

The Almanac

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

OCTOBER 22, 2021 | VOL. 57 NO. 6



WWW.ALMANACNEWS.COM

Local schools hit hard by pandemic staffing shortages

Districts scramble to find substitutes, leaving administrators and counselors to fill in

By Zoe Morgan
and Angela Swartz

Mei Chan may be the Las Lomas Elementary School District's chief business officer, but on a chilly morning earlier this month, Chan was also a crossing guard for the district, which has one school in Menlo Park and one in Atherton. Dressed in a green reflective vest, she ushered students across the intersection of Avy and Altschul avenues near La Entrada Middle School.

Chan started supervising students on their way to the Menlo Park school on Sept. 24 when the school's crossing guard resigned. The hiring firm the school district uses, All City Management Services, has had difficulty enlisting the workers, she said.

"One of us had to be out there, so I picked up the stop sign and just started being out there," said Chan, who was hired by Las Lomas three and a half months ago. "As CBO, we just jump in wherever help is needed. It could be moving furniture. We're not a large district."

Las Lomas, which has roughly 1,100 students, is facing the same problem plaguing many districts across the region and beyond: pandemic-induced staffing shortages. Over three-quarters of school district administrators in the U.S. report experiencing at least moderate staffing shortages this school year, according to a recent nationwide survey by the EdWeek Research Center. Locally, schools are having trouble finding people to fill a variety of positions, including crossing guards, bus drivers and classroom assistants.

The struggle to find substitutes

A shortage of substitute teachers has proved to be a particular pain point for schools on the Peninsula. Districts have had to get creative, with principals, counselors and other school staff covering classes. Teachers in some cases are also filling in for their absent colleagues during free periods meant to be set aside for grading and lesson planning.

The Sequoia Union High School District is grappling with a shortage of subs. At Menlo-Atherton



Magali Gauthier

Mei Chan, Las Lomas Elementary School District's chief business officer, has been filling in as a crossing guard due to staffing shortages. She guides children at the intersection of Altschul Avenue and Avy Avenue in Menlo Park on Oct. 13.

High School in Atherton, 715 periods needed to be covered by substitute teachers in September, according to Sequoia District Teachers Association President

Edith Salvatore. Of those, 159 (or 22%) could not be covered by a sub, 139 (19%) were covered by members of the teachers union and another 20 (3%) were covered

by site administrators, she told the district's governing board at an Oct. 13 meeting.

See **STAFFING**, page 10

Menlo Church investigation finds no sexual misconduct

By Kate Bradshaw

Zero Abuse Project, a non-profit specializing in combating child sexual abuse, found no direct evidence of sexual misconduct following a 10-month investigation of Menlo Church after allegations surfaced last year that the then-senior pastor's son had been permitted to continue to volunteer with youth even after confessing feelings of sexual attraction to minors.

Menlo Church, a Reformed Presbyterian faith community, serves about 3,800 registered

members across campuses in Menlo Park, San Mateo, Mountain View, Saratoga and San Jose. It is part of the denomination ECO: A Covenant Order of Evangelical Presbyterians.

Each week, more than 500 volunteers help care for more than 1,000 children who participate in the church's activities, according to the Zero Abuse Project report.

The investigators recently reported that they found no direct evidence of sexual misconduct by the pastor's son, but laid out a number of ways that

the church could improve its practices to minimize the risk of someone harming children through its programs.

The report comes more than a year after Menlo Church's senior pastor John Ortberg stepped down in July 2020 amidst allegations of poor judgment. The details became public after a whistleblower, Ortberg's son Danny Lavery, raised concerns with the church's leaders, and then more publicly via Twitter, that his brother had

See **MENLO CHURCH**, page 16



Sammy Dallal

Menlo Church is one of five Bay Area locations where a faith community holds worship services. Last year, after allegations emerged that the senior pastor's son was permitted to volunteer with youth even after confessing feelings of sexual attraction to minors, the church launched an investigation into possible misconduct.

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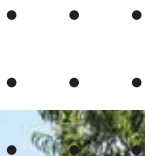
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Magali Gauthier

Stanford University engineering lecturer David Cardinal, a Portola Valley resident, has created an evacuation model for the town as a hobby.

Portola Valley resident develops custom town evacuation model

By Angela Swartz

Anaturally curious person with an engineering background, Portola Valley resident Dave Cardinal decided to start tinkering with solving a question of concern to some residents: What would it look like should the town have to evacuate during an emergency?

Cardinal, who teaches engineering courses at Stanford University, began creating a

traffic simulation back in the spring. In addition to a situation like a major fire, he wondered how more people moving to town — through housing projects like the Stanford Wedge proposal and the 253 housing units the town must designate for in its upcoming housing element — could impact an evacuation.

“I started modeling and I got carried away,” Cardinal said of the “hobby project” he’s been doing for free. “I was inter-

ested partially because from the planning point of view, I wanted to know, ‘What difference it makes to put more families in town and does it matter where they are?’”

Cardinal, who lives in the Alpine Hills neighborhood, created his own tool when he found other small scale emergency evacuation models were few and far between — most look at larger scale events, like how

See **EVACUATIONS**, page 8

Menlo Park mayor blasts councilwoman for setting up mystery meeting

Mayor Drew Combs: ‘This is what corruption looks like’

By Kate Bradshaw

While some of what happened during the Menlo Park City Council’s closed session last Wednesday may remain a mystery, one thing is clear: Mayor Drew Combs is not pleased with Councilwoman Jen Wolosin’s actions to set up that meeting.

Last week, three City Council members, Jen Wolosin, Betsy Nash and Cecilia Taylor, set up a closed session meeting for

Tuesday at 3:30 p.m. — a time when the other two City Council members, who have full-time jobs, were unable to attend — and they did it without the knowledge of either the city manager or the mayor.

Normally, the city manager and mayor set meeting agendas together, and traditionally, all council members are polled



Mayor Drew Combs

about their availability before a meeting is set, Combs said.

Then, at the last minute, the meeting was continued to 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Oct. 13 (after *The Almanac* went to press).

Adding to the mystery was information that later emerged that while the topic of the meeting was about the city manager’s performance, the law firm that represents the city on personnel matters wasn’t there. Usu-

See **MEETING** page 18

Teachers say pandemic has added new stresses to the profession

Burnout, anxiety weigh on some local teachers two months into full return to classrooms

By Angela Swartz and Leah Worthington

Sanitizing desks, frequent hand-washing and reminding students to pull up their masks take up a large part of Menlo-Atherton High School teacher Mallory Byrne’s days. In addition to her typical teaching duties and COVID-19 hygiene procedures, Byrne is contending with the anxiety that comes from finding out a student is sick.

Although COVID-19 transmission rates have remained fairly low on the Atherton school’s campus — 28 cases have been reported at the school of around 2,200 students since they returned full time to classrooms in August — and she’s received a single notification that one of her students tested positive, it’s exhausting constantly wondering if she may be exposed.

“I’m wondering, ‘Was my mask on tight enough today?’” said Byrne, who teaches ethnic studies and U.S. history. She gets tested twice a week on campus. “It’s anxiety-inducing. Some days I just want to go to sleep (when I get home). ... I do feel some relief because I’m vaccinated, but I would feel more relief when we have viable treatments.”

Sequoia Union High School District Superintendent Darnise Williams said that transmission rates are low (less than 1%) on campuses because of safety precautions such as masking and air filtration systems.

Mixed feelings and burnout

Teachers have had varying perspectives about being back on campus. M-A physical education teacher Craig Carson said he has received a couple of notices that he’s been exposed to COVID-19 during classes.

“We were outside the first six weeks so masks were optional,” he said in an Oct. 12 email. “Most students still wore them and no one seemed nervous. We have been in the main gym the last two weeks and the students

have been really good about wearing their masks and again do not seem nervous at all. Overall, I think I’m probably a little more relaxed than most of our staff.”

Another M-A teacher, who asked not to be named for fear of retribution, said it’s been anxiety-inducing to receive three exposure notices so far this year. Many of their colleagues have received three or four notices since school started. They reminded students that the masks are “not a chin diaper” when they fall down their noses.

“I get excited when I go in because I’m going to find out whether I have it or not,” the teacher said about getting tested weekly.

The teacher is frustrated with how contact tracers are classifying if someone is a close contact. Teachers often walk throughout the classroom to work with students, and there are instances in which they are exposed to students for more than 15 minutes at a time that are not being taken into account by contact tracers. Administrators make the assumption teachers are simply at the front of the classroom the whole period lecturing, the teacher claimed.

“There’s a disconnect between what is this close contact if the administration doesn’t know what teachers are doing in the classroom,” the teacher said.

In general, returning to classrooms during a pandemic has caused some anxiety, said M-A Principal Karl Losekoot in an Oct. 4 email.

“At the start of the year, the COVID notifications certainly caused some alarm and concern, but as we have continued to communicate what such notices mean and as we now offer on-site testing two days a week, I believe much of the early anxiety has dissipated,” he said. “We are all concerned about mitigating spread, and coming back to school in the midst of COVID adds a few details for us to be attentive to when we would

See **TEACHER STRESSES** page 11

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every Friday at

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The Almanac (ISSN 1097-3095 and USPS 459370) is published every Friday by Embarcadero Media, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558. Periodicals Postage Paid at Menlo Park, CA and at additional mailing offices. Adjudicated a newspaper of general circulation for San Mateo County. The Almanac is delivered to homes in Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Almanac, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558. Copyright ©2021 by Embarcadero Media. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited.

The Almanac is qualified by decree of the Superior Court of San Mateo County to publish public notices of a governmental and legal nature, as stated in Decree No. 147530, issued November 9, 1969. Subscriptions are \$60 for one year and \$100 for two years. Go to AlmanacNews.com/circulation.

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



CRIME BRIEFS

Clerks cited for selling alcohol to minors

Menlo Park police recently cited four of nine clerks at stores and restaurants that sell alcohol within the city as part of a minor decoy operation to catch workers who sell alcohol to underage youth.

There was one clerk cited each at BevMo! and Naomi Sushi, and two from The Refuge, according to Nicole Acker, spokesperson for the Menlo Park Police Department.

Under a grant program from the California Alcoholic Beverage Control, police worked with the state agency to crack down on minor alcohol sales and consumption. ABC is initiating compliance checks across California to deter businesses from violating alcohol sale policies.

The retail licenses will now face a minimum fine of \$250 or up to 32 hours of community service. ABC will also take administrative action, which means the businesses could face suspension or revocation of their alcoholic beverage sale licenses.

Menlo Park police get \$70K grant

The Menlo Park Police Department received over \$70,000 in grant money to fight against alcohol-related harm, the department announced on Oct. 13.

The grant, rewarded by the California Alcoholic Beverage Control, will work to strengthen the connection between local first responders and statewide policy experts. Specifically, the program focuses on reducing alcohol consumption by minors, holding operators accountable and enforcing penalties for those who violate beverage sale policies.

“The program improves the quality of life in neighborhoods,” said ABC Director Eric Hirata in a statement. “We’ve seen a real difference in the communities where the grant program resources have been invested.”

— Bay City News Service and Almanac staff

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Housing and planning professionals to host discussion series

San Mateo County’s “Let’s Talk Housing” initiative, a collaborative effort between jurisdictions’ housing and planning staff throughout the county, is hosting an online webinar and discussion series to talk about the housing crisis countywide on Wednesdays from 6 to 7:15 p.m. The next discussions in the series are: “Housing and Racial Equity” set for Oct. 27; “Housing in a Climate of Change,” set for Nov. 10; and “Putting it All Together for a Better Future” on Dec. 1. Go to letstalkhousing.org to register for the events, which are set to be held on Zoom.

Off the Grid to halt for winter

Menlo Park’s weekly Off the Grid food truck event held on Wednesday evenings from 5 to 9 p.m. in the Caltrain station parking lot at 1120 Merrill St. is set to pause for the winter starting in November, according to an announcement on Twitter from the organizer, Off the Grid San Francisco. “Come out for dinner while the weather’s still nice,” the announcement stated.

— Kate Bradshaw

Webinar on rain gardens

Flows To Bay, the San Mateo Countywide Water Pollution Prevention Program, will host a workshop on how to design and maintain a rain garden on Saturday, Oct. 23, from 10 a.m. to noon on Zoom.

There will be an interactive Q&A along with information on how to replace a lawn with drought-tolerant landscape and get a rebate for it.

Sign up at flowstobay.org.

— Angela Swartz

Library book sale set for Nov. 5-6

Friends of the Menlo Park Library will host a book sale from 2

See **COMMUNITY BRIEFS**, page 19

CORRECTION

In the Oct. 15 Measure B editorial, The Almanac misstated the expiration date of the current Menlo Park City School District parcel tax Measure X. It expires in July 2024. ❏

Stroll the streets of Paris on the Peninsula with Bon Marché

By Sara Hayden

A French-inspired outdoor market is coming to Menlo Park. Bon Marché will feature more than a dozen vendors for fresh produce, flowers, cheese, charcuterie, mushrooms, beer, wine, olive oil, honey and more.

The market will take place weekly every Wednesday, starting Oct. 27. It will run 4 to 8 p.m. at the 600 and 700 blocks of Santa Cruz Avenue, adjacent

to Bistro Vida at 641 Santa Cruz Ave. Local high school students, who've been providing music in the area during weekend brunch hours, will also perform at the inaugural market.

"We'll bring the best gelato, the best saucisson. There will be the mushroom guy, and the cheese guy," Bistro Vida owner Ali El Safy said in an interview about coordinating the effort.

The new open-air market will complement the Menlo Park Farmers Market that takes

place every Sunday. It's one of the latest pilots in the city to reimagine what life in the area can be as people have needed greater physical distance and gravitated outdoors during the COVID-19 pandemic, organized with the city, West Coast Farmers Market Association and Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce.

El Safy, whose restaurant is inspired by France, said that he's long had a desire to do a boutique French-style outdoor

market — "it's got to be very Parisian." In addition to that, it has to draw the community. "It's an idea that can bring people in the middle of the week downtown," El Safy said. "We wanted to do it right."

Vendors will be confirmed as required permits are finalized. The market will feature up to 20, such as: Bistro Vida; Buon Gusto Pasta; Artisan Macaron; Fabrique Delices; Castellano fruits; Lemos Farm strawberries; Tu Universo Farm pro-

duce; Arellano Farms produce; Hummus Heaven; Fernandez Flower Growers; GIO Gelati; Achadilha Cheese Company; Little Sky Bakery; JuiceAlize; and Jewelry by Geri.

In the winter months, El Safy said he hopes there will be a vendor for hot chestnuts and mulled wine.

"It's going to be fun," he said. ▣

Email Associate Digital Editor Sara Hayden at peninsulafoodist@almanacnews.com.

Protesters tell Facebook CEO to 'get the Zuck out'

Demonstration outside Mark Zuckerberg's Palo Alto house calls for his removal from company

By Lloyd Lee

A caravan of about 20 protesters parked by Mark Zuckerberg's Palo Alto residence on Sunday afternoon to honk up a storm and deliver a message to Facebook's CEO: "Get the Zuck out!"

Protesters taped signs to their vehicles that called for Zuckerberg to be fired as CEO and stated that "Facebook is bad for democracy" after a whistleblower recently leaked thousands of confidential documents revealing how the Menlo Park-based social media giant is aware of its role in spreading disinformation and harming young people's mental health.

The event, which took place in

front of Zuckerberg's home on Edgewood Drive, was organized by two San Francisco-based nonprofits: Global Exchange, an international human rights group, and Media Alliance, which promotes using media for social change. Raging Grannies, a local group of activists, and Code Pink, a women-led progressive grassroots organization, also helped plan the protest.

Media Alliance Executive Director Tracy Rosenberg said in an interview that it would be nearly impossible to convince billions of people to delete their Facebook accounts, so instead, users like herself should demand changes from the platform.

"We are indirectly paying Facebook with our time, atten-

tion and engagement, because there is no Facebook if we don't do that," Rosenberg said. "So as users we should have some collective power here and we're trying to manifest that."

Facebook recently came under intense scrutiny from the public and federal lawmakers after Frances Haugen, a former product manager for the company, leaked troves of internal documents detailing how the social media giant is aware that its products, including Instagram, spread disinformation and negatively impact teenagers' mental health yet chooses to avoid implementing effective safety measures.

"Facebook, over and over again, has shown it chooses



Magali Gauthier

Marni Barne, a member of the Raging Grannies, raises her fist during a protest with about 20 demonstrators who drove by Mark Zuckerberg's Palo Alto home on Oct. 17 demanding that he be fired as Facebook CEO.

profit over safety," Haugen said in a "60 Minutes" interview on Oct. 3.

In a Senate Commerce Committee hearing on Oct. 5, Haugen, who joined Facebook in 2019 and was part of its civic misinformation team, urged federal lawmakers to regulate the company and request more

documentation from it in order to effectively do so.

"I'm here ... because I believe Facebook's products harm children, stoke division and weaken our democracy," Haugen testified to lawmakers. "The company's leadership knows how to

See **ZUCKERBERG**, page 18

Coronavirus central: San Mateo County inches closer to relaxing mask mandate

COVID-19 positivity rate continues to drop, one of three criteria for allowing people to go maskless indoors

By Sue Dremann

County test positivity rate drops below 1%

San Mateo County is a step closer to reaching the goal of releasing the mask mandate set forth by eight counties and the city of Berkeley on Oct. 7, said Chief of Health Louise Rogers at the Tuesday, Oct. 19, Board of Supervisors meeting.

The county has a COVID-19 testing positivity rate of 0.9% overall and 1.3% positivity for the lowest quarter of people represented in the state's Healthy Places Index, which measures health factors among the county's most economically

disadvantaged.

The lower positivity rate is one of three metrics the county will require under the multiple county criteria prior to relaxing the indoor mask mandate. To lift the mandate, a county would need to meet the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's criteria for the moderate yellow tier for COVID-19 transmission for three consecutive weeks; 80% of the county's total population has had both doses of the Moderna or Pfizer vaccine or one shot of Johnson & Johnson's vaccine; and hospital rates must remain low and stable. Alternatively, the mandate could be lifted if eight weeks

have passed since a COVID-19 vaccine has been authorized for emergency use by federal and state authorities for 5- to 11-year-olds.

The county corrected its data and found it has a larger percentage of unvaccinated people who are eligible to receive the vaccine than it previously tallied, at 67,000. Rogers said 72.5% of the total county population is fully vaccinated. The county's vaccination rates far surpass the nation's average, which is 57% for the fully vaccinated eligible population, she noted.

Dr. Anand Chabra, San Mateo County Health's COVID-19 mass vaccination section chief,

said that Pfizer-BioNTech is asking the Food and Drug Administration for emergency use authorization for COVID-19 vaccines to be given to children aged 5 to 11 and a hearing is scheduled for Oct. 26. If approved, the vaccines could be available sometime in November, he said.

On Oct. 15, the FDA's Vaccines and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee recommended making the one-shot Johnson & Johnson/Janssen vaccine available for a second shot, which would improve immunity. The same panel voted Oct. 14 to recommend the Moderna vaccine booster

to enhance waning immunity from that vaccine. The Pfizer vaccine received FDA approval for its booster shot on Sept. 22 for people who are ages 65 and older or are in eligible groups and have medical or work conditions that would make them likely to have severe COVID-19 infections.

Comprehensive COVID-19 coverage

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

Email Staff Writer Sue Dremann at sdremann@paweekly.com.

Governor declares a statewide drought emergency

By Rachel Becker/CalMatters

Gov. Gavin Newsom Tuesday declared a drought emergency for the entire state of California, as conservation efforts continue to fall far short of state targets.

Newsom also authorized California's water regulators to ban wasteful water use, such as spraying down public sidewalks, and directed his Office of Emergency Services to fund drinking water as needed. But he stopped short of issuing any statewide conservation mandates.

"As the western U.S. faces a potential third year of drought, it's critical that Californians across the state redouble our efforts to save water in every way possible," Newsom said in a statement.

Tuesday's announcement extends drought emergencies, already declared in 50 counties, to the eight remaining counties where conditions had thus far not been deemed severe enough: Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San

Bernardino, San Diego, Imperial, San Francisco and Ventura.

The emergency declarations are aimed at easing responses to the deepening drought — such as emergency bottled water purchases or construction to bolster water supplies — by reducing environmental and other regulations. Under the proclamation, local water suppliers must begin preparing for the possibility of a dry year ahead.

"We think we'll be able to manage through this year," said David Pettijohn, director of water resources at the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power. "Next year is the issue. And we don't know what the water year is going to look like. Nobody can predict the weather."

But California's water watchers say that without a conservation mandate, California is losing time, and water. "We know mandates are more effective than voluntary calls," said Heather Cooley, director of research at the Pacific Institute, a global water think tank. "It

takes time to ramp up, and because of the delay in asking Californians to save water this spring, we are further behind than we should be."

Conservation efforts still short of goals

New data released Tuesday by the State Water Resources Control Board reveals that Californians cut their water use at home by 5% in August compared to August 2020, an improvement over the reductions of less than 2% in July but still far short of the voluntary 15% cuts Newsom urged in July.

The hard-hit North Coast, where the state's first drought emergencies were declared in April, continued to show the biggest drops in household water use — with an 18.3% decrease compared to August of last year. Conservation numbers tapered off moving south, with the San Francisco Bay Area conserving nearly 10% more water than last August.

The South Coast region —

which includes Los Angeles, Orange, San Diego and Ventura counties — showed an improvement over July, when water use was roughly even with last year. In August, residents used about 3.1% less water than they did in August 2020.

"Those numbers are a little bit misleading, frankly," said Pettijohn, pointing to existing conservation measures including mandatory outdoor watering restrictions. "Looking at one month, in one year, compared to the same exact month in the current year, it's really not a true measure of what the efforts in the city have been."

The current reductions in water use are on top of conservation that has continued since the last drought. In 2020, Californians were already using about 16% less water in their homes and businesses statewide compared to 2013, according to water board data analyst Marielle Pinheiro.

This August was both the hottest and driest on record, accord-

ing to the governor's office. And the increased conservation, even during an exceptionally dry month, "is especially significant," Pinheiro said at the water board meeting Tuesday.

"Once you've learned to save water, why turn the water on when you're brushing your teeth?" said former water board chairperson Felicia Marcus, who led the response during the last drought under former Gov. Jerry Brown. "The glass half full view of that is that messaging is starting to take hold."

Still, Newsha Ajami, director of Urban Water Policy at Stanford University, was surprised that Newsom didn't declare a statewide water conservation mandate Tuesday.

"We really need to reduce per capita water use significantly in some areas of the state," she said. "If this drought lingers longer and we end up having a few more dry years we are going to have a lot more communities

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EVACUATIONS

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to evacuate an entire state during a hurricane. There have been research studies completed on the 2018 Paradise fire, but those models looked backward rather than forward. He wants Woodside Fire Protection District, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office and town officials to have a tool they can use to run scenarios and decide how to respond.

Town consultants are in the midst of an evacuation study, which they launched in September. Town staff plan to have Cardinal work with consultants who are analyzing different scenarios that may affect evacuations and suggest whether improvements to Portola Valley's infrastructure may be beneficial, according to the town. A report is expected to be completed in February, said Town Manager Jeremy Dennis.

He put in the number of potential residents that could be added to town based on 2023-31 Regional Housing Needs Allocation numbers to see how evacuations might look with a larger population.

Neighbors held their own evacuation drill in August, which Cardinal said was helpful for his modeling. The data he uses for the model is based on OpenStreetMap, an editable geographic database, or Google Maps. The maps don't show "the pavement is only 8 feet wide here" or "there's room for another lane here." The simula-

tion doesn't take into account if a road is closed or a car breaks down and blocks traffic, which the drill does, he explained.

But overall, only a few hundred people participate in such drills at a time and it only simulates one question. With a simulation model, you can do much more, he said.

The simulation

The Almanac viewed a demo of Cardinal's technology, which has not yet been released to the public.

Cardinal said he sought to create a model that includes people, cars and road externalities. He fed the model information on the projected fire spread.

He pulled data from OpenStreetMap, which he said came with a lot of issues he needed to fix, including data that comes in a "zillion" formats.

He wanted to simulate what happens with a variety of complications (such as road closures and traffic from other areas) and mitigations (making roads one way, adding traffic control at key points).

Models generally include a limited amount of local knowledge, he said. They tend to rely on speed limits and theoretical maximums, not an awareness of how the roads actually work. There's also limited flexibility for "outliers" like horse farms or homes with trailered vehicles.

Major takeaways

The town would "overall be in

good shape" during an evacuation, Cardinal said, based on his models. It would take between two to four hours after an evacuation order is given, according to his simulation. Major factors include:

- How many people would have already left, assuming there was a prior warning
- How many cars each family takes
- How long it takes people to pack up and start out
- What complications occur (downed lines, accidents, roads closed, etc.)

If more residents move into town, for evacuation purposes, it'd be best for them to live near exits in town. Stanford University's proposed Wedge project is located just south of Interstate 280 on Alpine Road. There could be up to 7,500 cars that leave Portola Valley during an evacuation, but realistically residents are not all going to leave at the same time, he said.

The project, called Stanford Terraces, includes 39 housing units on part of the property's 75 acres located between Westridge and Golden Oak drives. It was initially proposed over two years ago, and some residents have cited potential traffic jams and fire hazards for opposing the development plans.

"People make it seem like (if we build) the Wedge project will suddenly make it so we're all going to die in flames or something," he said.

With about 200 additional

housing units, mostly accessory dwelling units, spread all over town, residents should be able to leave fairly easily in a normal evacuation scenario.

His simulation shows police intervention will be "really important."

"Some intersections are particularly tricky," he said. "The (town) traffic plan has traffic control points and expect they can do that (in an evacuation)."

Cardinal said the biggest surprise from the model is that if you make Arastradero Road one way for outbound traffic, on paper it serves as a decent third alternative route.

"I'm hoping this is a place where the traffic engineers can help us decide if that's realistic," he said.

There's no way to exit to a main roadway from the town to the west and that can't be fixed, he noted. If there's a fire along the 280 corridor, then residents might have to shelter somewhere like Corte Madera School, near the Frog Pond.

He also noted it would be ideal if there was another way to get out of the Ladera neighborhood.

He said Portola Valley residents are rightly worried about fire risk and losing their home insurance policies, a trend in recent years.

"Some level of fear makes sense," he said. "I do think a lot of people are very sincere. I think some other people just want to leave things the way they are. The world moves.

Stanford owns 75 acres and it's their land. It's America, you get to do stuff with your property."

He also argues Stanford will maintain the property better against fire risk with faculty members living on it.

Some residents have said Portola Valley could face a catastrophic fire similar to the 2018 Camp Fire that devastated the town of Paradise, but Cardinal argues that conditions are not the same. Paradise had a larger population (almost 27,000 versus fewer than 5,000 in Portola Valley) and downslope winds in the dry season. Portola Valley is close to a major highway that can bring residents to nearby cities, unlike Paradise. There are also no traffic lights in Portola Valley that would require synchronization.

"You could walk out of here (Portola Valley) or mountain bike out of here; you'll get to 280 almost no matter what," he said. "But you never know what's going to happen next."

He noted that his model doesn't take into account that evacuating through I-280 is dependent on regions. For example, traffic from San Francisco to the Peninsula will clog the highway, so ultimately the model needs to be on a larger scale, he said.

For more on the town's traffic study, go to tinyurl.com/pvevacuationstudy. **A**

Email Staff Writer Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com.

Former tutor now faces 55 counts related to alleged lewd acts on teen students

Mark Allan Hodes is charged with felonies against 17 girls that could keep him in prison for life

By Sue Dremann

Yet again, former Palo Alto math tutor Mark Allan Hodes' plea hearing was postponed after prosecutors added charges against

him alleging multiple lewd and lascivious acts against girls whom he had taught in his home. The current number of charges: 55.

The Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office filed

three additional counts against him on Monday, Oct. 18, switching his scheduled Oct. 19 court appearance from a plea hearing to an arraignment. He is now set to enter a plea on Dec. 14.

This is the prosecution's sec-

ond amended felony complaint filed since Hodes was initially charged in September 2020 with nine felony counts of lewd and lascivious acts on a child, which are related to three of his female students. He was

initially released on a \$450,000 bond. The court ordered he be held without bail, however, after prosecutors filed their first amended complaint this past

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DROUGHT

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experiencing water scarcity and water access issues."

An unknown water year ahead

Newsom's announcement comes at a pivotal moment for California's water.

The state just closed out its second-driest water year on record, with nearly 88% of California now in the clutches of extreme drought, or worse. By the end of September, statewide reservoir storage had hit 60% of average, with Lake Oroville setting a new record low.

"It's amazing that in the second dry year, we're in as scary a

position if not scarier than what we faced in that last drought. It's almost beyond comprehension," Marcus said. "It's a stunning challenge."

State officials have warned water providers south of the Delta relying on state water allocations that they might be cut off completely next year.

"We're starting with record low (reservoir) storage," Karla Nemeth, director of the state Department of Water Resources, said last month. "We would have to have north of 140% of (average) precipitation to generate average runoff into the reservoirs that would begin filling that hole."

But some experts say that number is likely an underestimate.

Now, California is on the cusp of its rainy season, when it receives almost all of its yearly precipitation.

A series of storms are expected to reach Northern California this week, with another that could unleash some rain over Southern California as soon as this weekend, according to Chad Hecht, a meteorology staff researcher with the Center for Western Weather and Water Extremes at the Scripps Institution of Oceanography.

Precipitation forecasts range from 8 inches in the Sierras over the next seven days, to less than half an inch in Southern California, said Julie Kalansky, the center's deputy director.

While the rain is highly

unlikely to substantially refill empty reservoirs, it could help prepare thirsty soils for more rains to come.

For these storms, "the runoff from them may not be very high, but they'll help moisten the soils. So if we get more, hopefully you get more runoff that can go into reservoirs or streams and ecosystems," Kalansky said.

But the water year ahead remains murky: Cooler than average temperatures in the tropical Pacific herald the arrival of La Niña conditions, which the National Weather Service's Climate Prediction Center reports have an 87% chance of continuing between December and February.

La Niña can stir up storm

tracks, changing how much precipitation falls on California. But the results vary — especially for Northern California — making it difficult to predict what this means for rain and snowfall in the northern two-thirds of the state, Kalansky said.

For Southern California, on the other hand, La Niña tends to foretell a drier year. "It doesn't mean that we're necessarily going to have a really dry year, but we typically don't get really wet years when it's a La Niña," she said.

Overall, Kalansky said, "it's still yet to be decided on whether or not this year is going to be wet or dry and what this means for drought. We just don't have those answers yet." ■

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STAFFING

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“We know it is a dire situation when the administration has to step in,” she said. “We know there’s no easy fix for this. We know every district is going through it. ... When we don’t have a substitute, when another teacher has to cover, when classes are combined so they can work with one substitute, students often don’t get the lesson that was planned.”

A photography teacher who was out sick recently left a lesson for her students, Salvatore said. Students headed to the library where the librarian supervised them. But library computers didn’t have the software they needed to complete the assignment, so students took a study period instead.

To combat the shortage, the board voted to hire six new substitutes during the Oct. 13 meeting.

Stopgap measures may be unavoidable, but they have an impact, whether that’s a counselor who has to cancel an appointment with a student or a teacher who misses out on important preparation time, Palo Alto Unified School District Superintendent Don Austin said.

The Palo Alto district, which serves over 11,700 students in transitional kindergarten through 12th grade, according to data from 2020, has seen its pool of substitute teachers shrink substantially. Before the pandemic, there were over 200 active substitutes in the district. Now, there are 111.

“To feel good about our situation, we’d probably want to double that number,” Austin said.

The Los Altos School District, which had roughly 4,000 students in 2020, has similarly seen a sharp drop in the number of available substitutes. There are roughly 25 substitutes in the TK-8 school district this fall, compared with about 80 in the 2019-2020 school year.

The shortage has meant that in some instances, principals have been asked to cover classes, said Erin Green, the district’s director of student and staff services.

“To tie up a principal in a classroom is really hard because then they’re not able to address all of the big picture things that are coming their way,” Green said.

Identifying possible reasons for staffing crunch

Substitute teacher shortages have been a recurring issue over the years, but the pandemic has made the problem more acute, school leaders say.

“It’s already been hard to find subs, but the hardest problem about this now is that we’re asking people to go into rooms where kids are unvaccinated,” Mountain View Whisman School District Superintendent Ayinde Rudolph said.

As a TK-8 school district, many Mountain View Whisman students are currently too young to be vaccinated. Rudolph said he believes finding substitutes may be easier once children under 12 can get their shots.

Another part of the challenge, Rudolph said, is that the credentialing process for substitutes got disrupted by the pandemic. According to Green, some substitutes also retired, moved out of the area or are helping to care for family members.

“All these things have a compounding impact on availability to have subs,” Rudolph said.

The broader trend of open positions across the economy may also be having an impact. Austin pointed to the “help wanted” signs in many restaurant windows as an example of the current labor shortage.

Most of the positions school districts are having trouble filling are part time or hourly, Austin said, as well as jobs that require specialized training, such as bus drivers. The Palo Alto district currently has enough bus drivers, “but by the skin of our teeth,” Austin said.

Part-time, low-wage jobs like crossing guards (the Las Lomas district pays \$45 to \$52 for two hours a day) are often filled by senior citizens, a population now trying to minimize their exposure to COVID-19, Chan explained.

Chan planned to train a crossing guard to replace her — a duty not normally delegated to district administrators — but the candidate bowed out of the position. The district is reevaluating how it fills its crossing guard roles, she said.

In the Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District (MVLA), officials are seeing “very high turnover” among classroom assistants and in some clerical positions, human resources director Leyla Benson said. In August and September, 17 classified employees resigned, compared with four during the same period in 2020 and seven in 2019, Benson said. Classified employees are those who don’t have a teaching credential.

“It is very atypical that at the start of the school year you have people resigning,” Benson said.

She attributed the resignations to a variety of factors, including some who are dealing with the aftermath of illness and family hardship during



Magali Gauthier

Dana Torok, a substitute teacher, helps a second grader complete a math assignment at Oak Avenue Elementary School in Los Altos on Oct. 13.

the pandemic, as well as others who have reset their priorities and want to make changes like staying home with their own children.

Menlo Park City School District staff is also facing staffing shortages. They’ve found it difficult to fill long-term substitute teaching roles, according to Assistant Superintendent of Talent and Technology Kristen Gracia. The district is also having difficulty filling daily positions when teachers or staff are out of the classroom or off work.

Some districts have turned to increasing pay as a way to attract more applicants. For substitutes in particular, many local districts have boosted wages. Palo Alto recently increased pay from \$165 to \$180 per day for a typical substitute. Long-term substitutes, who fill in for teachers on longer leaves, earn \$300 a day, Austin said.

MVLA boosted daily substitute pay to \$225, up from \$180. Long-term substitutes make \$473 per day, Benson said.

‘Resident’ substitutes

Another strategy that has been effective for some districts is paying a group of substitutes to show up every day, regardless of the actual need, so that someone is available if a last-minute absence occurs.

MVLA in particular decided over the summer to start a “resident” substitute program in anticipation of a likely shortage this fall. The district pays five or six substitutes to consistently staff each of the district’s high schools.

The program has been a tremendous benefit, Benson said, adding that the district hasn’t “felt the pain” of the substitute shortage that other districts are experiencing.

“Having the resident subs available to plug in when we’re in a pinch has really assisted,” Benson said.

The district is considering expanding the program as the winter flu season approaches. MVLA also launched a pandemic hiring initiative back in the spring, looking for community members who could supervise classrooms where the teacher was still instructing students over Zoom. Some of those hires ended up completing the required steps to become a regular substitute, rather than a classroom monitor, and stayed on this fall.

In some cases, these were stay-at-home parents who wanted to help the school return to in-person classes.

“When they heard that we could get school up and running and we needed these vital positions, they were on board 100%,” Benson said.

Alice Tong was among the parents who signed up last spring to supervise classrooms and is now working as a resident substitute at Mountain View High.

With one child who graduated from Mountain View High in the spring and a pair of twins who started their freshman year at the school this fall, Tong said she saw an opportunity to help support kids who may have had a difficult time during the pandemic.

“I wanted to help out the kids who were coming back, and also the school and the teachers,” she said.

Tong came in with a lot of experience, having first started subbing in the Mountain View Whisman School District roughly eight years ago. She decided to keep working for the high school this fall, in part because being a resident substitute gave her a consistent schedule. Currently, she’s working every Tuesday and Thursday.

“In most school districts when you sub, it’s on an on-call basis,” Tong said. “It’s very difficult to

plan because you don’t know if you’re working that day and you don’t know where you’re working.”

Other school districts are also trying out a similar model, where they guarantee certain substitutes regular work.

The Palo Alto district is offering resident substitutes \$250 per day and is looking to find four to staff each high school, plus three at each middle school. The Los Altos School District currently has one substitute who works every day but moves among schools and is looking to hire a second.

“We know we’re going to need them, so we’ve hired them permanently for the year,” Green said.

Districts are also running substitute recruitment events. Los Altos is holding a substitute information night next month where attendees will learn about what’s required to become a substitute.

“Some of our greatest subs are parents right in our own community,” Green said.

Districts have also in some cases turned to outside companies to help provide substitutes. Both the Los Altos and Mountain View Whisman districts have contracted with Swing Education, which recruits substitute teachers and provides them to districts.

In many cases though, Rudolph said, his district’s most reliable substitutes are those who are hired directly by the district.

A rise in staff absences

In some cases, the substitute teacher shortage is being compounded by an increase in staff absences, potentially because of the increased emphasis being placed during the pandemic on staying home if you are ill.

The Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District has seen the number of teachers missing work for personal or family illnesses go up somewhat this fall. Teachers missed 148.33 days of work last month due to illness, compared with 131.6 days in 2019, according to data Benson compiled.

However, most other districts say that teacher attendance has stayed relatively stable, and the bulk of the problem is the lack of available substitutes.

“We’re not necessarily having a higher number of staff absences, but there is absolutely a substitute shortage,” Los Altos Superintendent Jeff Baier said. “And we’re all grappling for the same pool of people.” ■

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TEACHER STRESSES

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prefer to just focus on teaching and learning.”

He called being back full-time “exciting, fun and tiring. For students and teachers alike, being back in school and following the normal, pre-COVID, schedule, means adjusting back to life where teachers teach five classes a day and students are going to six or seven classes throughout the day, Losekoot wrote.

For Susan Nicholls, a second grade teacher at Sandpiper Elementary School in Redwood City, the return to school has felt safe and relatively normal. There have been just 15 cases reported in the Belmont-Redwood Shores School District since school began, according to a district data dashboard. Nicholls said she is heartened by mask and sanitation compliance, staggered schedules, and an overall sense of people looking out for each other.

Nicholls described some discomfort knowing that a small number of teachers are not vaccinated and said she supports a mandate for students and staff. About 95% of district teachers are fully vaccinated, according to a media report.

But for others, the added responsibilities and anxieties of returning to school during a pandemic have been harder to manage.

Infrequent and relatively mild COVID cases have created “the illusion of safety,” said Erinn Washburn, a middle school music teacher in the district and president of the Redwood City Teachers Association (RCTA). Director of Communications Jorge Quintana said that all 391 certified employees responded to a districtwide survey and that 98.5% of RCSD employees are fully vaccinated.

But even with low numbers, some teachers are reaching a breaking point, Washburn said.

“Teachers are definitely feeling it. I’m hearing it all over the place. It’s overwhelming,” Washburn said, adding that understaffing has exacerbated the situation. “They’re like, ‘This is not sustainable. I cannot keep doing this. I can’t keep working 12-hour days. I can’t keep working every Saturday. This isn’t gonna work.’”

The teacher shortage predated COVID, but it’s only gotten worse since then, said San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools Nancy Magee. A National Education Association’s survey of 2,690 members conducted in May found that 32% of education workers who responded reported the pandemic has spurred them to want



Magali Gauthier

Mallory Byrne, an ethnic studies and U.S. history teacher at Menlo-Atherton High School, stands outside the Sequoia Union High School District office in Redwood City on Oct. 12.

to leave the profession earlier than expected.

“Some people are burned out, some people are making different kinds of priority choices with their lives — moving to be closer to family,” she added. Magee noted constant media coverage of schools during the pandemic might have scared some potential teachers away. “Education and schools were often a top headline. So it didn’t necessarily look appealing from afar.”

While other industries have been similarly impacted by the pandemic, Magee thinks the effect has been felt more profoundly in schools.

“We can’t really hang a sign in the window and say, ‘Be patient with us, we’re understaffed. It might take a little longer to get your food,’ or something like that,” she said. “You’ve got 30 kids showing up in your classroom every day ready to learn, and we need to be responsive. So it’s been pretty tough.”

Overwhelmed with contact tracing and wanting to provide on-site testing to staff, the Sequoia district signed a contract with Worksite Labs to carry some of the load school health staff members were facing. The group began administering tests on school campuses on Sept. 20. Testing is available Monday through Friday from 9:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. on at least one district site per day. Worksite Labs is also assisting with contact tracing.

“We noticed on the third day of school that there are not many people out there who want to do this work,” said Jarett Dooley, the Sequoia district’s student services director, during a Sept. 8 school board meeting. “I got to meet with our health staff yesterday and they are ready to feel some of the relief. ... This has consumed us, but that’s OK. This is some of the most important work.”

Sequoia district Health & Wellness Coordinator Javier Gutierrez noted contact tracing

high school having missed most of middle school in person

“Kids just kind of forgot how to act in school,” said Washburn, who’s heard reports of bad classroom etiquette and occasional fights. They said overworked teachers are doing their best to address social-emotional issues as they arise. “If there’s behavior stuff that’s coming up ... or if somebody says something racist, you have to have the time to be like, ‘Whoa, let’s stop and look at what just happened right here. And let’s dissect that a little bit.’”

Magee has heard similar stories.

“Coming out of a traumatic experience, you’re going to have people who are what we call ‘dysregulated,’ their emotions aren’t really in balance,” she said. “People are more short with each other. There’s more conflict. There’s not as much resilience or flexibility in people’s spirits.”

M-A English teacher Abbie Korman told the school board during its Sept. 8 meeting that she would like to see the district offer more mental health support to students and teachers who are struggling with the impacts of the pandemic.

“I’ve been told our mental health professionals are seeing more students than ever before and need more resources and

more space,” Korman said after the student advisory council presented students’ perspective on the return to school to the district’s governing board on Sept. 22. Some 27 students offered feedback for the council’s survey. “I’m frustrated a survey wasn’t administered by the district. The district would have a much further reach (than the students). What new mental health supports have been put in place after this monumental return from a once in a lifetime event?”

According to Magee, the county has made addressing these issues a top priority.

“We have a large body of experts here at the county office providing training and local support to school districts in specifically mental health and social-emotional well-being,” she said.

But more trainings also means more work for the teachers, something Washburn, the union president, is concerned about.

“Report cards are coming up here real soon, the first trimester is almost coming to a close,” they said. “It’s just a whole bunch of stuff happening all at once.” ■

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**TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY
NOTICE OF PLANNING COMMISSION
PUBLIC HEARING**

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Planning Commission of the Town of Portola Valley will hold a public hearing, via teleconference, on **Wednesday, November 3, 2021 at 7:00 p.m.** on the following:

REQUEST FOR AMENDMENTS TO CONDITIONAL USE PERMITS TO ALLOW WINE SALES, TASTING AND EVENTS AND ARCHITECTURAL AND SITE DEVELOPMENT REVIEW OF SITE MODIFICATIONS FOR THE NEELY/SPRING RIDGE WINERY, 555 PORTOLA ROAD; FILE #PLN_USE04-2018; PURSUANT TO PORTOLA VALLEY MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTERS 18.64 and 18.72.

The project has been determined to be exempt from the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Section 15303 of the CEQA Guidelines (construction or conversion of new small facilities or structures). The determination is supported by a traffic operation study, biological resources and noise study.

To join the Zoom meeting online:
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To join the Zoom meeting by telephone:
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Public Hearings provide the general public and interested parties an opportunity to provide testimony on these items. If you challenge a proposed action(s) in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at a Public Hearing(s) described above, or in written correspondence delivered to the Town of Portola Valley at, or prior to, the Public Hearing(s).

Information pertaining to the proposal may be viewed on the Town’s website at www.portolavalley.net/projects. Interested persons are invited to appear before the Planning Commission to be heard at the time and place mentioned above and may email comments prior to the meeting to planning@portolavalley.net reference “Neely Wine” in the subject line.

Dated: October 22, 2021
Laura Russell, Planning Director

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Erika Demma
650.740.2970
DRE 01230766

566 VAN BUREN STREET, LOS ALTOS



\$5,598,000 • 5 Bed • 4.5 Bath • 566vanburen.com



Lynn North
650.703.6437
DRE 01490039

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\$5,495,000 • 4 Bed • 3.5 Bath • 190phillip.com



Erika Demma
650.740.2970
DRE 01230766

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Jack Welsh and Denise Welsh
650.823.3180 | 415.999.0727
DRE 02099304 | DRE 00939903

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1360 CLOUD AVENUE MENLO PARK



UPDATED AND BRIGHT IN WEST MENLO

Bright, updated interiors and a floorplan perfectly suited for a modern lifestyle make this West Menlo home on a 7,000 square foot lot an excellent choice for Silicon Valley living. Beautiful hardwood floors extend throughout over 1,800 square feet of living space with a light, airy ambiance thanks to ample natural light. A fireplace centers the living room, which flows into the dining room, and the granite-appointed kitchen includes stainless-steel appliances and a butcher block-topped island. Three spacious bedrooms in the main home, including the expansive primary suite, each feature outdoor access, and this home also includes an ADU with a kitchen and additional full bathroom for added accommodations. Find great space for outdoor enjoyment in the peaceful backyard with colorful plantings, fruit trees, a deck, and an expansive patio. Plus, you will be just moments to the amenities of downtown Palo Alto, a short drive to Sharon Park, and to Stanford University, and enjoy access to the acclaimed Las Lomas school district (buyer to verify eligibility).

OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY & SUNDAY 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM

www.1360Cloud.com

Listed at \$2,498,000

Listed by the DeLeon Team • 2.5% Commission Paid to Buyer's Agent • Waived if DeLeon Buyer's Agent

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 | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224



935 COLLEGE AVENUE MENLO PARK



LUXURIOUSLY APPOINTED WITH A GREAT LOCATION

A tree-lined street in the sought-after Allied Arts neighborhood sets the stage for this bright and inviting 4-bedroom, 2.5-bathroom home of nearly 2,800 square feet. Offering outstanding curb appeal, this home is introduced by a column-framed front porch leading inside to light, bright interiors with beautifully refinished hardwood floors extending throughout expansive gathering spaces. A 2-way fireplace centers the living and dining room, the kitchen features appliances from Thermador and Sub-Zero, and the expansive family room enjoys a built-in entertainment center. Comfortable bedrooms are highlighted by the primary suite with a luxurious bathroom, while a main-level bedroom can also serve as an office. Outside, the peaceful backyard provides great space for al fresco enjoyment with a large patio and lush lawn. Just moments to both downtown Menlo Park and Palo Alto, this home is also convenient to numerous parks, Stanford University, and Caltrain, with access to acclaimed Menlo Park schools (buyer to verify eligibility).

OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY & SUNDAY 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM

www.935College.com

Listed at \$3,498,000

Listed by the DeLeon Team • 2.5% Commission Paid to Buyer's Agent • Waived if DeLeon Buyer's Agent

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 | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224



INDEPENDENT REDISTRICTING COMMISSION (IRC) VACANCIES

Setting the electoral boundaries

The City of Menlo Park is seeking Menlo Park residents to apply for the IRC.

The Commission shall be comprised of seven (7) commissioners and two (2) alternate commissioners. Alternates may fully participate in Commission deliberations but may not vote and may not be counted toward the establishment of a quorum. Alternates are subject to the same qualifications, restrictions and standards of conduct as all other Commissioners.

The IRC's responsible for setting Menlo Park's electoral boundaries for City Council districts following the 2020 census.

Redistricting determines which neighborhoods and communities are grouped together into a district for purposes of electing a city councilmember

FOR MORE INFORMATION AND APPLICATIONS:

- Visit menlopark.org/redistricting
- Email jaherren@menlopark.org
- Call 650-330-6620

Lora Riggs Wadsworth

Lora Riggs Wadsworth, 58, passed peacefully in her home in Atherton, CA on October 9, 2021, surrounded by her loving family. A talented businessperson, leader, community servant, mother and wife, Lora had a successful business career followed by leadership roles in numerous community and charitable organizations, but her greatest achievement was creating a wonderful and loving family.

Lora was born in Alva, OK to Sam and Lois (Rauh) Riggs. After the family moved to Lakewood, CO, Lora attended Alameda High School where she was President of the Jefferson County Student Council, Colorado representative to the US Senate Youth Program, chairperson of the Jefferson County School Accountability Committee, and a National Merit Semi-finalist. Lora went on to college at Stanford University where she played on the Stanford Women's Lacrosse team and participated in the Stanford Overseas Study Program at Cliveden, England. Lora majored in both Economics and Mechanical Engineering and graduated from Stanford in 1985.

After four years working as an engineer for Mobil Oil Corporation, Lora attended Harvard Business School, graduating in 1991 with an MBA. After graduating from Harvard, Lora moved to the Los Angeles area where her business career included roles as a consultant at Boston Consulting Group and director of business development in the Disney Educational Software business at The Walt Disney Company.

After her success in business, Lora chose to retire and put her talent toward raising her family and supporting her community through non-profit work. Lora married Steve Wadsworth in Dillon, Colorado in 1991, and together they raised a daughter, Christina, and a son, Drew, in Pacific Palisades, California and most recently in Atherton, California.

In addition to her family, Lora's top priorities were contributing to and leading community and non-profit organizations to serve



others. Lora served on the board of Palisades Lutheran Preschool from 2000 to 2004. From 2004 to 2008, she served on the board of Big Sunday, a nonprofit that organizes volunteers to work on projects to support those in need. In 2005 Lora graduated from the CORA Los Angeles Women in Leadership program. Lora was a Troop Leader for the Los Angeles Girl Scouts of the USA in the early 2000s, and from 2012 to 2020 Lora was a volunteer and troop representative with Troop 109 of the Boy Scouts of America in the Pacific Skyline Council. Additionally, Lora held leadership roles in both the Junior League and National Charity League, and she was an active supporter of Daughters of the American Revolution, Mayflower Society and the Society of the Cincinnati.

Lora's largest charitable focus was the Children's PSC Foundation, where she served as CEO and Director of the nonprofit foundation for over 15 years. The foundation supports parents and pediatric patients with primary sclerosing cholangitis (PSC), a rare, chronic liver disease. In her role, Lora helped identify a successful treatment for certain PSC patients, contributed to ongoing research, and raised funds to identify the cause and search for a cure.

Lora was a curious problem solver, an active adventurer, a smart businesswoman, and a servant to the community with a brilliant mind and a kind heart. She was also a beautiful, dedicated, and loving wife and mother. Lora loved to travel and spend time outdoors with her family. She particularly enjoyed backpacking, hiking, biking, scuba diving and skiing and spent meaningful time adventuring in Block Island, RI and Breckenridge, CO.

Lora is survived by her husband, Steve; her daughter, Christina; her son, Drew; her parents, Samuel M. and Lois Riggs, Lakewood, CO; and her sister, Marsha Riggs Abbott, Portola Valley, CA.

In lieu of flowers, please consider a donation in Lora's memory to the Children's PSC Foundation <http://childrenspsc.org>.

PAID OBITUARY

MENLO CHURCH

continued from page 1

been permitted to volunteer for more than a year after telling his father that he experienced sexual attraction to minors.

The investigation by Zero Abuse Project looked into potential instances of sexual misconduct by the pastor's son, referred to as "Individual A," combing more than 500,000 pages of documents and records as well as interviewing 104 people over about 94 hours of interview time.

The report, and The Almanac's previous reporting, declined to name the pastor's son because there has so far been no disclosure or other direct evidence of child sexual abuse by him.

Go to bit.ly/3G25Iul to access the 117-page investigation in full.

The investigation was led by Victor Vieth, chief program officer for education and research, and Shanon May, chief program officer for victim assistance, at Zero Abuse Project, according to the report. They had support from former child abuse prosecutors, victim assistance specialists and a child forensic interviewer.

The group also contracted with an organization that responds to sexual abuse in the Jewish community, an expert on digital forensic evidence analysis, a former child abuse detective, a sex offender treatment provider, an expert on sex offender management, and an immigration attorney fluent in Spanish to help interview witnesses from Mexico, as well as an initial review of more than 130 documents.

The investigation

Beyond the investigation of "Individual A," the report's authors also dug into how the church can reform various programs and approaches to its ministries to more proactively prevent child sexual abuse and boost the faith community's knowledge about the subject.

The issue of child sexual abuse is one not specific to individual faith communities, "but the entire Christian church," the report's authors said.

"As Menlo discovered, churches that are not prepared to respond to this issue may set in motion a chain of events that hurt a great many people," the report's authors said.

"If Menlo is to mend its relationship with the congregation and better protect children, it must not forget these events but instead process them with humility and learn from them," they added.

One source of earlier concerns was that an initial investigation into the matter by Fred Alvarez of the law firm Coblenz, Patch, Duffy & Bass was too limited.

According to the Zero Abuse Project report, the previous investigation had included a review of the church's records of the individual's volunteer activities and eight people. One Menlo staff member also interviewed nine other staff members with a script, asking questions about any reports of inappropriate relationships, touching or contact with students. And while none of those interviews identified concerns about "Individual A," nobody was explicitly asked about him in those interviews either, the report said.

In the aftermath of that investigation, as well as Ortberg's decision to step down, leaders at the church formed a "Supplemental Investigation Advisory Committee" to help select a firm to lead a more thorough investigation. Members of the committee were Lisa Carhart, Amy Hsieh, Chris Hsuing, Paul Merrill and Caroline Tuan, according to the Menlo Church website.

That group chose Zero Abuse Project, "based largely on their reputation and experience with these types of investigations," the committee said in a statement to The Almanac.

"The SIAC is grateful to the (church's leaders) for granting complete autonomy and independence in recommending Zero Abuse as the investigatory body and we are satisfied with the breadth, depth, and level of detail contained in the final report," the committee added.

The church also held an online town hall discussion of the report on Oct. 17.

Recommendations

Among the recommendations in the report were for the church to:

- Create greater restrictions for volunteers who work with children of the same sex. While the church has maintained strict limits on volunteer and staff interactions with children of the opposite sex, contact with youth of the same gender until recently had been strongly supported, according to the report.

Instead of encouraging leaders to become involved in the personal lives of the youths they work with, such as surprising them by showing up at a sports practice or giving them rides, leaders should generally avoid one-on-one meetings and build in other checks to prevent possible abuse, such as obtaining written approval for one-on-one meetings, discussing appropriate boundaries between mentors and youth, or using church email addresses that are periodically checked by supervisors to ensure nothing suspicious is taking place.

- Provide personal safety education for parents and caregivers whose children participate in

youth church programs, as well as for the minor participants.

- Develop a policy for working with a congregant sexually attracted to minors.

- Hire a child protection director and create a standing Child Protection Committee to support the director, implement child abuse prevention initiatives and prioritize child protection concerns.
- Create a safer environment for Menlo's LGBTQIA+ community. The report states, "although Menlo describes itself as a welcoming community, it is not an affirming community."

- Develop one or more community collaborations to address child maltreatment, such as partnering with local child protection agencies or specially trained chaplains.

- Incorporate topics of child abuse and maltreatment into faith activities, such as offering Bible studies related to child maltreatment, delivering periodic sermons on child abuse, participating in multifaith efforts to raise awareness about children's needs, or hosting a "service of lament" that invites parishioners to express grief and sadness to encourage healing.

- Develop a process for restorative justice that prioritizes the needs of victims over those of offenders. "In all likelihood,

there would need to be an outside mediator who can help facilitate conversations between those who are hurt and those who may have, perhaps unwittingly, hurt them," the report states.

Ultimately, the report asks whether, if the church had handled the situation differently, the situation involving "Individual A" and the pastor — described by one witness as a "public scandal" — could have had a different outcome. "Would a better response have created an environment where others struggling with an attraction to minors might have felt safe in seeking help, while affirming to the parishioners and community that the protection of children will never be compromised?" it asks. ■

Email Staff Writer Kate Bradshaw at kbradshaw@almanacnews.com.

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include **Karen Sortino**, 85, a Menlo Park resident of about 60 years, on Sept. 17.

To read the full obituary, leave remembrances and post photos, go to Lasting Memories at almanacnews.com/obituaries. ■

Bette Landi

September 4, 1930 – October 10, 2021

Bette Landi of Menlo Park, CA, peacefully passed away at Sequoia Hospital on October 10th at the age of 91. Bette was surrounded by her loving family who will honor her legacy by living their lives to the fullest, just as she did.

Bette was born Elizabeth Joan Yeckl on September 4, 1930, to parents George and Camille Yeckl. After graduating high school in San Francisco, Bette worked as a secretary for Metropolitan Life Insurance before marrying her husband, Albert C. Landi. Together, they moved to Menlo Park where they raised their two daughters, Debbie and Dana. Bette and Al were blessed to celebrate their 71st wedding anniversary just last week.

A loving wife, dedicated mother, grandmother, and loyal friend, Bette was passionate about volunteering at local hospitals. When she wasn't participating as a member of her bowling team or attending 49er tailgate parties with friends, you could find Bette planting in her garden. In later years she enjoyed traveling the world and was an avid reader, but Bette was truly happiest in the simple moments just spending time with her family.

Bette was predeceased by siblings George Yeckl and Barbara Hill. She is survived by her husband Albert Landi; her daughters, Debbie Landi and Dana Landi Halvorson; and grandchildren Sara Halvorson and Garrett Halvorson.



PAID OBITUARY

Marion "Pete" Avery
November 17, 1927 - October 10, 2021

Marion Peterson "Pete" Avery, beloved matriarch, passed away peacefully at age 93 after a brief illness. Pete is remembered for her love of family and friends, keen intellect and wit, natural inquisitiveness, kind and generous spirit, humility, and for her elegance and charm. She was a devoted wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, and a caring friend.



upgrade its aquatics facilities and backed groundbreaking immunology research at the School of Medicine. They shared a passion for Early California Art, and they greatly enjoyed dominoes and bridge games with friends.

Pete moved to the Vi, a senior living community next to the Stanford campus, after Burt passed in 2005. She enjoyed connecting with old friends,

Pete was raised in Oakland by her loving family: Otto and Gladys Peterson; stepmother Florence (after Gladys' death); and older brothers Robert, Richard and Edward. Many of her lifelong friendships were formed during her early years, later at Anna Head High School in Berkeley, and at UC Berkeley ('49) where she was president of Kappa Kappa Gamma sorority.

Pete met the love of her life, Burt Avery, on a blind date in 1948. Burt was completing his degree at Stanford Business School after returning from U.S Naval service as an underwater demolition specialist in WWII. Their relationship blossomed that summer at Lake Tahoe where each held a summer job. Pete enjoyed waitressing at Glenbrook Inn while Burt built a house at Rubicon Bay. They married one year later in Berkeley and enjoyed 56 years of wedded bliss until Burt's death in 2005. At first, when they went together to Big Game, Pete sat on the Cal side of the stadium while Burt was on the Stanford side. But they quickly decided they preferred to sit together!

Pete and Burt were a devoted couple and dedicated parents. Early in their marriage they worked nights and weekends together to convert the historic Flood estate horse barn in Atherton into a loving family home where they raised their five sons. The Avery home, fondly known as "The Barn," was a hub of activity where everyone felt welcome, and there was never a dull moment! Pete infused every day with humor and grace. Always supportive, Pete and Burt took great interest in each of their sons' pursuits in education, activities and sports. Once the boys were off to school, Pete could be found helping in the classroom, working with the PTA, or volunteering with the Junior League. Pete spent many afternoons shuttling the boys back and forth to swim and water polo team practices. She took the lead organizing family vacations and particularly enjoyed their summer excursions to Glenbrook, a special place for the family dating back to that first summer she shared with Burt. Pete also was extremely supportive of Burt's career, as he founded Avery Construction in 1960 and developed garden apartments and office buildings on the San Francisco Peninsula.

Pete and Burt were overjoyed to welcome four daughters-in-law into the family, whom they both loved dearly. They adored their 11 grandchildren, and Pete lived long enough to enjoy the company of her three great-grandchildren.

Strong and active supporters of Stanford, Pete and Burt helped the University to

as well as building many new relationships. Always inquisitive, she attended lectures at the Vi and was an avid reader of fiction and non-fiction. One of her favorite experiences at the Vi was taking a memoir class where she had the opportunity to record personal stories from her entire life. Another great joy for Pete was playing bridge and the deep friendships she developed around the bridge table. And she rarely missed watching the Golden State Warriors, San Francisco Giants, and Stanford football. She particularly loved learning about the players' personal stories.

Pete will be forever missed by her four surviving sons: Chris, Brian (Tracey), Matt (Kathy) and Regan (Brenda), and by Laurene, her son Bruce's widow; grandchildren: Alida Avery McIntyre (Shea) and Tom Avery (Anne); Galen Avery Neidlinger (Matt), and Alex (Janine), Amanda, and Meg Avery; Wade, Gavin and Weston Avery; Christian and Palmer Avery; and great-grandchildren: Luca and Crew McIntyre; and Reese Neidlinger. Her beloved brothers and husband Burt predeceased her. Pete and Burt's cherished son Bruce was taken too young in an automobile accident in 2014.

There will be a private memorial service over the Thanksgiving holiday for immediate family to celebrate Pete's life. The family appreciates your thoughts and prayers, and would greatly enjoy receiving emails or letters with stories about your connection with Pete.

In lieu of flowers, donations honoring Marion P. Avery may be made to Stanford Medicine "Cancer Discovery Fund", JDRF (formerly called Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation), or the charity of your choice. The Stanford Medicine "Cancer Discovery Fund" supports various programs including cancer research, patient services, and educational programs within the Cancer Center. Donation checks may be made payable to "Stanford University" with a memo note of "In memory of Marion P. Avery" and mailed to Stanford Medicine, P.O. Box 20466, Stanford, CA 94309-0466. Gifts may also be made online at memorial.stanford.edu. Click on Stanford Medicine, and in the second line please select "The Cancer Discovery Fund", and in the gift specifications section mark the gift as "In memory of Marion P. Avery." Donation checks to JDRF may be made payable to "JDRF" with a memo note "In memory of Marion 'Pete' Avery" and mailed to JDRF, 1215 4th Avenue, Suite 1100, Seattle, Washington 98161. Or, gifts may be made online at <http://www2.jdrf.org/goto/peteavery>. The family is grateful for your support.

PAID OBITUARY

Marketplace

The Almanac offers advertising for Home Services, Business Services and Employment.

If you wish to learn more about these advertising options, please call 650.223.6582 or email digitalads@pawekly.com.

Public Notices

995 Fictitious Name Statement

KIDDIE COTTAGE BILINGUAL DAY CARE FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 288814
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Kiddie Cottage Bilingual Day Care, located at 1750 Croner Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
ALEJANDRA ESPINOSA
1750 Croner Ave.
Menlo Park, CA 94025
This business is conducted by: An Individual.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on N/A.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on September 9, 2021.
(ALM Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 2021)

MID-PENINSULA HIGH SCHOOL FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 288864
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Mid-Peninsula High School, located at 1340 Willow Rd., Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
MID-PENINSULA EDUCATION CENTER, INC.
1340 Willow Rd.
Menlo Park, CA 94025
California
This business is conducted by: A Corporation.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 5/15/2002.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on September 14, 2021.
(ALM Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 2021)

SELECT PHYSICAL THERAPY FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 288929
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Select Physical Therapy, located at 540 Ralston Ave., Suite B, Belmont, CA 94001, San Mateo County; Mailing address: 4714 Gettysburg Rd., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055.
Registered owner(s):
PHYSIOTHERAPY ASSOCIATES, INC.
4714 Gettysburg Rd.
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
Michigan
This business is conducted by: A Corporation.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on N/A.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on September 21, 2021.
(ALM Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 2021)

SELECT PHYSICAL THERAPY FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 288928
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Select Physical Therapy, located at 900 Veterans Blvd., Suite 230, Redwood City, CA 94063-1750, San Mateo County; Mailing address: 4714 Gettysburg Rd., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055.

Registered owner(s):
PHYSIOTHERAPY ASSOCIATES, INC.
4714 Gettysburg Rd.
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
Michigan
This business is conducted by: A Corporation.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on N/A.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on September 21, 2021.
(ALM Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 2021)

SELECT PHYSICAL THERAPY FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 288927
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Select Physical Therapy, located at 1860 El Camino Real, Suite 201, Burlingame, CA 94010, San Mateo County; Mailing address: 4714 Gettysburg Rd., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055.
Registered owner(s):
PHYSIOTHERAPY ASSOCIATES, INC.
4714 Gettysburg Rd.
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
Michigan
This business is conducted by: A Corporation.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on N/A.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on September 21, 2021.
(ALM Oct. 1, 8, 15, 22, 2021)

BOTTLETREE CULTURE FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 288861
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
BottleTree Culture, located at 321 Bell Street, East Palo Alto, CA 94303, San Mateo County; Mailing address: P.O. Box 50713, East Palo Alto, CA 94303.
Registered owner(s):
MUISI-KONGO MALONGA
321 Bell Street
East Palo Alto, CA 94303
This business is conducted by: An Individual.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on January 1, 2018.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on September 14, 2021.
(ALM Oct. 8, 15, 22, 29, 2021)

LEONE ADVERTISING FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 289159
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Leone Advertising, located at 2024 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
LAUREL LEONE
2024 Santa Cruz Ave.
Menlo Park, CA 94025
This business is conducted by: An Individual.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 9/1/93.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on October 8, 2021.
(ALM Oct. 22, 29; Nov. 5, 12, 2021)

Call 650-223-6578 for assistance with your legal advertising needs.

ZUCKERBERG

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make Facebook and Instagram safer but won't make the necessary changes."

In response, Zuckerberg took to Facebook to argue that his company has taken steps to consider its users' well-being, such as an algorithm adjustment that pushes fewer viral videos and more content from friends and family, and claimed Haugen mischaracterized the company's intentions.

"It's disheartening to see that work taken out of context and used to construct a false narrative that we don't care," Zuckerberg wrote.

This is far from the first time Facebook has had to parry with calls for more regulations. In the past few years, the company was

criticized for stoking divisions in democracy amidst the 2020 presidential election, impacting youth's mental health, spreading COVID-19 misinformation and even inciting genocide in Myanmar.

Many people who heavily rely on Facebook for their work or to keep in touch with friends and family, but are also critical of the platform, are often stuck at an impasse on how to effectively protest against a social media giant with nearly 3 billion users.

"I'd love to delete Facebook," said Debi Rose, 61, a protester from San Mateo who manages several groups on the social media platform. "But I just can't. I have too much responsibilities on it."

Calling for Zuckerberg to step down as CEO is also a monumental challenge in

itself. Rosenberg recognized that Zuckerberg has greater voting power at the shareholders' table, which is why she believes users need to coalesce and apply the pressure for change. Global Exchange and Media Alliance recently formed the Facebook Users Union under the belief that users are essentially stakeholders in the platform and thus should have a say in the decisions made by the company, Rosenberg said.

"We understand that technically the board cannot fire Zuckerberg because of the stock arrangement," she said. "However, that doesn't mean that he can't be pressured or forced to step down. And we hope to start that conversation." ■

Email Editorial Assistant Lloyd Lee at llee@pawekly.com.

MEETING

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ally, someone from Sloan Sakai Yeung & Wong, the law firm the city uses for personnel matters, would be there but instead, the meeting was attended by a representative from the city attorney's firm, Burke, Williams & Sorensen, which doesn't represent the city in labor negotiations and complex personnel matters.

Because of that, Combs said he initially planned to not participate in the closed session meeting.

"It is reckless and exposes the city to many risks for us to convene under the auspices of a personnel issue with counsel that is not the counsel that has been stipulated as the personnel counsel for the city," he told

the other council members before the meeting began.

"The behavior over the past couple of days has amounted to some sort of 'House of Cards' amateur hour," he added.

However, he later told The Almanac that he eventually did decide to join the meeting out of concern for the individuals he represents on the City Council.

While there are legal limitations on what can be disclosed from a closed session, Combs said that after the meeting that there was a maneuver made, and it failed.

Furthermore, he felt that the matter brought up in the closed



Councilwoman Jen Wolosin

session discussion did not, in his estimation, validate the lead-up to the meeting, he said.

Combs said that Wolosin's actions had created uncertainty for city staff, the city manager and the community and said he believed that she should apologize to residents, city staff and the city manager.

Her actions, he said, led some individuals to suspect that "there was some major impropriety that had happened or was happening, which was not the case."

"This is what corruption looks like," he said.

In a statement, Wolosin told The Almanac, "Nothing I did was in any way unethical or illegal. I will continue to advocate for equitable and sustainable transportation, housing and climate solutions. I hope we can work together on these issues for our beloved city."

"The city does real things," Combs said. "It provides public safety. It provides water and transportation infrastructure. The city is not the machinations of council. Councilmember Wolosin has lost that perspective."

She "should be embarrassed by her actions ... She owes the residents an apology," he added. ■

Email Staff Writer Kate Bradshaw at kbradshaw@almanacnews.com.

Employment

DeLeon Realty, Inc.

DeLeon Realty, Inc. is an innovative, top-tier real estate company in Silicon Valley. We dedicate ourselves to reinventing the next generation of real estate where experience, education, professionalism, and a genuine commitment to our client's best interest take center stage. We offer competitive pay, great benefits, and perks, with a high-energy environment and lots of room for both personal and professional growth.

We are looking for the following individuals to join our company:

- Transaction / Real Estate Coordinator
- Executive/Administrative Assistant in Real Estate
- Disclosure Coordinator

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To place an ad or get a quote, contact Kevin Legarda at 650.223.6597 or email digitalads@pawekly.com.

express

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

continued from page 6

to 5 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 5, and 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Saturday, Nov. 6, to raise funds to support library programs and events. The event will offer books for adults and children, CDs, DVDs and collectibles, with most items priced at \$1 or \$2. The library is located at 800 Alma St. in Menlo Park.

— *Kate Bradshaw*

Las Lomitas Elementary collecting breakfast items for donation

Las Lomitas Elementary School is collecting breakfast items like cereal, granola, pancake and waffle mixes, syrup, jam, jelly, honey, cocoa mix, instant coffee and creamer for the Samaritan House between Nov. 2 and 17.

— *Angela Swartz*

The Samaritan House, with locations in San Mateo and East Palo Alto, serves 25,000 individuals in need in San Mateo County.

Collection bins will be located at the front office, 299 Alameda de las Pulgas in Atherton.

COVID-19 vaccine clinic planned at Las Lomitas Elementary

Pending FDA approval for the COVID-19 vaccine for children ages 5 through 11, Las Lomitas Elementary will host a vaccine clinic in Cano Hall at Las Lomitas Elementary School on Wednesday, Nov. 10, from 11:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Flu shots and Pfizer COVID-19 booster shots will also be available during the clinic.

Additional information will be shared when it becomes available.

TUTOR

continued from page 9

April for a total of 52 charges for committing alleged lewd acts on 16 girls. He remains in jail without bail, according to court documents.

The incidents spanned nearly two decades, from 2002 to 2019, and the girls were as young as 12 years old, according to the second amended complaint. It adds three new charges of a lewd and lascivious act on a child age 14 or 15 for alleged acts on another girl, raising the total number of girls to 17. The acts

against the 17th girl allegedly occurred between Sept. 1, 2012, and April 14, 2014, according to the complaint.

The second amended complaint includes 45 counts of lewd or lascivious acts on a 14- or 15-year-old child with the defendant being 10 or more years older than the victim; and 10 counts of lewd acts on a child under 14 with no force used. Some of the counts carry sentences of 25 years to life in prison. If convicted, Hodes, 75, would likely spend the rest of his life in custody.

Hodes operated Peninsula

Tutoring Service from his Manuela Avenue home since 1970, teaching students mathematics at the primary and secondary grade levels and the university level, according to his LinkedIn profile, which has been taken down since initial charges were issued last year.

He was arrested by Palo Alto police on Aug. 25, 2020, after two women who were former students discussed their experiences in Hodes' home and came forward. ■

Email Staff Writer Sue Dremann at sdremann@paweekly.com.

PUBLIC NOTICE

AT&T Mobility, LLC is proposing to modify an existing wireless telecommunications facility on an existing wood pole located at 100 Ansel Lane (37.413830, -122.1932), Menlo Park, San Mateo County, CA. The modifications will consist of the collocation of antennas at approximately 28 feet above ground level (measured to the top of the antennas) on the 42-foot-tall utility pole. Any interested party wishing to submit comments regarding the potential effects the proposed facility may have on any historic property may do so by sending such comments to: Project 6121007556 - MH EBI Consulting, 6876 Susquehanna Trail South, York, PA 17403, or via telephone at (785) 760-5938.



Las Lomitas Elementary School District Bond Oversight Committee

The District is currently searching for members of the Las Lomitas Elementary School District Community to serve on a Citizens' Oversight Committee for Bond Measures to fulfill the criteria of:

- ***One (1) member who shall be active in a senior citizens' organization***
- ***One (1) member of the community at large***

Individuals interested in being appointed to the Bond Oversight Committee can access application information online at www.llesd.org, by emailing mchan@llesd.org or calling 650-854-6311.

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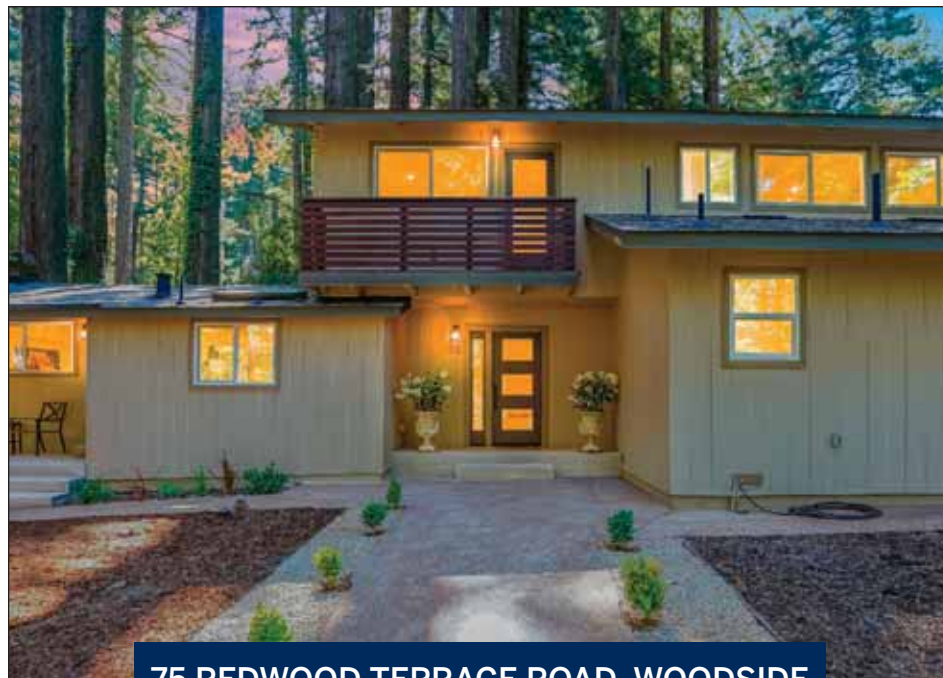
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Viewpoint

IDEAS, THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS ABOUT LOCAL ISSUES

Yes on Woodside's Measure A

Much has been said in small towns around the Peninsula — Woodside among them — about the importance of preserving rural character.

Planning projects in Woodside are analyzed to ensure compatibility with the town's rural landscape. The town's general plan emphasizes retaining that rural character. Propose a change in town and, however small or large it may seem, the concept of how and whether it would fit in with Woodside's rural charm will be invoked.

Which brings us to Measure A, an initiative on the Nov. 2 ballot that would potentially allow for more outdoor community dining and gathering spaces by amending existing zoning restrictions on some parcels in the center of town.

The measure, which needs a simple majority in favor to pass, would allow the property behind Cañada Corners to potentially be outfitted with surface parking to accommodate permanent outdoor dining, trails and play structures, all of which are now prohibited. It would also allow for the possible construction of a public building — an amphitheater or gazebo — for community events in the residentially zoned Town Center area on a portion of a 1.65-acre plot called Village Hill. Measure J, approved by Woodside voters in 1988, prohibited development of commercial or office space on a then vacant, town-owned parcel near where Town Hall is now located. It also required residential properties within and adjoining Town Center to remain in residential use unless commercial parking on those properties had been permitted prior to June 1, 1988.

Measure 1, approved by voters the following year, created an exception to Measure J's requirement that residential parcels in Town Center remain in residential use. Upon its approval by the voters, residentially zoned parcels in the Woodside Road Whiskey Hill Road Parking Assessment District were authorized to provide access,

parking and open space, so long as at least 50% of the residential parcels were maintained in open space. Approval of Measure 1 allowed the town to construct Town Hall parking and access improvements which now serve Town Hall, commercial businesses in the Town Center and the public.

The passage of ballot measures J and 1 made it so only voters can overturn rules limiting future development on these sites.

Woodside residents Alex Tauber and Peter Bailey, authors of Measure A, introduced the initiative in light of the popularity of outdoor dining during the COVID-19 pandemic. The Woodside Town Council's state of emergency ordinance allows the town to waive restaurants' parking requirements, but when the emergency declaration ends, the town will have to enforce the parking requirements as currently outlined.

Measure A, however, would enable the potential addition of permanent outdoor dining behind Cañada Corners, along with other community benefits like trails, play structures and a public amphitheater or gazebo. Potential is the key word here: The passage of Measure A would only allow for a continued discussion about these proposals, which would happen in public meetings of town committees or the council. It will enable reports and designs and schematics — further analysis of the properties and proposed changes. Approval of the measure doesn't guarantee any physical changes will be implemented; therefore, one can vote in favor of the initiative while also feeling that more aspects of the proposal need to be fleshed out — because they do.

More than 30 years have passed since residents approved measures J and 1. Inevitably, people have come and gone from Woodside, and some longtime residents who voted on the initiatives that limited

development of these parcels in the late '80s may have since changed their minds. The Almanac recommends a yes vote on Measure A to allow for continued conversation and more formal plans to be analyzed by the community.

The benefits of permanent outdoor dining, play structures, a public gazebo and trails for the community speak for themselves. These are staples of many communities, and outdoor gathering areas have only become more essential since the onset of the pandemic. Outdoor dining in particular has been vital for the survival of many eateries and will continue to serve as an asset for these restaurants and their patrons as the pandemic continues and beyond.

Opponents have painted a picture of Woodside as a rustic hamlet that would become overrun with nonresidents flocking to the center of town for rock concerts and

outdoor dining, resulting in a significant uptick in traffic and noise. But the passage of Measure A would enable the continued analysis and conversation around community gathering spaces and the uses of these properties, which would generate environmental impact reports investigating potential traffic, noise and other factors that could play into land use changes. The measure's authors, Bailey and Tauber, have also stated that they determined after speaking with community stakeholders that Woodside could use an open space for groups to meet, and that they "don't want any lights or speakers," but rather "something that fits into the environment." Bailey and Tauber have also maintained that any development would be paid for by the property owner, not the town or Woodside residents.

Adding surface parking and amenities like a play structure and permanent tables

and chairs for dining would be additions that could be enjoyed by anyone, but would mainly appeal to residents. The amphitheater — which measure proponents envision would be for the use of Woodsiders — isn't going to be a state-of-the-art concert hall that seats 30,000 people. This project wouldn't be the type to attract attention from a large number of people who aren't already in town on a frequent basis.

The argument from opponents that residents shouldn't support this measure because expanded use of the town's center could benefit "outsiders" and upset Woodside's rural character perpetuates the reputation of exclusivity that wealthy, primarily white enclaves like Woodside have maintained for decades, in part through now prohibited practices like restrictive covenants that prevented non-Caucasians from buying houses in areas of the Peninsula. This anti-resident sentiment is not only foolhardy — visitors help any town's economy, and many residents were visitors before they settled in Woodside — it's blatantly discriminatory. It would be worthwhile for community members to consider what exactly upholding the town's rural character means to them, and how Woodside's historic dedication to that concept may have perpetuated its lack of economic or ethnic diversity — but that's an editorial for another day.

Resistance to change is understandable, but thinking change can be controlled by a simple ballot measure is unrealistic. Change is inevitable, and occurs in Woodside every day in innumerable ways. Many controversial changes that have been adopted by local municipalities over the years — the addition of sidewalks, for example — have been considered moves to the mainstream for the most public benefit. Continuing the conversation about possible improved public amenities in the center of Woodside will ultimately benefit the community. Vote yes on Measure A.

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

LETTERS

Our readers write

Reasons to vote no on Woodside Measure A

I believe I am qualified to give an informed opinion on Measure A.

My family and I have been living in Woodside for close to 50 years. I served on the Planning Commission. I helped update the town's general plan. After the terrible Oakland Hills fire 30 years ago, Mayor Jeanne Dickey asked me to head up a committee to make recommendations to the Town Council on how Woodside could protect itself from such a catastrophe. I coached Little League baseball and softball. My wife Amalia was voted Woodside Citizen of the Year in 1984.

It is our considered opinion that what Measure A proposes to do to the town

of Woodside is exactly what the town has never wanted. Here are three powerful reasons to vote no:

■ The amphitheater is a terrible idea for innumerable reasons. Two of the most salient are:

We already have a first-rate amphitheater in the beautiful redwood grove behind the school. There are lots of non-school activities on school grounds, like Little League baseball/softball and AYSO soccer, on the basketball courts, May Day activities, etc. Spending town funds to build another amphitheater — when there are so many places where those funds could be put to very good use — would be fiscally irresponsible (Editor's note: The authors of the measure, Alex Tauber and Peter Bailey, have stated that any development stemming from the passage of Measure A would be paid for by the property owner, not the town or residents.) And funds for day-to-day maintenance costs? For security?

While it sounds idyllic to have a "gathering place" for Woodsiders in the center of our town, the fact is events would needlessly attract a lot more gathering outsiders, with all the traffic congestion, parking problems, and noise pollution that necessarily would come with the crowds. And toilets to accommodate them? Do we really want all this?

■ On adding greater restaurant seating capacity, I am totally sympathetic to the plight of the restaurants during the pandemic, and I support anything temporary — like outdoor seating — that helps them. But it would be a very serious mistake to convert this emergency solution into a permanent change that would work to the long-term detriment of the town's residents — and, by the way, also to the owners of the other convenient places of business in the center (the hair salon, the cleaners, the florist) whose customers would be hard put to find a parking space. Permanent

outside seating would create traffic, parking, and other problems Woodsiders should not have to put up with.

Over the years the town has actively discouraged greater restaurant seating. Indeed, a restaurant was proposed for Village Hill, where the bronze statues of Spring and her foal Sprite now serenely gaze down on us as we drive or bike by. The arguments for the restaurant were essentially the same as what we're hearing now for permanent outdoor seating, but were soundly defeated. Happy ending: Village Hill was then voted into Woodside open space for all of us to visually enjoy.

■ Conflating in a single vote such totally different proposals as permanent outdoor dining and an amphitheater makes absolutely no sense at all. The only thing they have in common is that they are both very bad ideas for the Woodside residents.

F. Harvey Popell
Olive Hill Lane, Woodside

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SCREEN SHARING



UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION FILM FESTIVAL BRINGS AUDIENCES BACK TO THE THEATER



Films featured at the United Nations Association Film Festival include, clockwise from top left, “Zero Gravity,” “Youth V. Gov,” “In Case of Emergency” and “To the Street (A la Calle).” “Youth V. Gov” photo by Robin Loznak; all other photos courtesy UNAFF.

By Heather Zimmerman

The United Nations Association Film Festival (UNAFF) is returning to the big screen after playing exclusively on the smallest screens — computers, tablets and phones — for its 2020 edition.

The documentary film festival, which made a pandemic pivot to an all-virtual format last year, is back Oct. 21-31 in theaters for 11 days of screenings of 60 films at venues in Palo Alto, East Palo Alto and the Stanford University campus. San Francisco’s Roxie Theater also hosts an evening of screenings.

The films vary in length from shorts to feature length, making it easy to take in a session of as many as three or four films in an afternoon or evening. Over 30 countries are represented in this year’s schedule of films, including Cuba, Syria, Iraq, Iran and Afghanistan.

With 24 years under its belt, UNAFF is the oldest documentary film festival in the United States, said founder and Executive Director Jasmina Bojic, a Stanford University educator. Bojic is also the director of Stanford Arts’ Camera as Witness program, which uses documentary film as an educational tool to help illuminate a number of important topics, such as the environment and human rights — a role which has complemented her work with the festival.

“When I founded the festival, I was really wanting to have an opportunity for our community to be educated about human rights issues particularly,” Bojic said, noting that the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations in 1948 informed the festival’s mission, though the event is not affiliated with the United Nations.

UNAFF remains its own entity, and although it has weathered the most recent economic threat brought by the pandemic, like all nonprofits, it needs continuing support, Bojic said.

“We are an independent nonprofit organization, and we need support from our community in order to continue with it.”

She said her longtime dream is to create a Camera as Witness Institute — a facility that would be a home for documentary film and learning. Such an institute is a much longer term pursuit.

For the moment, with the return to in-person, indoor screenings, Bojic underscored the stringent public health rules that will be in place. All in attendance are required to wear masks and must have proof of vaccination or a

negative test result from no longer than 48 hours prior.

“The first and the most important rule is safety,” she said. But Bojic was effusive about once again presenting films to audiences in the theater. The festival aims to create a sense of community among filmmakers, speakers and audiences, she said, which is bolstered by the in-person experience.

“It’s not just being at a film festival, coming to see a film and then you’re out,” Bojic said, emphasizing the festival’s six free panel discussions that explore the larger issues covered by some of the featured documentaries, including criminal justice reform, crossing borders, youth action for climate, and censorship and the press. Panels will have filmmakers as well as local subject matter experts, such as government officials or members of the Peninsula media, depending on the topic.

“Moving Forward” is the theme of the 2021 festival — a concept that might sound like it’s happily heralding a return to theaters after the pandemic lockdown, but there’s more to the idea, according to Bojic, who said that the slate of 60 films and half-dozen panels offers an opportunity to delve into pressing political, economic and health issues of our day and explore how we can go forward together. And with the pairing of documentaries and discussions, festivalgoers can get a more informed picture of world and national events.

“The best way to move forward is having knowledge about a situation — what’s happening in the world. You get the idea of what’s happening in Afghanistan, what’s happening in China, what’s happening in the Middle East, or what’s happening in our country,” she said.

The United States’ two decades of war in Afghanistan are the subject of “Ghosts of Afghanistan,” one of a trio of films opening the festival on Oct. 21 at Palo Alto’s Mitchell Park Community Center, along with “Hunger Ward,” which examines the efforts of health care workers to battle starvation among children as war wears on in Yemen, and “Barbara Lee: Speaking Truth to Power,” about Bay Area Rep. Barbara Lee, who cast the lone dissenting vote in Congress against authorizing the broad use of military force following the Sept. 11 attacks. The film chronicles Lee’s longtime work for human rights.

The festival will honor Lee and musician and activist Harry Belafonte with its Visionary Award. A special message from Lee will accompany the screening of “Speaking Truth to Power.” The Visionary Award ceremony takes place Oct. 31, with Belafonte’s daughter, Gina Belafonte, on hand to accept the award for her father.

Some other festival highlights include, on Oct. 23, “Resurrection! Airtro Moreira & the Preservation Hall Jazz Band,” by Bay Area filmmaker Dale Djerassi, which captures a meeting of musical legends: renowned Brazilian percussionist Airtro Moreira playing together with New Orleans’ Preservation Hall Jazz Band on Mardi Gras morning.

Moreira’s daughter, jazz singer Diana Purim, and her husband, hip-hop artist Krishna Booker, will perform after the screening.

Also on Oct. 23, local filmmaker Ines Hofmann Kanna will be on hand for a screening of “United States vs. Reality Winner,” about National Security Agency contractor Reality Winner, who disclosed a document about Russian election interference to the media.

In celebration of United Nations Day on Oct. 24, the festival hosts a screening for young audiences of the film “Zero Gravity,” which follows San Jose middle school students as they compete in a nationwide tournament to code satellites aboard the International Space Station.

The power of young people coming together is also highlighted in a screening of “Youth V. Gov,” about 21 youth climate activists ages 8 to 19 who filed suit against the United States government for violating their constitutional rights in creating and failing to mitigate the climate crisis.

The film will be followed by a panel discussion with youth climate activists, presented in partnership with Anamatangi Polynesian Voices, a nonprofit focusing on environmental justice for the underrepresented Pacific Islander community. The film and panel will be presented Oct. 27 at Cooley Landing in East Palo Alto.

The festival’s closing night, which takes place Oct. 31 in Palo Alto, includes screenings of “In Case of Emergency,” which looks at the key role of emergency rooms and nurses in U.S. health care, and “To the Street (A la Calle),” a look at political activists in Venezuela. The final film to be screened will be “Solutions,” which chronicles a 10-day retreat by some of the world’s leading scientists and experts in fields ranging from the environment to technology, democracy to social media, who come together to discuss how to secure humanity’s future. Danish director Pernille Rose Grønkvær will be on hand for a Q&A about the film.

For more information and a full schedule of screenings, visit unaff.org.

Email Arts & Entertainment Editor Heather Zimmerman at hzimmerman@almanacnews.com.



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Food & Drink

Homebrews to home base

Brewing With Brothas aims to open first microbrewery in East Palo Alto

By Sara Hayden

During his birthday camping trip, Denzel Jackson woke up at 5 a.m. and spent the morning fishing with RiSean “Bookie” Tinsley. When they returned to shore and stepped off the boat, the craft beer connoisseurs brewed up an idea.

“We were having a beer, and talking about actually making our own,” Jackson said. About a month later, the two purchased a homebrew kit at MoreBeer in Los Altos. They started with extract brewing, then went on to all-grain brewing. Jackson recalls, “It kicked off from there.”

With that, the friends co-founded Brewing With Brothas. Their goal is to launch the first microbrewery in their East Palo Alto hometown, where they were born and raised.

“We want a place for our community to come and chill, have a good time and have a quality pint to drink,” Tinsley said.

Since their founding almost two years ago, Brewing With Brothas has received local and national recognition.

Out of 18 brews, theirs took first prize at the Taplands homebrew competition out of Santa Clara in December 2020. It was canned and showcased at the taproom. Then, “It just never stopped.”

This year, Brewing With Brothas was among the 80 Black-owned breweries on the books in the U.S. and Central America sought out by brewer Rodg Little of Oak Park Brewery in Sacramento to participate in this year’s Brew Your Story project.

Earlier this month at Oak Park, participating brewers commemorated the 51st anniversary of Peoples Beer, founded by Theodore Mack, Sr., the first African American brewery owner, with the first annual Peoples Harvest Time Jubilee. As part of the event, Brewing With Brothas brewed their first commercial size batch of their Black Belgian Tripel — or BB3.

Since they started developing it, BB3 has become Brewing With Brothas’ first flagship beer. With that one, “there’s just something that clicked,” Tinsley said.

The Belgian-style beer is “phenomenal,” said Little, who’s been part of Sacramento’s craft brewing scene since it began. “I think they probably created a new style.”

To make BB3, Brewing With Brothas started with a yeast-driven Belgian base with clove and banana esters. They added dark malts, imparting caramel and roasty characteristics. At 8.6% ABV, BB3 has notes of chocolate, toffee and clove. The flavor is smooth and rich, light and savory, and it’s got a dry finish.

“When you say ‘dark beer,’ a lot of people think of Guinness,” Tinsley said. He enjoys the dry stout, he said, but, “There’s so much more to dark beers. That’s something we want to highlight. One of our mottos is, ‘Make dark beer great again.’”

Developing BB3 and all their other brews is a result of love and countless hours brewing. Every weekend, Jackson and Tinsley can be found perfecting their recipes, experimenting with something new and different just about every month.

They’ve made mouthwatering Peach Cobbler Cream Ale (“just like Mom used to make”), Banana Milkshake IPA made with Mosaic, Sabro and Simcoe hops (“think about banana milkshake but not as thick”) and a Blackberry Cheesecake Cream Ale.

They’ve created a Zel-Hefe series, sharing their version of Hefeweizen. They’ve paid tribute to other brews, with their Brotha Pliny giving a nod to Russian River’s Pliny the Elder. They’ve also taken inspiration from Gordon Biersch — the brewery where Tinsley said he first tasted beer that he actually liked.

Tinsley was pursuing his master’s degree in social work in Hawaii when he encountered it. “The dormitory was right below a Gordon Biersch brewery. That’s where my love of craft beer started,” Tinsley said. He chuckles. “Before then ... I had no idea about how beer could actually taste good.”

Meanwhile, Jackson’s dad introduced him to beer. “When I had my first beer, I didn’t really like beer.” Jackson wanted to change perceptions around it.



Denzel Jackson strains hops out of beer as it drains into a fermenter in East Palo Alto on Oct. 17.



Magali Gauthier

Brewing With Brothas co-founder Denzel Jackson grinds grains while co-founder RiSean “Bookie” Tinsley pours more into the mill outside Tinsley’s home in East Palo Alto.

“The conversation about beer is maybe not as high esteemed as folks talking about wine. It’s just a conversation that maybe hasn’t been had. There’s complexities if you look for them.”

Jackson and Tinsley set out to find those nuances. When Tinsley finished his studies and returned home to California, he reached out to Jackson, who had a penchant for quality food and drink.

“I asked him, ‘Where’s the best place to get a good beer around here?’” Tinsley said. “He started to name off some restaurants, and I was like, ‘Those are cool and all, but where are the craft

breweries at, the places where people make their own beer?’”

They ventured out to different breweries, like Barebottle Brewing Company in Santa Clara and Freewheel Brewing Company in Redwood City. “But I quickly realized there were no breweries around my area — East Palo Alto, Palo Alto,” Tinsley said. There was the Tap Room on University Avenue, but that closed.

Around that time, Tinsley had seen a social media post about Celeste Beatty, who’s breaking barriers as the founder, owner and brewer of Harlem Brewing Company at a time when



Magali Gauthier

RiSean Tinsley measures the alcohol level in the beer he has brewed. Tinsley and Jackson are looking to open the first microbrewery in East Palo Alto.

LEHUA GREENMAN



“Some of us think holding on makes us strong, but sometimes it is letting go.”

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less than 1% of breweries are Black-owned.

“It inspired me to say, ‘Hey, why can’t we do this?’” Tinsley said.

Starting a business was something that Tinsley had long had in mind. “I come from a lineage of entrepreneurs. My grandfather and his brother started a car dealership some years back called Tinsley Buick. Just from then on, my grandfather and my family have always strived to make sure we have some kind of equity just to keep the family afloat, and keep the next generation going, and have something to stand on.”

Creating a craft beer taproom where they grew up presents a special opportunity.

“We want to bring that here,” Jackson said. “This is my hometown. Doing something here for my home, with all the changes that are being made, it would be nice to make a positive change for our folks ... Understanding craft beer and sharing craft beer with our community, it’s a new frontier for us.”

Along the way, they’ve found a supportive community. Oakland’s Hella Coastal is one of the teams that Brewing With Brothas has been learning from.

“They’d been through a lot of things that we were going to

encounter. They started showing us the ways for how they went through things,” Jackson said. “It’s been a crazy learning curve. The people we’ve met have helped us substantially ... They’ve been so inviting. They’ve been open books in terms of what they’ve been through, how they got through it, what ideas and ways to move forward ... It’s just a really collaborative industry. You’d be surprised the people you meet. It’s a good place to be.”

Hella Coastal encouraged Brewing With Brothas to work with other craft beer brewers. They introduced them to Humble Sea Brewing Company in Pacifica, and Brewing With Brothas pursued their own collaboration.

“In our opinion, they’re one of our top three breweries in California — the nation really,” Tinsley said. “It was definitely a dream.”

On Oct. 2, Brewing With Brothas and Humble Sea released Sea Brothas, a double dry-hopped foggy IPA. It’s their take on a hazy IPA, the “foggy” inspiration suitable for the coastal area where it was born.

Sea Brothas reflects both breweries in name, art and style. It was brewed with a touch of honey malt, hopped

with Citra and Motueka and a bit of Sabroe sprinkled in at the end. The result is a beer with a creamy mouth feel, full body and a rounded finish with notes of strawberry, piña colada and pineapple.

“The beer in particular turned out awesome,” said Lee DeGraw, Humble Sea’s head of marketing. “We feel really lucky to know those guys and work with them and share knowledge.”

Now, you can find Brewing With Brothas brews at Humble Sea Brewing Co. and Oak Park Brewing Co., as well as wherever those breweries distribute. You can also reach out to Brewing With Brothas on Instagram (@brewing.with.brothas). “If you’re interested, don’t be shy,” Jackson said.

As their beers take flight across Northern California, their vision remains the same: creating a space to connect over quality pints in East Palo Alto. They envision a taproom where people can relax and do yoga, and that showcases local artists’ work in music and spoken word.

“We love the craft beer atmosphere as it is. Whenever you go to a brewery, it’s completely different from a bar or a club or anything like that. It’s so much more relaxed, so much more



Magali Gauthier

RiSean “Bookie” Tinsley, left, and Denzel Jackson hold cans of Sea Brothas and BB3 at home in East Palo Alto.

open, so much more intimate,” Tinsley said. “It’s a place where people can actually converse with each other.”

Once they find a brick-and-mortar location in East Palo Alto, they want to capture some of the magic of their family homes that they experienced growing up.

“Both of our homes over the years have been like home base for everybody in the neighborhood” Tinsley said. “That’s what we want to do with our brewery. We want to have a place where good people can come and meet, break down

barriers and have a good time to chill and hang out.”

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