how institutions have created inequities.

"People have really tough feelings and emotions from what they hear," Camacho said.

The summer of 2020, after Minneapolis police killed George Floyd, an unarmed Black man, in late May, showed people they need to talk explicitly about race, she said. "We're not going to be able to address inequities until we explicitly talk about it." ■

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

### ORANGE TIER

continued from page 5

received 22,160 vaccine doses last week, a jump from the 17,860 doses it received two weeks ago. The recent supply includes doses of the Janssen vaccine, developed by Johnson and Johnson.

This week, first and second dose clinics are continuing at the San Mateo County Event Center. There were also clinics scheduled in East Palo Alto, Daly City and Half Moon Bay.

Chabra said that the county is also beginning to target its vaccination efforts on people experiencing homelessness, those who may be homebound and people who are hospitalized. So far the county has identified at least 900 homebound individuals.

In order to keep up with vaccine opportunities, Rogers recommended that county residents sign up for the county's active notification tool as well as the state's [myturn.ca.gov](http://myturn.ca.gov) notification tool.

While Santa Clara County opted out of the state's plan for Blue Shield of California to

manage vaccinations statewide, Rogers said San Mateo is evaluating the agreement with Blue Shield to figure out what makes the most sense for the county.

"Our goal really is to ensure the maximum supply of vaccine to this county and to keep the pace of work moving forward without disruption of the vaccine effort locally," Rogers said.

Since San Mateo County is not in the early phases of Blue Shield's vaccine rollout, Rogers said they had some time to decide.

For more information on COVID-19 vaccination in San Mateo County, including vaccination data and the county's notification tool, visit [smchealth.org/covidvaccine](http://smchealth.org/covidvaccine). ■

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**SHOOTING**

*continued from page 10*

that the number of people living in encampments near the Bay had dropped to around 10 from a high of around 60 people in the summer due to efforts to connect unhoused people with services.

"We recently made some significant progress in having Caltrans and the state bring in a contractor to remove a number of the encampments on the north side of the Triangle near Willow Road. They filled multiple 50-yard dumpsters

with debris, filled in dangerous trenches that had been dug along with latrine pits ....

"A number of the people living out here have been assisted by the city, county, Life Moves and We Hope and other volunteer organizations along with several religious organizations. Others simply moved elsewhere until they can move back. We've been working on this for years now, it's not an easy problem to solve," Schapelhouman said in the statement.

This particular grouping of encampments is on land owned by SamTrans, which is

responsible for the Dumbarton Rail Line and a 50-foot easement on each side of the track. The fire district will be in touch with them to have these encampments removed as well, he said.

"Sadly, violence like shootings, stabbings, drug overdoses and fires have all dramatically increased to unacceptable levels over the last few years and that has been exacerbated because of out-of-touch state policies that somehow presume that local firefighters and police officers wouldn't be touching people because of COVID. Clearly, that isn't the case and never

has been when a life hangs in the balance, no matter who you are!" Schapelhouman said in the statement.

Detectives from the California Highway Patrol Golden Gate Division's Special Investigations Unit are now trying to determine the identity of the shooter and are asking anyone with information about the shooting to call the CHP investigation tip line at (707) 917-4491. **A**

*Bay City News Service contributed to this report.*

*Email Sue Dremann at sdremann@paweekly.com*

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**Maureen Louise Hamner**

*August 1944 – February 2021*

Maureen passed away peacefully at home in Palo Alto with her husband of fifty-eight years, Richard T. Hamner, at her side. Those who knew and loved Maureen will forever cherish her memory. With her beautiful smile and warm personality, she was known for always making others feel comfortable.



Maureen was born during WWII in Japanese-occupied Manila, Philippines, the daughter of Thomas A. Campbell and Carmen Russell Campbell. Shortly after the war, Maureen's family relocated to Westchester, CA, later moving to El Centro, CA, where she graduated at the top of her class from Central Union High School in 1962. Matriculating to SDSU, in December 1962 Maureen married her high school sweetheart, then a third year SDSU student.

In 1975 the Hamner family moved to the community of Ladera (Portola Valley) CA. Within a few years, with three grammar school age sons, Maureen was ready to go to work, part time. First working as a bookkeeper and legal secretary for the Foothill College District, her career goal was to work at Hewlett Packard (HP). In 1981 she joined HP as a secretary at HP Labs and, subsequently, at Corporate HR. In 1986 she took a leave of absence from HP to try real estate. The rest is history. Maureen loved being a realtor and, over her twenty-two-year real estate career, she carefully developed her business, based on professional competency and integrity. An agent with Coldwell Banker in Menlo Park, Maureen frequently ranked in the top 1% of all Coldwell Banker agents internationally.

An enthusiastic thirty-four-year Ladera resident, Maureen served on the Ladera Community Association board and organized the Ladera Bridge Group. An avid tennis player, Maureen enjoyed playing tennis with her Ladera friends and traveling internationally with Women's Amateur International Tennis (W.A.I.T.). The highlight of her tennis career was playing for the Alpine Hills Tennis Club team that won the USA League, 3.5 Senior Women, 1999 National Championships.

Diagnosed in 2008 with early-onset Alzheimer's Disease, Maureen vowed to fight it, and did so, up until the last day of her life, retaining the inner purity, grace, and courage that defined her.

Maureen is survived by her husband, Richard T. Hamner; her sons, Richard T. Hamner, M.D., wife Eleanor; Todd A. Hamner, wife Mirza; Brett M. Hamner, wife Rene; her six grandchildren; and, her sisters, Carmel Repp-Pearl and Patricia Enna-Carr. No memorial services are planned, at this time.

Remembrances: Alzheimer's Association, [alz.org/norcal](http://alz.org/norcal)

PAID OBITUARY

**Therese Luke Hamilton**

*May 25, 1933 – February 26, 2021*

Therese "Terry" Luke Hamilton, - a longtime resident of Atherton, and Redwood City California - passed away peacefully on February 26th, 2021. In the comfort of her home, while surrounded by her family, Terry shed the weight of this world she loved, and stepped into her Lord's promised, vibrant, and eternal kingdom - she was 87 years old.

Terry is survived by Ed - her husband of nearly 66 years - and by her four children: daughters Lindsay and Leslie (Jim), and sons Ian (Kim) and Doug (Dori). Terry is also survived by 10 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren.

Terry was born in New York, New York to Josephine Therese Buckley and Charles Wilson Luke. At the age of 10, Terry traveled by train with her sister and mother across the country to her new home in San Francisco. It was there that she met a young neighborhood boy nearly her own age, who many years later would become the love of her life, and the father of her four cherished children. After finishing her primary education at Miss Burke's School, Terry moved across the Bay, and joined the Kappa, Kappa, Gamma sorority at UC Berkeley and graduated with a degree in History.

Terry and Ed were married in August 1955, eventually making their home in Atherton. With four kids in tow and numerous cats and dogs roaming the house, Terry's community interests and service to others along the Peninsula, began to blossom. A member of the Junior League of Palo Alto and the Woodside - Atherton garden club for 40 years, Terry leaned into her volunteer activities with her well-known engaging and inquisitive enthusiasm. With a keen eye for residential plant life - developed over the years with her fellow garden club members - her garden pots at home were always full of vivid color the year round.

As her kids entered their teenage years, Terry earned her license as a real estate agent. She good-naturedly took a healthy dose of teasing from her family, for Terry

could often be heard late at night talking to herself in the kitchen as she worked out the nuances of tricky negotiations - a habit she owned during her 25 years of faithful



real estate service to the community. Terry was also very fond of traveling. She and Ed were blessed to have had quite the variety of excursions over the years. Whether crisscrossing the US in their home-away-from-home RV, visiting her sister and nieces in Italy, dear friends in Japan or walking the headlands in her adopted home of Mendocino, Terry's thirst for local culture, history, and a good story, could hardly be contained.

But for all her travels and adventures, it was the "others" in her life that always focused her attention. Whether it was the "Save the Bay" campaign or serving as a Lay Eucharistic Minister at her local church, Terry was most at home when she was making phone calls to friends and family both near and far, writing letters and notes of encouragement - always planning and organizing group gatherings. She loved her grandchildren deeply. She thoughtfully and routinely wrote postcards to each one on her trips with Ed. She often could be found playing "go fish" or spoons on the floor with her "grands" over the years, never tiring of their enthusiasm and playful natures. Terry welcomed life and she welcomed people into her life.

As we gathered around her bed on the day of her passing it was noted and affirmed by all, that ultimately, "Mom loved well." She loved her church, she loved God's creative beauty of plants and animals and serene vistas. She loved her family with sincerity and passion. And she loved to bring wholeness and goodness to everything she touched. Yes, Terry loved well. You will be missed "Grammy" - yes, you will be missed very much indeed.

In lieu of gifts or flowers, please consider giving a donation to the St. Francis Center of Redwood City - an organization with a rich history helping the least of these in our community. Thank you!

PAID OBITUARY



# 3787 Woodside Road, Woodside



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# 242 Oak Grove Avenue, Atherton



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## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

continued from page 6

Family Health Center in a statement.

Belle Haven residents may fill out an interest form online at [is.gd/BHvax](http://is.gd/BHvax) or access it through [bellehavenaction.org](http://bellehavenaction.org) for more information about how to register to be vaccinated.

### Menlo Portal environmental documents released

The city of Menlo Park has released the draft environmental impact report (DEIR) for the Menlo Portal development project, a proposal to build 335 apartments, office space and child care space at 115 Independence Drive and 104 to 110 Constitution Drive.

The development, proposed by Greystar, would include a seven-story apartment building and a three-story commercial building with a total of about 35,000 square feet of office space on the top two levels and 1,600 square feet of child care space. Both structures would have above-ground parking garages incorporated into the buildings.

Under city ordinances, about 48 of the housing units would be for rent below market rate, and the developer planned to make an additional 15 units available for below-market-rate rent if permitted to build all 335 units proposed, according to the project webpage.

The draft EIR reports that the analyses conducted did not identify any significant and unavoidable environmental impacts from the proposed project.

The deadline to comment on the report is April 12. Written comments should be submitted by email to Contract Principal Planner Payal Bhagat at [pbhagat@menlopark.org](mailto:pbhagat@menlopark.org), or by letter to Payal Bhagat, Contract Principal Planner, Community Development, 701 Laurel St., Menlo Park, CA 94025.

The Planning Commission is set to hold a public hearing on the draft EIR and a study session for the proposed project via GoToWebinar or Zoom on Monday, March 22. People may provide oral comments on the draft EIR then.

—Kate Bradshaw

### Belle Haven nonprofit calls for faith leaders to be prioritized for vaccine

Belle Haven Action, a nonprofit focused on serving the residents of Menlo Park's Belle Haven neighborhood, has asked the San Mateo County Health Department and the California State Vaccine Advisory Committee to give priority for the COVID-19 vaccine to faith leaders, pastors, reverends and church workers serving the community.

"Many members of the church community in Belle Haven are essential service workers in food service, agriculture, and the grocery/retail industry," the organization said in a press statement. "During the COVID-19 pandemic, faith-based organizations and churches have distributed food, assisted with childcare, and conducted grief counseling among the families of those lost to COVID-19. These organizations also provide services to

the homeless community."

Serving those in need may have exposed these leaders to the same risks as the community they are serving have faced, the organization added.

—Kate Bradshaw

### Local community colleges to remain online

San Mateo County Community College District — home to Cañada College in Redwood City, College of San Mateo in San Mateo and Skyline College in San Bruno — will continue to hold courses online through the end of fall semester in December.

The district's governing board ratified the decision during a Feb. 24 meeting, according to a district press release.

"Nothing is more important than the health and safety of our students, faculty, and staff," said district Chancellor Michael Claire in a statement. "Even though we all want to get back to our beautiful college campuses, we will do so in a thoughtful and deliberate way. We are optimistic that as vaccines become more widely distributed in the summer and fall we will be able to restore more in-person classes and services to students next year."

In-person instruction will continue for certain essential infrastructure sectors — health care, emergency services and transportation fields, as well as critical STEM labs in key transfer areas, and to meet licensing requirements for career education programs — to train first responders and health care workers to address urgent community needs, according to the

district. Due to criteria set by the state that includes social distancing, classroom and lab sanitizing procedures and other health precautions, the number of people on campuses will be kept at a minimum.

The district is receiving \$13.3 million in federal Higher Education Emergency Relief funding, the district said. Of that, almost two-thirds will be distributed to students to assist with financial challenges and the remainder will be used to offset costs incurred by the colleges for COVID-related expenses such as technology, health and safety equipment, and training.

### Woodside committee collecting COVID-19 stories

The Woodside History Committee is creating a collection to document the lives of the town's residents during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Committee members will be assembling an archive in the Woodside Community Museum to preserve the history of the crisis. They are accepting stories about how the pandemic has impacted Woodside families, both in good ways and bad, as well as interesting experiences they have had during this period. Submissions should be 500 words or fewer. If you wish to remain anonymous, please indicate that in the submission.

Send stories to [woodsidehistory@woodsidetown.org](mailto:woodsidehistory@woodsidetown.org).

### Encinal third graders advocate for diversity in bandages

The Menlo Park City School District now offers students bandages in a variety of skin tone colors after two Encinal third graders, Gabriel and Natalia, lobbied for the change to make all students feel included in the school community.

Encinal Principal Sharon Burns and teacher Larra Olson

introduced the students during a Feb. 25 school board meeting, referencing the district governing board's resolution to create anti-racist schools, according to a district press release.

"In class we read an article titled 'Band-Aid launches bandages to embrace the beauty of diverse skin,'" Gabriel said at the meeting. "We also read the book, 'A Kid's Book about Racism.' We talked about how this might make some people feel. We are learning about racism in my class and we noticed that there's only one color Band-Aid for everyone. This one Band-Aid does not match my skin and maybe other people in my class. I am the only Black person in my class, so I might not feel so good about my skin tone without a Band-Aid that matches me."

### New assistant principal at Las Lomitas Elementary

John Berry is the new interim assistant principal at Las Lomitas Elementary School in Atherton this spring, according to a March 8 school newsletter. He replaces Kristen Fielding, who left in November to work in the Lake Tahoe area, said Principal Alain Camou in an email.

Berry, a San Francisco native, has 28 years of K-12 educational experience and has worn a number of different hats in the profession as an assistant principal, executive director, high school adviser and more.

He holds a bachelor's degree in modern history from the University of California at Berkeley, a master's degree in educational administration from Columbia University's Teachers College, and holds both an administrative service and teaching credential from San Francisco State University.

Berry lives in Marin with his wife Paula, and daughters Alexandra and Audianna.

—Angela Swartz

### WATER RATES

continued from page 10

the Black and Veatch study. The consumption charge rate per cubic foot of water used is currently \$5.57 per cubic foot for customers who use less than 6 cubic feet monthly and \$7.98 per cubic foot for customers who use more than that. A three-tier system, as favored by the council, would raise consumption charge rates per cubic foot gradually to \$8.11 for the lowest tier, \$10.21 for the middle tier and \$12.48 for the highest tier by 2026, according to a staff presentation.

A three-tier system would also send a stronger message

to customers to conserve water, Black and Veatch consultant Alberto Morales told council members.

If the city takes out the expected loans, rates for typical residential households with a 3/4" meter would rise over the five years from a base rate of \$27.58 starting in July to \$33.53 in 2026 and, for households using 6 cubic feet of water, from \$70.63 starting July 1 to \$83.52 in 2026.

In addition, the capital surcharge would be set at \$1.50 per cubic foot used for all customers. ■

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



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## NOTICE INVITING PROPOSALS TOWN OF ATHERTON, CA

The Town of Atherton will accept proposal for qualified vendors for the following:

### ATHERTON LIBRARY CAFÉ VENDOR

The Town of Atherton is seeking proposals from qualified vendors to operate a café at its new Town Library, which is currently under construction. The successful vendor will provide for food and beverage items in a non-cooking environment throughout the day, as well as light fare, warming accessories, coffee makers, etc. Offsite food items are allowed provided they are prepared in a facility and manner approved by the San Mateo County Health Department. It is intended that the café be a community amenity for local residents and visitors to the Town Center and Library.

The Request for Proposals may be obtained at <http://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/bids.aspx> at no cost. The vendor shall be responsible for any addendums that may be posted on the Town's website.

PROPOSALS will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 150 Watkins Avenue, Atherton, California 94027, until 10:00 a.m. Pacific Standard Time on **Wednesday, May 4, 2021**.

Interested parties are advised that the Town of Atherton has also released a companion Request for Proposals seeking qualified vendors to provide Event Management Services at Holbrook-Palmer Park located at 150 Watkins Avenue. The companion Request for Proposals is available on the Town of Atherton website or by contacting the Town of Atherton Public Works Department.

# Public Notices

## 995 Fictitious Name Statement

SENIOR CARE AUTHORITY PENINSULA  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
File No.: 286717

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

Senior Care Authority Peninsula, located at 1040 S. Claremont St., San Mateo, CA 94402, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s):  
ANNAMARIE BUONOCORE

414 Barneson Ave.  
San Mateo, CA 94402

This business is conducted by: An Individual.

The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 02/01/2017.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 18, 2021.

(ALM Feb. 26; Mar. 5, 12, 19, 2021)

EQUINE EVENTS  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
File No.: 286787

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

Equine Events, located at 1619 Carleton Ct., Redwood City, CA 94061, San Mateo County; Mailing address: PO Box 620143, Woodside, CA 94062.

Registered owner(s):  
JOAN LORRAINE MCLAREN

1619 Carleton Ct.  
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 Feb. 24, 2021.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 24, 2021.

(ALM Mar. 5, 12, 19, 26, 2021)

**The Almanac is adjudicated to publish in San Mateo County.**

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# Viewpoint

IDEAS, THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS ABOUT LOCAL ISSUES

## The Texas power crisis: What happened, why it happened, and what it means for the future of energy policy

By Jeff Aalfs

### GUEST OPINION

Last month, Texas experienced an extreme winter storm, with low temperatures not seen in decades. One of the unfortunate results of the storm was a widespread failure of the electric system: Millions of Texans were without power and safe drinking water, some of them for several days. Because many Texans rely on electricity to heat their homes, the situation became dire — dozens of deaths have been reported, and the final toll may top 100.

The failure of the power grid was the result of multiple factors: The widespread use of electricity to heat homes led to unprecedented levels of demand; hundreds of generation sources (coal, nuclear and natural gas plants, along with hundreds of wind turbines) were hobbled by the cold; natural gas infrastructure itself was disabled as gas froze at wellheads; and because much of the gas delivery infrastructure relies on electricity, the initial failures sparked a vicious cycle of cascading blackouts before the Texas grid operator was able to stabilize the system by cutting power to millions of customers.

While this may seem like an unfortunate confluence of events, the reality is that every one of these events was a foreseeable, and preventable, consequence of extreme cold. In 2011, in fact, a similar but less intense winter storm left over a million Texans in the dark due to the same cold-related failures seen last month. In the intervening decade, Texas added 1.6 million new homes, most of them heated with electricity, while doing next to nothing to address the known vulnerabilities of its electric system.

Since the Federal Power Act of 1935, Texas has gone to great lengths to isolate its electric system from neighboring states. This isolation allowed Texas to avoid nearly all federal oversight; the Texas grid is operated by the Electric Reliability Council of Texas (ERCOT), overseen by the Texas Public Utilities Commission (PUC). As with

most Texas regulatory bodies, ERCOT and the PUC have worked to minimize regulations, including those related to safety and reliability. They have consistently favored business-friendly approaches, and cheap electricity — at a cost we only see in situations like the past month.

In evaluating grid safety, we look for scenarios that can plausibly disrupt a large fraction of generating facilities within an electric system. In California, we have seen such events resulting from extreme heat, most recently last August. The week of Aug. 14-19, California experienced several of the hottest days in its recorded history. On two days, Aug. 14 and 15, the California grid operator, CAISO, was forced to call for rolling blackouts to maintain system stability. Notably, on the hottest day, Aug. 18, CAISO was able to avoid outages despite serving the highest demand ever recorded; CAISO was able to adjust to the situation by a combination of backup capacity and temporary limits on exports of electricity. Ultimately, the California blackouts were much shorter, less widespread, and less devastating than the Texas blackouts last month.

The Texas and California

experiences illustrate the importance of rigorous, thoughtful regulation. Like most electric grids, the California grid uses a capacity market, a system of requirements that keeps surplus power generators online to respond to short-term needs for generation; Texas has no such market. California is also governed by the Federal Electric Regulatory Commission (FERC), which issues guidance on the safe maintenance of power plants and other infrastructure. Finally, California's rigorous building energy codes have curbed statewide electricity demand, while creating homes better able to withstand temperature extremes, even without power; Texas building codes are far less rigorous. All of these measures could have blunted, or even eliminated, the worst of the consequences that we saw in Texas.

In summary, regulation matters, and good regulation can avoid disasters and even save lives. California faces difficult questions as it builds the carbon-free energy grid of the future, but its robust, transparent regulatory processes are ready to take up the challenge. ▀

*Jeff Aalfs is a member of the Portola Valley Town Council and board chairman for Peninsula Clean Energy, San Mateo County's nonprofit electricity supplier.*

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The Almanac

# Artscene

PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCES IN ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

## DRAWN TO THE PAST: SAN MATEO COUNTY HISTORICAL ASSOCIATION PLANS NEW MULTILEVEL FACILITY

TAUBE FAMILY CARRIAGE HOUSE MUSEUM WILL BE A MAJOR ADDITION TO DOWNTOWN REDWOOD CITY

By Maggie Mah

Sometimes, getting in touch with the past can help make sense of the present and even provide a sense of stability for the future. When we can experience the things left behind by the people who came before us, history really comes to life. With that in mind, a new cultural destination is being planned for downtown Redwood City that organizers hope will bring history alive in multiple ways and provide plenty of enjoyment in the present.

The San Mateo County Historical Association is finalizing plans for the Taube Family Carriage House. Named for the project's keystone donor, Woodside philanthropist and businessman Tad Taube, the carriage house will be the showcase for San Mateo County's collection of historic horse-drawn vehicles and much more. The new building will include areas for revolving exhibits and public event space.

Just as the 2006 renovation of the historic domed courthouse (present home of the San Mateo County History Museum, which has a planned reopening date of March 24) and creation of the adjacent public square played a major role in changing downtown Redwood City from "Deadwood City" to the lively and attractive cultural hot spot that it is today, the carriage house will add a new dimension to the area.

The planned three-story,

14,000-square-foot building will be located at the corner of Marshall Street and Middlefield Road, adjacent to the courthouse and to the newly relocated Lathrop House. Designed by Woodside architect Adolph Rosekrans, the striking carriage house will sit on what is now a small parking area.

"It's hard to believe we could put something like that up there," said Taube.

The building will feature glass walls on every level, providing passersby with lighted views of the interior at all hours.

What inspired this ambitious addition to the San Mateo County Historical Association's collection?

Long before Silicon Valley started making billionaires, San Mateo County was a favorite destination for people with high net worth to escape the grit and chill of San Francisco. They came, they played and they built. By the 1880s, there were more large country estates on the Peninsula than in any other place west of the Mississippi.

Being seen was important to the top tier of society, and fine carriages were not just the way to get around but also the way to communicate one's wealth and status. Carriages made by Brewster and Company in New York were considered the finest in the world at the time and owning at least one was de rigueur for wealthy residents.

Fast forward to 1975, when Lurline Matson Roth donated



Rendering courtesy San Mateo County Historical Association

**A rendering** shows the exterior of the Taube Family Carriage House Museum in downtown Redwood City.

her 650-acre Woodside estate, Filoli, to the National Trust for Historic Preservation. Roth's stunning collection of Brewster carriages, however, was given to San Mateo County. Although a few of the carriages have been on display in the San Mateo History Museum galleries, the rest of the Roth collection and a number of other fine examples of horse-drawn vehicles (29 in all) have been stored for more than 40 years in a climate-controlled warehouse out of public view.

Mitch Postel, San Mateo County History Association president and executive director since 1985, said he has been dreaming for years of a place where the public could enjoy these reminders of our equestrian past.

Postel, who is arguably the most

energetic and knowledgeable fan of San Mateo County's past one is ever likely to meet, provided a perspective on the "upstairs-downstairs" aspect of Peninsula society in the late 1800s.

"San Mateo and Burlingame were like villages in the European tradition," he said. And although most of the vehicles in the collection were once owned by the wealthiest and most prominent residents of the area, Postel is adamant that it's not just about them. "Sure, you might have been a rich cat with lots of money but many people made their living by working for the carriage trade. This is really our heritage — this is us! It's who we were," he said.

Taube has been involved in the San Mateo County Historical

Association for a number of years and received the organization's History Maker Award in 2017. He first became aware of the carriages about two years ago and after a visit to the warehouse, said he knew he had to make something happen.

"When I saw them, I thought, 'My God, this is really a treasure!' I immediately reacted that we had to bring this to the world," he recalled.

Taube and Postel set out to find a new home for the carriages near Courthouse Square. The original idea was pretty straightforward — a simple structure on the order of a single-story, garage-type building — but rapidly evolved into something far grander.

See **CARRIAGE HOUSE**, page 28



Magali Gauthier

**Mitch Postel**, president of the San Mateo County Historical Association, admires a fire hose roller from 1880 that's currently in storage.



Magali Gauthier

**A vintage carriage collection** currently in storage by the San Mateo County Historical Association will be displayed in the Taube Family Carriage House.

## CARRIAGE HOUSE

continued from page 27

“We concluded that the only way to do justice to these carriages was to create a showplace. Of course, a showplace involves money,” Taube said. To date, the Taube Carriage House Campaign has raised over 78% of the \$11.5 million price tag, all of which has come from private pledges and donations. Construction of the carriage house is expected to take approximately two years, with preliminary site improvements set to begin this spring.

With the museum fast becoming a reality, Taube said, “Anybody who has seen the carriages has to get excited about the possibility that people are going to be able to enjoy them.” Plans are well underway for what visitors will experience.

On the ground floor will be a gallery devoted to rotating exhibits featuring special display bays. Possible themes include vehicle collections from local car aficionados, historical perspectives on the electric car and other vehicles from the county’s collection, including a remarkable Standard Oil delivery wagon. Said Postel, “I would love to do a display of lowriders.”

The second-floor gallery will feature a permanent display of the county’s 10 prized Brewster



Magali Gauthier

**A Brewster Light Park Drag**, the crown jewel of the carriage collection, is currently on display in the San Mateo County History Museum.

carriages and a rotating display of other carriages, all of which will be shown with the museum’s collection of textiles and vintage gowns from the period. Interactive features include the opportunity to experience what it was like to drive a horse-drawn vehicle and to observe craftsmen at work restoring and maintaining carriages in the conservation area.

Plans also include an entire wall of magnificent gilded mirrors from several of the Peninsula’s great estates.

The crown jewel of the carriage collection is the 17-passenger Brewster Standard Light Park Drag. With its metal frame painted a cheerful but tasteful yellow, the carriage was designed for fun: Owners and guests were seated on top for the best views of

sporting and social events, while an assortment of servants rode below. Pointing to the lined and fitted compartments for bottles and glasses in the rear of the carriage, Postel chuckled, “This was the ultimate tailgating vehicle.”

The original purchase price of the Park Drag was \$2,800. In today’s dollars, that would be about \$82,000 or similar to the price of a new Tesla Model S. Actually, this comparison isn’t quite accurate. Despite the quality of both vehicles, the carriage by itself wouldn’t have gotten you anywhere without four fine, perfectly matched horses turned out in polished, monogrammed harnesses, an assortment of servants and grooms in matching uniforms and a clean-shaven coachman.



Rendering courtesy San Mateo County Historical Association

**This rendering** shows the planned interior of the Carriage House.

The carriage house’s third-floor rooftop terrace will be an open, airy space featuring a central skylight and large expanses of glass on the exterior walls. The facility, which has been designed for gatherings of up to 300 people and includes catering areas, will be available for rent to the public for post-pandemic events such as meetings, conferences and receptions.

In addition to the carriage house, a new natural history area will be created through construction of a passageway connecting the new building with the courthouse. A diorama will feature the complete 14-foot cast of the skeleton of a paleoparadoxia — a rare aquatic mammal that inhabited the area of what is now Menlo Park in the Miocene period, approximately 12 million years ago. Murals by Burlingame artist Fred Sinclair, Jr. will depict the ancient elephants, horses, saber-toothed cats and rhinoceroses that once roamed the Peninsula.

Interactive exhibits will provide kids the opportunity to experience what it’s like to be a paleontologist or archaeologist, and an electronic map will show the area’s geologic and geographic changes over millions of years.

Meanwhile, project architect Rosekrans, who will turn 90 this year, can personally attest to the power of things from the past. As an avid collector of antique farm implements, he recently accompanied San Mateo County Historical Association Curator Dana Neitzel

to look at a carriage that was being offered to San Mateo County by History San José. He did not know that the errand was about to reconnect him with his childhood. Rosekrans remembered that his mother, Alma Spreckles, had owned several carriages and remembered riding in them on Runnymede, her Woodside estate, but didn’t know what had become of them. “She probably wanted them out of the way,” he said.

The carriage being offered was a Brewster Brougham (pronounced “brooam”) from the late 1890s and was showing its years. Rosekrans and Neitzel went about inspecting the vehicle and, “when I put my hand on the handle, it felt very familiar,” Rosekrans said. A subsequent check of the carriage’s serial numbers determined the original owner. “It turned out to be my great-grandfather, Claus Spreckles,” he said. The handle was the very one he had gripped as a child.

The Spreckles carriage, which for now is back at Runnymede, will be the first restoration project. With the Taube Family Carriage House plans rolling along, locals can look forward to making more connections to San Mateo County’s past — and creating new memories.

More information is available at [historysmc.org](http://historysmc.org).

Contributing writer Maggie Mah can be emailed at [maggiemah@me.com](mailto:maggiemah@me.com)

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Monthly Market Report  
February 1, 2021 - February 28, 2021

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3. \$4,477,000 7 Cheryl Place	4. \$4,390,000 538 Encina Avenue
5. \$4,105,000 960 Lassen Drive	6. \$3,800,000 2150 Camino De Los Robles
7. \$3,750,000 2198 Sterling Avenue	8. \$3,500,000 745 Evergreen Street
9. \$3,488,000 37 Willow Road	10. \$3,350,000 263 Princeton Road

**ACTIVE LISTING**

Feb: 61  
Jan: 46

↑ 33%

**AVERAGE SALES PRICE**

Feb: \$2,920,179  
Jan: \$2,299,793

↑ 27%

**AVERAGE SALES PRICE/SQ FT**

Feb: \$1,393  
Jan: \$1,214

↑ 15%

**PENDING LISTING**

Feb: 33  
Jan: 33

→ 0%

**AVERAGE SOLD DAYS ON MARKET**

Feb: 21  
Jan: 35

↓ 40%

**MONTHS OF INVENTORY**

Feb: 2.00  
Jan: 2.00

→ 0%

\*First further home transactions were to come to market, the area would be SOLD OUT of residential real estate in the number of MONTHS shown

**SOLD LISTING**

Feb: 30  
Jan: 23

↑ 30%

**SALE/LIST PRICE**

Feb: 103.60%  
Jan: 101.10%

↑ 2%

**30 YEAR MORTGAGE RATE**

Feb: 3.18%  
Jan: 2.93%

↑ 9%

10/28/2021 2.93% 2/28/2021 3.18% Source: Birmingo

\*Source: MLS Listings for Single Family Properties | Townhomes | Condos

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# Food & Drink

## Palo Alto JCC launches kosher food hall with Yemeni breads, sushi and more

By Elena Kadvany

A 1,600-square-foot kitchen at the Oshman Family JCC in Palo Alto is now home to four businesses that will bring a range of kosher food and coffee to the local community.

The eateries are Holy Sushi, which serves kosher sushi; The Ma'lawah Bar, a former cottage food operation that specializes in Yemenite-Israeli breads; Caffe Mediterraneo, an Italian espresso bar with pastries and lunch fare; and Matriarch Cafe, a Jewish deli-inspired eatery.

Until now, Izzy's Brooklyn Bagels on California Avenue was the only kosher, full-service establishment in Palo Alto, said Rabbi Joey Felsen, founder and executive director of the Jewish Study Network, who teaches classes at the JCC and brought in the vendors to fill the vacant kitchen.

"The Jewish community in Palo Alto has been underserved in terms of kosher offerings relative to most other communities in the United States," he said. "For years the community has wanted more and for us it was a natural assumption that the Jewish community center could be a place where that could be offered."

All four businesses at 3921 Fabian Way will be open to the public. Holy Sushi and The Ma'lawah Bar are already open, and Matriarch Cafe and Caffe Mediterraneo will debut this spring. For now, all

food must be ordered online for pickup, though there are some tables and chairs for outdoor seating.

### Holy Sushi

Meira Academy, an all-girls private Orthodox Jewish high school located at the JCC, started Holy Sushi in 2014 to bring kosher food to the campus. (Felsen is also the founding board president of Meira Academy.)

The kosher sushi eatery closed for several years but is now back serving rolls, sashimi, nigiri and tofu karaage, made by chef Wilson He.

Holy Sushi is open Monday, Friday and Sunday but will eventually expand to six days a week.

For more information and to order, go to [holysushi.org](http://holysushi.org).

### The Ma'lawah Bar

Owner Doreet Jehassi worked in tech for nearly two decades but always found herself reminiscing about cooking. In 2018, she decided to leave the corporate world and started a kosher cottage food operation out of her Santa Clara home. She called it The Ma'lawah Bar.

Jehassi became known for her Yemenite-Israeli breads, including malawach (the namesake dish), a flaky, layered flatbread with the texture of puff pastry, and



Courtesy Joey Felsen

**Holy Sushi** is offering its kosher creations at the Oshman Family JCC's food hall.

jachnun, a sweet, rolled bread that's baked low and slow for more than 10 hours until it's golden brown. Both are typically served with freshly grated tomato, hard-boiled eggs and schug, a spicy condiment made from chiles, garlic, chili, cilantro, cumin and other spices.

Food has helped Jehassi reconnect to her Jewish identity, she said. She was born and raised in Long Island, New York, in a Yemenite-Israeli family.

"Growing up on Long Island, I was very different from others. I always longed to find my roots," she said.

So at 18 years old, she moved to Israel — a journey known as "making aliyah." She lived there for 12 years. Decades later, her time in Israel and learning Yemenite recipes from her mother would influence the birth of The Ma'lawah Bar. Jehassi said she wanted to pay tribute to her heritage and demonstrate that there's more to Jewish cuisine than matzo balls.

"With all due respect, it's delicious food, but there's Jewish food beyond

European food. There's Moroccan and Sephardic and Tunisian and Turkish and Yemenite and Ethiopian Jewish foods," she said. "I wanted to show diversity. I wanted to expose that."

Yemenite-Israeli cooking revolves around wheat, one of the few ingredients persecuted Jews had access to, Jehassi said. They made baked, fried and grilled wheat breads, dipped in hearty soups and stews and sauces like schug and hilbeh (a fenugreek dip). They baked jachnun for hours in aluminum pots in underground charcoal ovens, a technique Jehassi now replicates in her 21st century kitchen using baking dishes to ensure consistency (though when she's cooking for her family she still uses the Yemenite pot). Making jachnun from start to finish takes 18 hours, including resting the dough overnight, laminating it and the low, slow bake that caramelizes the sugars.

Jehassi also sells kubaneh, a fluffy, yeasted pull-apart bread that Jehassi describes as "the other challah." She adds katzach, or nigella seeds, to her version, which also happens to be vegan and is the ideal vessel for soaking up soups and sauces. For dessert, she makes basbousa, a semolina cake that's soaked in syrup and topped with coconut.

Jehassi believes she's the only Bay Area business serving Yemenite-Israeli food. All of her recipes were passed down through family members, taught by feel and taste. She's the first in her family to write them down.

As The Ma'lawah Bar grew, it quickly took over her home kitchen, so she spent the last year searching for a kosher commercial kitchen. Her dream is to get her frozen products and condiments into



Courtesy Doreet Jehassi

**Doreet Jehassi** makes malawach in her home kitchen.



Courtesy Doreet Jehassi

**Malawach**, a Yemenite-Israeli flatbread, is available from The Ma'lawah Bar.

See **OSHMANS**, page 30

**OSHMAN***continued from page 29*

retail stores, like Whole Foods. She's heartened to see foods like schug, labneh and shakshuka sold at mainstream markets.

The Ma'lawah Bar held a soft opening last weekend for pickups only.

For more information, go to [themaalawahbar.com](http://themaalawahbar.com).

**Caffe Mediterraneo**

Earl Hartman will be opening his homage to Caffe Mediterraneo, the iconic Berkeley cafe, at the Oshman Family JCC this spring. Hartman worked as a barista there, as well as Le Bateau Ivre on Telegraph Avenue, in his early 20s but eventually went on to a longtime career as a Japanese-English translator.

Now at 69, Hartman is opening his first cafe, named after the Berkeley original (which closed in 2016 after nearly 50 years). He plans to serve Italian espresso drinks and coffee as well as Italian sodas, gelato, pastries, focaccia and sandwiches.

"Since I keep kosher, and since I love proper Italian espresso, I was conscious of the complete lack of a cafe where observant

Jews could go and have a nice coffee and a pastry or a light meal," he said. "I wanted to open a place that not only served high-quality, traditional Italian espresso, but that was also kosher so observant Jews could have a cafe where they could order anything on the menu."

The coffee will come from Mr. Espresso in Oakland, and the food from Palo Alto kosher catering company Deja Vu.

While Hartman's Caffe Mediterraneo will be kosher, he doesn't "want people to think that the cafe will 'only' be a 'Jewish cafe.'"

"There's no rule that says kosher has to mean second-rate," he said.

He hopes to open after Passover, in early to mid-April.

**Matriarch Cafe**

Spencer Brodie has been cooking since he was 11 years old, growing up in Belmont. As a business student at San Jose State University, he said he's worked nearly every job in the hospitality industry — server, cook, bartender — and started his own kosher catering company, Neshama Foods. He never planned to open his own

cafe, but when the opportunity presented itself at the JCC, he jumped.

Brodie's Matriarch Cafe will be his take on a Jewish deli, with dishes like a pulled brisket sandwich (made from a family recipe, with his own adaptations), shawarma sandwiches and a lamb burger with Israeli spices. Eventually he'll serve a New York-style pastrami sandwich. And even though Matriarch Cafe will be kosher, "we're going to be doing a lot of things that make you forget it's kosher," Brodie said, like serving bacon made from beef.

Brodie named the cafe in honor of the female influences in his family: his mother, grandmother and great-grandmother.

While Matriarch Cafe won't be open until after Passover, the Palo Alto JCC will be a pickup location for Neshama Foods' Passover menu, including brisket, matzo ball soup, tzimmes, potato kugel and chocolate-coconut macaroons (a secret family recipe). Check the Neshama website at [neshamafoods.com/passover](http://neshamafoods.com/passover) for ordering information. ■

Email Elena Kadavy at [ekadavy@pawekly.com](mailto:ekadavy@pawekly.com)



Courtesy Spencer Brodie

**Spencer Brodie** of Neshama Foods will open his first cafe at the Palo Alto JCC this spring.

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