

The Almanac

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

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COVID-19 levels are falling in local schools, but case rates are still far higher than in 2021

By Angela Swartz

The uptick in COVID-19 cases at local schools that began last month is subsiding, but case numbers have yet to drop down to the levels seen during the fall semester, according to school administrators.

The 2,700-student Menlo Park City School District (MPCSD) saw about 2.5 cases per week on average from its initial reopening in fall 2020 until just before this school year's winter break, said Superintendent Erik Burmeister. Flash forward to the week of Jan. 10 and the district saw 88 cases in a week. The following week, it reported 88 cases again.

"As we move into February, internal MPCSD data indicate that the omicron surge is on its way down, at least among school staff and students," he said in a statement, noting school attendance rates are back up to normal, about 95%, and

reported COVID-19 cases are trending downward from the peak of mid-January. "However, we still are seeing an elevated case rate compared to the fall. ... At 66 cases last week, there is still a long way to go to return to those levels."

The district board will consider loosening mask restrictions at a Feb. 10 meeting, according to Burmeister.

Cases are also in decline in the roughly 10,200-student Sequoia Union High School District, which was hit hard by the surge. There were just six cases the week in December that students headed off to winter break. A little over two weeks later, it started off the semester with a staggering 710 in January. There were 237 cases reported last week.

Menlo-Atherton High School reported 53 cases last week. TIDE Academy had 12. Woodside High School had 42 cases.

See **SCHOOLS**, page 17



Magali Gauthier

Woodside High School students work on their assignments in an audio production class on Feb. 1. The high school district saw record numbers of COVID-19 cases in early January, but case numbers are trending down.

Woodside freezes SB 9 housing projects, citing exemption for mountain lion habitats

By Angela Swartz

Mountain lions and housing policy aren't often uttered in the same sentence, but that was the case last week in Woodside.

On Jan. 25, the town put an indefinite hold on all housing projects permitted under Senate Bill 9, California's new split-lot law, according to Town Manager Kevin Bryant. The state legislation took effect last month and allows homeowners to split single-family lots and construct up to four residential units.

Town officials found a clause in the law that prohibits

development in areas identified as habitats for protected species. Mountain lions are a protected species because they are a candidate for the California Endangered Species Act and Woodside, in "its entirety" is a mountain lion habitat, according to a Jan. 27 memo from Town Planning Director Jackie Young. The Fish and Game Commission planned to release a decision on the animals' status in November, but the agency has



Dick Brown

yet to make that determination.

On Jan. 11, the Town Council passed an ordinance that limits units allowed under SB 9 unit to 800 square feet. It also prohibited basements under SB 9 and excluded development in areas at high risk of wildfires.

There were no applications submitted to the town under SB 9 before housing projects were halted, according to Bryant.

When asked if critics would argue invoking the clause is a ploy to avoid having to build more housing, Mayor Dick Brown said that it's "not the Woodside way" to value housing over preserving the environment.

"We love animals," he said. "Every house that's built is one more acre taken away from (mountain lions') habitat. Where are they going to go? Pretty soon we'll have nothing but asphalt and no animals or birds."

Brown also noted that during last week's meeting, the council created a committee to look into alternative housing approaches besides SB 9.

"We're very interested in creating more housing alternatives; we're not trying to shut anything down," he said. "We just don't want to have somebody in Sacramento saying we have to put a multistory high-rise in a rural

community."

Some Woodside officials have vocally opposed state housing mandates. In 2020, the Town Council voted 4-3 to adopt a resolution stating the town felt strongly that state housing legislation deprives towns of their abilities to meet the needs of their communities. Then-Mayor Brian Dombkowski, and then-Mayor Pro Tem Brown, John Carvell and Chris Shaw voted for the resolution.

Council members Ned Fluet, Jenn Wall and Sean Scott voted against it. Scott supported the resolution, but said he wanted

See **HOUSING PROJECTS**, page 10

INSIDE

ARTSCENE 20 | FOOD & DRINK 22

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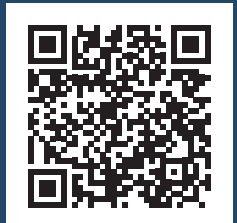
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Local News

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Courtesy San Jose Police Department

San Jose police recovered this homemade ghost gun after an alleged carjacker opened fire on police officers on Jan. 19.

Unregistered ghost guns are a growing concern

DIY kits make it cheap and easy for people to get around firearm restrictions

By Leah Worthington and Sue Dremann

Exactly how many ghost guns are circulating in the Bay Area is unknown, but an informal survey of Peninsula law enforcement agencies reveals a noticeable rise: In South San Francisco, more than a fourth of the firearms police recovered in 2021 were

Editor's note: This is the second story in a two-part investigative series. Part one ran in last week's issue of The Almanac and can be read online in its entirety at AlmanacNews.com.

ghost guns. And even in relatively quiet Palo Alto, police confiscated two ghost guns

during vehicle stops for traffic violations last year.

Ghost guns, or privately made firearms, are hand built with DIY kits and lack a serial number, making them impossible to trace. Their proliferation in criminal activity has been a growing problem for local law enforcement agencies.

See **GHOST GUNS**, page 18

Menlo Park seeks to end the blare of train horns

Study of 'quiet zone' on Caltrain line moves forward

By Kate Bradshaw

Menlo Park is officially exploring what it would take to establish a "quiet zone" along a section of the Caltrain corridor.

On Jan. 25, the City Council voted unanimously on plans to seek contractor bids to study the feasibility of creating a Caltrain horn-free zone along the rail line bisecting Menlo Park, within and even extending slightly beyond the city limits.

The idea behind a quiet zone along the Caltrain rail line is to install safety improvements enabling train operators to lay off the horns at each intersection where the rail line crosses city streets. Without extra safety measures, the trains are required to sound their horns.

In Menlo Park there are four such crossings: Ravenswood, Oak Grove, Glenwood and Encinal avenues. In addition, the Palo Alto Avenue crossing just south of the Menlo Park border is close enough to trigger Caltrain horn blasts in the city as it crosses into Palo Alto.

The city wants a consultant to figure out how much more it would cost to evaluate the Palo Alto Avenue crossing in the feasibility study, although if it moved forward, it would likely be treated as its own quiet zone, according to a staff report.

Because all four of Menlo Park's

rail crossings are so close together, and Caltrain sounds its horn four times every time it is a quarter-mile from its next crossing, the horn can blast up to 16 times over a distance of only about 1.1 miles as each train passes through Menlo Park. And each blast can reach the maximum train horn volume of 110 decibels, according to staff.

Considering that, it's no wonder that residents have complained about the volume, frequency, duration and time frame of the horns for years. There's also been a notable uptick in complaints as residents who live near the train tracks have been increasingly trying to work and study at home during the COVID-19 pandemic. Some residents have pointed to neighboring Atherton's success in implementing the first quiet zone on the Caltrain corridor and called on city officials to establish a quiet zone in Menlo Park.

According to the Federal Rail Administration, there are a number of requirements that must be met to permit a quiet zone. Each crossing has to have gates, flashing lights and warning time devices; the zone must be at least a half-mile long; and it must not have a regular (non-quiet) crossing within a quarter of a mile of the first or last crossing of the zone, Associate Transportation Engineer Phong Vo told the City Council.

See **TRAINS**, page 14

How to access Meta Park, Menlo Park's newest public open space

The park is accessible by foot or bike, but limited parking poses a challenge for drivers

By Lloyd Lee

Meta, formerly Facebook, opened a 2.2-acre park on Jan. 29, along with a bike and pedestrian bridge that offers a new way for Belle Haven residents to access the Bedwell Bayfront Park and Bay Trail.

The park is open to the public from sunrise to 8 p.m. daily. But those who are making the trek by car may be disappointed to find that Meta Park does not have

designated parking lots.

"This park was designed for foot and bike access for the local community," Meta spokesperson Tracy Clayton said in an email. "We encourage people to walk and bike to enjoy this open space."

Visitors can access the park via 1 Facebook Way, at the entrance off Chilco Street near the now-closed Fire Station No. 77, Clayton said. They can also get to the park via the bridge. But getting

to the park by car poses more of a challenge.

Ada Chen Rekhi, a Menlo Park resident of about 10 years, drove to the park with her husband, 2-year-old toddler and dog before being turned away twice by security guards for trying to enter through Meta's Buildings 21 and 22. (The park is located between the two buildings.) For Chen Rekhi, the park is about a

See **META PARK**, page 15



Lloyd Lee

Meta, formerly known as Facebook, opened a new park available to the public daily from sunrise to 8 p.m.



NOTICE INVITING BIDS

TOWN OF ATHERTON, CA

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

2022 OVERLAY PROJECT

Removal and replacement of 2 inches of asphalt concrete pavement on Various Streets. Crack sealing and grind and replace approximately 5,000 square feet of asphalt to a 4-inch depth of pavement failures and placement of thermoplastic/paint striping. Some hand work around utility access-hole covers will be necessary.

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

SEALED BIDS will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 80 Fair Oaks Lane, Atherton, California 94027, until 1:30 p.m. Pacific Standard Time on February 22, 2022, at which time bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.

Bids must be for the entire work, and shall be submitted in sealed envelopes clearly marked: "Bid of (Contractor) for 2022 OVERLAY PROJECT", along with date and time of bid opening.



Las Lomitas Elementary School District Invitation for Bid Vended Meals for Child Nutrition Programs

Las Lomitas Elementary School District is soliciting bids for the provision of vended meals for the School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs. Bids will be accepted until Friday, March 18, 2022 at 1:00 PM at the District Office, located at 1011 Altschul Avenue, Menlo Park, California, 94025. Visit the district website at <https://llesd-ca.schoolloop.com/CBO> to view the full Bid document.

Clarifying questions may be directed to Mei Chan by emailing mchan@llesd.org or calling 650-854-6311 x14

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CRIME BRIEFS

Portola Valley man arrested for alleged sexual abuse of a minor

A Portola Valley man has been arrested for allegedly sexually assaulting a minor, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office said on Tuesday, Feb. 1.

Michael Traurig, 51, an equestrian coach for youth and adults in San Mateo County and, more recently, in Los Angeles County, was arrested in connection with an Oct. 21, 2021 investigation by sheriff's headquarters patrol deputies. They say that Traurig allegedly molested a 13-year-old in May 2019. The assault allegedly took place on the 3600 block of Sand Hill Road in unincorporated San Mateo County.

Investigators found Traurig was also charged with sexually assaulting an adult in Los Angeles County. He has also been mentioned in other sexual assault allegations but they have exceeded the statute of limitations, the sheriff's office said.

Traurig, a jumper/hunter, was temporarily suspended by the U.S. Center for SafeSport, a nonprofit organization that protects youth from emotional, physical and sexual abuse and misconduct, for allegations of misconduct, effective Oct. 19, 2021, according to the organization's Centralized Disciplinary Database and the U.S. Equestrian Federation. He was also issued a no-contact directive by the center.

On Jan. 26, sheriff's detectives obtained a no-bail felony warrant for Traurig's arrest on two counts of child molestation. Detectives located him in Los Angeles and arrested him on the warrant with the assistance of the Los Angeles Police Department and Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, they said.

Traurig was booked into county jail in Los Angeles and later transported to San Mateo County jail. He appeared in court on Jan. 31 and his bail was set at \$1 million.

An arrest is only an allegation, and the arrestee is considered innocent until proven guilty.

Because he is facing multiple allegations of sexual assault, there is concern that there may be other victims who have not yet come forward, police said. Anyone with information is encouraged to contact Det. C. Barker at 650-474-1243 or email cbarker@smcgov.org.

— Sue Dremann

Menlo Park resident who stabbed store clerk to begin substance abuse treatment

A Menlo Park man will begin a substance abuse program with Our Common Ground on Feb. 9, in accordance to a plea deal entered on Nov. 18 after stabbing a 7-Eleven store clerk almost two years ago.

On Aug. 9, 2020, Matthew Allen Bertolucci stabbed a store

See **CRIME BRIEFS**, page 15

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Antiques Roadshow coming to Filoli

The 2022 Antiques Roadshow will make a stop in Filoli, the historic Woodside estate, on Wednesday, June 22, and you can enter to win two free tickets to the event.

The popular TV show kicks off its 27th season on May 10 and will also make stops in Nashville, Tennessee; Santa Fe, New Mexico; Boise, Idaho; and Shelburne, Vermont.

The U.S.'s version of the Antiques Roadshow is put on by PBS. In each hour-long episode, auction house specialists and independent dealers offer free appraisals of antiques and collectibles — including family heirlooms, flea market finds and items kept in attics and basements, according to the show's website.

The ticket drawing will be conducted in April. After the drawing, on or about April 11, ticket winners will be notified if they were chosen.

Enter the drawing at pbs.org/wgbh/roadshow/tickets by March 21.

See **COMMUNITY BRIEFS**, page 16

Newsom seeks 'fast forward' path to zero-emission vehicles

Governor proposes \$6.1B in budget to address infrastructure, support for more affordable, clean vehicles

By Sue Dremann

Standing outside the Ford Greenfield Labs in Palo Alto on Jan. 26, Gov. Gavin Newsom spoke about his vision for fast forwarding the state's zero-emissions economy and climate goals.

Newsom's budget proposal, dubbed the California Blueprint, is proposing an additional \$6.1 billion to build electric-vehicle infrastructure and offer rebates for purchasing alternative vehicles to residents in the next few years. The proposal includes tax incentives for manufacturers.

The \$6.1 billion would increase the total in the climate budget to \$10 billion, which would specifically support electric-vehicle transformation, he said. Of that total, \$665 million would be set aside for direct rebates to low-income residents to replace gas-guzzling cars with alternative vehicles, he said.

The \$10 billion is part of a broader \$37.6 billion plan that Newsom's announced to address climate change in the coming years.

"Electric vehicles are one of the state's biggest exports," he said, standing amid the Stanford Research Park, where not only Ford but Tesla have set up business. Palo Alto and Silicon Valley are playing a direct role in developing electric vehicles and will be "a big part of the future."

Making such an investment is "imperative for the state in particular" to meet its climate goals. California is the first state to require all new vehicles to be alternatives to gasoline engines by 2035, he said.

More than 50% of the state's carbon dioxide emission comes from oil extraction and/or tailpipes, according to Newsom. The state can't be serious about addressing climate change without thinking about reducing vehicle emissions, he said.

The \$6.1 billion would help support more affordable, clean cars, trucks and buses and expand access to zero-emission vehicles and zero-emission vehicle infrastructure in low-income communities.

State Assembly member Marc Berman, whose district includes Menlo Park, said Silicon Valley is inextricably linked to these innovations and would lead the way.

Palo Alto Mayor Pat Burt noted that the city has been a leader in working to meet the



Magali Gauthier

Gov. Gavin Newsom discusses the state's zero emission and climate goals at a news conference outside of the Ford Greenfield Labs in Palo Alto on Jan. 26.

governor's climate goals. The city has the highest electric-vehicle sales, with one-third of new car sales being electric. He noted that the 2020 catastrophic CZU August Lightning Complex fires, which were linked to climate change, came close to jumping the mountain ridges into Palo Alto, making climate protection a dedicated goal of the city.

Ford has started making high-volume, all-electric vehicles, including the E-Transit van and the F-150 Lightning Pro pickup truck, the latter of which will be available by the middle of this year, according to its website. Its Mustang Mach-E SUV is the first all-electric vehicle to pass the Michigan State Police vehicle tests, including for acceleration, braking and high-speed vehicle pursuits.

Ford Greenfield Labs in Palo Alto, located at 3251 Hillview Ave., is one of the largest automotive manufacturing research centers in the region, according to its website. It employs

nearly 300 researchers, engineers, designers and scientists in 182,000 square feet of work and lab space.

Ford Pro, the automaker's global vehicle services and distribution business, is dedicated to serving commercial and business customers.

The new business — the first of its kind among automakers — focuses on end-to-end services for cars, software, charging stations, financing and repair to help companies convert their vehicle fleets to electric. It currently has 70,000 Blue Oval chargeports throughout the country, said Wendy Zhao, head of growth for Ford Motors' Pro Charging, a section of Ford Pro.

"Fleets are a vital part of helping California and the world meet its ambitious climate goals," she said, adding that a robust charging network would be essential to making the transition. ■

Email Sue Dremann at sdremann@paweb.com



Woodside Elementary School District Invitation for Bid Vended Meals for Child Nutrition Programs

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REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Why Is Inventory So Low?

Dear Monica:

We are ready and anxious to buy a home but inventory is lower than I've ever seen it before. Do you know why it is so low and if this will change? Janet R.

Dear Janet:

In many years there has often been low inventory in January and February, with marked improvement in March and April. It is too soon to tell if that will be the case this year but it doesn't look promising as yet. It is very tough for buyers now with such a low property supply and also with cash-buying hedge funds edging them out of the market.

We don't know how long this imbalance between supply and demand will continue but most agents too would like to see it end. My advice is to keep at it and not to get discouraged.

Contact me at monica@monicacorman.com: Office: 650-465-5971, COMPASS. WSJ Nationally Ranked. Real Trends Bay Area Top 100 Agents

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Menlo Park biotech company opens COVID-19 testing site

The drive-thru site will be open daily from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m.

By Lloyd Lee

A Menlo Park biotech company is offering COVID-19 tests and will be open to the public daily.

Avellino Lab, which specializes in gene therapy and molecular diagnostics, is conducting PCR swab tests seven days a week from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., the company announced on Jan. 28. The site is located by the office's west parking lot at 4300

Bohannon Drive.

An appointment won't be required, according to Angela Lapre, global head of corporate communications. Patients will register on site and will be asked for health insurance.

Lapre said the company will follow the recommendations of the Centers for Disease Control Prevention and aim to provide test results within 48 hours. "But that could quickly change if there's another spike," she said.

Avellino uses its own COVID-19 tests that were given Emergency Use Authorization from the Food and Drug Administration in 2020. The company processes the samples at its laboratory 4.5 miles away from its headquarters. The lab is certified by the Center for Medicare and Medicaid Services' Clinical Laboratory Improvement Amendments program, which allows a lab to accept human samples for diagnostic testing.

At its peak, the lab can process

up to 30,000 tests, according to Lapre.

Lapre said the company decided to open the testing site as a way to support the community amid the surge of coronavirus cases due to the Omicron variant.

"We just wanted another lever to be able to support the community at an even more direct capacity, right in our backyard in our headquarter parking lot," she said.

Avellino operates additional

testing sites in San Jose and Cupertino. To date, Avellino has conducted more than 2.5 million COVID-19 tests, according to a press release.

The Menlo Park site will be open "as long as demand warrants," Lapre said.

To find more testing sites within San Mateo County, visit smcgv.org. ■

Email Lloyd Lee at llee@almanacnews.com

County's new partner to provide up to 2K COVID-19 tests daily at event center

By Bay City News Service

San Mateo County is partnering with health care provider Carbon Health to provide up to 2,000 COVID-19 tests daily at the San Mateo County Event Center.

Carbon Health began providing PCR tests at the Event Center on Feb. 1. Walk-ups are allowed or people can register online at bit.ly/3INcoxc.

Testing through Carbon

Health will be available Tuesdays through Sundays from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. at the Event Center. The entrance to the testing site is located at 2701 South Delaware St., San Mateo.

The testing is free. Patients are asked to walk in with an ID if possible.

County Manager Mike Callagy said in a statement that the county already has a relationship with Carbon Health, as they helped open a mass vaccination site at

the San Francisco International Airport and other county clinics.

Carbon Health's Chief Growth Officer Nita Sommers said in a statement that the site can accommodate between 1,500 to 2,000 tests per day and they expect to provide results in 48 hours.

The county will work with Carbon Health for one month with the possibility of extensions as needed. The county has ended its partnership with


bio-health technology company Virus Geeks following testing delays earlier in January.

More information and a map showing the testing site entrance are available online at smcgv.org.

PCR and rapid tests continue to be available at county sites, health providers and pharmacies. A full list of testing can be viewed online by visiting smcgv.org, then clicking "COVID-19 Resources." ■

Your COVID-19 vaccine questions — answered

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



NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Atherton City Council will hold a public hearing to consider adoption of an Ordinance governing the development of qualified Senate Bill 9 subdivisions and development projects on single-family properties within the Town of Atherton.

This meeting will be held via teleconference only pursuant to Government Code section 54953(e) to provide the safest environment for staff and the public while allowing for public participation. The public may participate in the Planning Commission Meeting via Zoom Meeting.

<p>Dial In: 1-669-900-6833, 506897786#</p> <p>Weblink: https://zoom.us/j/506897786</p> <p>Meeting ID: 506 897 786</p>	<p>Remote Public Comments: Meeting participants are encouraged to submit public comments in writing in advance of the meeting. The following email will be monitored during the meeting and public comments received will be read into the record.</p> <p>Email: asuber@ci.atherton.ca.us</p> <p>Text: 650-687-7084</p>
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Description: The City Council is considering adoption of an Ordinance governing the development of qualified Senate Bill 9 subdivisions and development projects on single-family properties within the Town of Atherton. The establishment of these regulations will result in the orderly subdivision and development of qualified Senate Bill No. 9 (2021) ("SB 9") projects while ensuring that the new units are consistent with the existing development patterns of the Town and do not create any significant impacts with regards to public infrastructure or public safety. **A copy of the meeting agenda, staff report and draft Ordinance can be found online by Thursday, February 3, 2022 here:** <https://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/Archive.aspx?AMID=41&Type=Recent>

The proposal has been determined to be exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) to CEQA Section 15378(a), which defines projects subject to these provisions. The proposal does not meet the definition of a project.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that said Ordinance is set for hearing by the City Council at its meeting on **February 16, 2022 at 6:00 PM** via teleconference accessible through the above-described information, at which time and place all persons interested may participate and show cause, if they have any, why the Ordinance should or should not be recommended for approval.


IF YOU CHALLENGE any actions taken to adopt the SB 9 Ordinance in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the City Council at, or prior to, the public hearing.

City Council decisions are final on the date of decision and may not be further appealed.

If you have any questions on the item, please contact Anthony Suber, Deputy City Manager, at asuber@ci.atherton.ca.us or 650-752-0529. Any attendee who wishes accommodation for a disability should contact the Building Division at (650) 752-0542 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

ATHERTON CITY COUNCIL
/s/ Anthony Suber
Anthony Suber, Deputy City Manager


Date Published: February 4, 2022
Date Posted: February 3, 2022



Portola Valley School District Invitation for Bid Vended Meals for Child Nutrition Programs

Portola Valley School District is soliciting bids for the provision of vended meals for the School Breakfast and National School Lunch Programs. Bids will be accepted until Friday, March 18, 2022 at 1:00 P.M. at the District Office, located at 4575 Alpine Road, Portola Valley, California, 94028. Visit the district website at <http://PVSD.net/rfp> to view the full Bid document. Clarifying questions may be directed to the District Office by emailing rfp@pvsd.net or calling (650) 851-1777.

Deadline for Submission: March 18, 2022 by 1:00 PM



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

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a public hearing will be held before the Board of Directors of the West Bay Sanitary District at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, February 9, 2022, at the District Offices, located at 500 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, California to consider the adoption of an ordinance amending Section 209 "Board Member Compensation" of the District's Code of General Regulations to increase the amount Board Members shall be compensated for attendance at meetings of the Board or for each day's service rendered as a Director by request of the Board from \$240.00 per day up to \$250.00 per day, not to exceed six days in any calendar month.

WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT
By: /s/ Sergio Ramirez
Sergio Ramirez
District Manager

Lawsuit alleges San Mateo County court imposes improper charges for traffic violations

By Bay City News Service

An unusual lawsuit filed Jan. 27 in the Superior Court of Alameda County names the Superior Court of San Mateo County as one of the defendants.

The plaintiffs claim the San Mateo court improperly impose a \$300 “assessment” whenever a person fails to timely respond to a traffic infraction or similar citation.

The suit was filed on behalf of plaintiffs Anthony McCree and the Debt Collective, a national organization that challenges consumer debt. McCree said he was traveling to a job interview when he was cited for fare evasion on public transit. McCree, who was homeless at the time, missed his payment and the court automatically charged him the \$300 fee. He found housing in Alameda County, but received notices from the San Mateo court that that he owed a total \$860, even though the base fine for fare evasion is \$250 at the maximum.

The plaintiffs maintain the assessments are big business for the court. Over a three-year

period, the court allegedly imposed assessments in more than 80,000 individual cases. During that period, the amounts assessed exceeded \$9 million per year.

The lawsuit aims to cancel tens of millions of dollars in outstanding charges and enjoin San Mateo from continuing the practice in the future.

The assessments generally arise after a driver is given a traffic citation in San Mateo County and receives a “Notice of Bail” from the court. The notice gives the violator a choice: They can pay the fine in full and thereby avoid a hearing. Alternatively, the violator can call and arrange a hearing date where he or she may contest the citation.

According to the complaint, many violators fail to do either. In that situation the court treats the failure to respond to mean that the alleged violator wants the court to resolve the matter without a hearing. The court then resolves the matter — generally by ruling against the violator — and imposes, in addition to the fine, a \$300 assessment for failure to respond.

If the violator fails to pay the fine

and assessment, the court, according to the plaintiffs’ complaint, “maximizes revenue collection” by using the legal procedures of “wage garnishment, property liens, and bank liens” to collect the debt.

Frequently the court refers charges to private collection agencies.

A significant portion of the lawsuit is devoted to allegations that the San Mateo court has a vested interest in imposing the assessments, because a portion of the funds collected go into the court’s budget. According to plaintiffs, the court is permitted to retain all assessments collected in excess of \$2.1 million plus the costs of collection.

In response to public records requests by plaintiffs, the court stated that it had been able to retain more than \$3 million over the most three recent fiscal years. Given the court’s annual budget of approximately \$50 million in fiscal 2020-21, plaintiffs contend that the amounts are such a significant source of revenue for the court as to create a conflict of interest.

The lawsuit also alleges that the courts’ obtained authority to impose assessments because

of California’s “Three Strikes” legislation dramatically overfilled prison facilities throughout the state and lead to a financial crisis for the court system’s budget.

Plaintiffs say the California Legislature solved the financial problem, not by increasing the court’s funding from the state treasury, but by allowing the courts to impose the assessments and retain the funds recovered.

The plaintiffs are being represented by attorneys with the ACLU Foundation of Northern California, the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights of the San Francisco Bay Area, Bay Area Legal Aid, and Fenwick & West LLP.

According to Zal K. Shroff, one of plaintiffs’ attorneys, said the assessments are a “pretty perverse practice” and one that has a disparate impact on people of color.

Shroff says, “in San Mateo County alone, black drivers are twice as likely to be stopped than white drivers.” That means, he says, that black and brown drivers are “being made to pay for California’s misguided mass incarceration era policies that were already hurting their communities.”

The complaint challenges the assessments on numerous grounds in addition to the conflict of interest issue. The complaint says that the statute does not require assessments but simply allows them at the discretion of a judicial officer. The San Mateo court allegedly imposes the penalties automatically without any discretion.

The complaint also argues that the practice violates the defendants’ due process rights by failing to timely and adequately inform them of their right to challenge the assessment or avoid it altogether simply by requesting that the citation be resolved without a hearing, a practice allowed in traffic violation matters.

According to Shroff, the suit is the first in California to challenge the assessment practice. While the new suit is not a class action, Shroff says that if relief is granted it will help many people affected by the assessment practice.

San Mateo allegedly referred more than 100,000 cases to collection in the last three years. Plaintiffs want to enjoin all collection of those assessments and stop any further improper assessments in the future.

Requests for comment on the suit by the San Mateo court and its counsel were not promptly returned. ▣



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A door is one of the best pieces of firefighting equipment.

It can:

- Reduce fire growth and spread.
- Limit damage to your home/building
- Save lives.

Remember:

- Close the bedroom door when sleeping.
- Close doors behind you when escaping a room or building that is on fire.
- Keep fire doors closed. Never wedge, disable, or prop open a fire door.





Coronavirus central: FDA issues full approval of Moderna vaccine

By Embarcadero Media staff

Federal regulators issued their full approval Monday of the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine, the second approval of a COVID-19 vaccine outside of its emergency use authorization.

The Food and Drug Administration issued its full approval of the vaccine after considering data from roughly 14,000 vaccine recipients and 14,000 placebo recipients.

In the more than 28,000 adults sampled, the two-dose vaccine was 93% effective at preventing COVID-19 infection and 98% effective at preventing serious illness.

The FDA also determined that the vaccine is safe to receive after analyzing data from a pool of more than 30,000 vaccine recipients and placebo recipients, with the most common reported side

effects including fatigue, headache, redness and swelling at the injection site and fever.

“While hundreds of millions of doses of Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine have been administered to individuals under emergency use authorization, we understand that for some individuals, FDA approval of this vaccine may instill additional confidence in making the decision to get vaccinated,” acting FDA Commissioner Dr. Janet Woodcock said in a statement.

The vaccine has been available to adults under emergency use approval since December 2020, along with the similar mRNA vaccine developed by Pfizer-BioNTech.

Since then, the FDA has expanded its emergency use authorization for the Moderna vaccine to include its use as a booster dose for people who completed their

initial vaccine series at least five months prior.

With Monday’s announcement, Moderna’s vaccine will now be marketed as Spikevax.

“Safe and effective vaccines are our best defense against the COVID-19 pandemic, including currently circulating variants,” said Dr. Peter Marks, the director of the FDA’s Center for Biologics Evaluation and Research. “The public can be assured that this vaccine was approved in keeping with the FDA’s rigorous scientific standards.”

VTA to require employees prove their vaccination status

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) will require its employees and contractors to prove that they have completed their initial vaccine

series, the agency said Jan. 27.

The policy requires VTA’s more than 2,000 employees and contractors to prove by April 29 have at least received their first two mRNA vaccine doses or single Janssen/Johnson & Johnson vaccine dose.

According to the VTA, workers will not be required to prove that they have received a booster dose, which health officials have argued is necessary to bolster immune response against COVID-19.

“We have a responsibility to protect our employees and the public and help bring an end to this devastating pandemic,” VTA General Manager and CEO Carolyn Gonot said in a statement.

Roughly 60% of VTA’s workforce has already voluntarily confirmed their full vaccination status, according to the agency. That figure does not include employees

hired after Aug. 1, 2021, who are required to be vaccinated.

Unvaccinated employees will be allowed to request a medical or religious exemption to the vaccination requirement.

Those with approved exemptions will be required to test weekly for COVID-19. All others whose exemptions are not approved must complete their first vaccine series by the April 29 deadline.

Comprehensive COVID-19 coverage

Find a comprehensive collection of coverage on the Midpeninsula’s response to the coronavirus by The Almanac and its sister publications, Palo Alto Online, and the Mountain View Voice, at tinyurl.com/c19-Almanac.

—Bay City News Service contributed to this report.



Town of Atherton

Town Administrative Offices
80 Fair Oaks Lane
Atherton, California 94027
650-752-0500

NOTICE OF ORDINANCE PROPOSED ADOPTION BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF ATHERTON

The City Council of the Town of Atherton, at its meeting of **February 16, 2022**, will consider the adoption of an Ordinance of the City Council of the Town of Atherton, State of California, amending Chapter 8.16.050 (B) Noise Control as it relates to *Power Garden Equipment*.

This meeting is being held via teleconference pursuant to Government Code section 54953(e)(1)(B) and in compliance with the Brown Act. Section 54953(e)(1)(B) permits the Town to hold a meeting during a proclaimed state of emergency via teleconference in order to determine whether as a result of the emergency meeting in person would present an imminent risk to attendees’ health or safety. The meeting will be held by tele or video conferencing. The public may participate in the City Council Meeting via:

Join Zoom Meeting:

<https://zoom.us/j/506897786>

Meeting ID: 506 897 786

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,506897786# US (San Jose)

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

Meeting ID: 506 897 786

Remote Public Comments:

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

Email: asuber@ci.atherton.ca.us

Description: The purpose of the amendment is related to the reduction of noise levels and air pollutants in Town and the consideration of phasing out, reducing, or banning the use of specific types of gas-powered lawn equipment. A copy of the City Council staff report and draft ordinance can be found online, by Friday February 11, 2022 here: <https://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/Archive.aspx?AMID=41>

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that said ordinance is set for hearing by the City Council at its meeting on **February 16, 2022, at 6:00 PM** via teleconference accessible through the above-described information, at which time and place all persons interested may participate and show cause, if they have any, why the amendments should or should not be approved.

If you have any questions on the item please contact Anthony Suber, City Clerk, at asuber@ci.atherton.ca.us or 650-752-0529. Any attendee who wishes accommodation for a disability should contact the City Clerk’s Office Building Division at (650) 752-0529 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

Date Published: February 4, 2022

Date Posted: February 4, 2022

ATHERTON CITY COUNCIL
/s/ Anthony Suber
Anthony Suber, City Clerk

HOUSING PROJECTS

continued from page 1

to amend it slightly to talk about housing fitting into the town’s broader strategy to maintain local control.

The town is also in the midst of updating its housing element, a mandatory statewide process to accommodate housing growth, and is being asked to zone for a significant number of units that must be designated for development. The housing element has prompted push-back from some residents and town officials, who object to changes to the “rural character” of Woodside and fear that building more homes could increase wildfire risk in a region that is already at a heightened risk for fires.

Woodside is tasked with zoning for 328 units between 2023 and 2031 under the state’s Regional Housing Needs Allocation, up from 62 during the previous cycle.

Council members asked staff last week to look into hiring a consultant to study mountain lion habitats in town, while the town’s Planning Commission raised similar concerns in January prior to the council’s discussion last week.

Updates will be posted to the town website as the review of the petition to put mountain lions on the endangered species list progresses, according to the memo. ■

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



Courtesy Trish Carney for Felidae Conservation Fund

A mountain lion was photographed in the Santa Cruz mountains in January 2010. The entire town of Woodside is in a mountain lion habitat, so town officials put a freeze on certain housing projects.

University AME Zion Church targeted in multimillion-dollar fraud scheme

By Sue Dremann

An alleged fraud scheme that put African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church properties, including in Palo Alto, into millions of dollars of debt has led to the arrests of a former bishop and lay leader, the U.S. Department of Justice said on Jan. 25.

Staccato Powell and Sheila Quintana were arrested and appeared in federal court last week to face charges of conspiracy, wire fraud and mail fraud stemming from the scheme, which targeted congregations in Palo Alto, Oakland, San Jose and Los Angeles and private lenders, U.S. Attorney Stephanie M. Hinds and FBI Special Agent in Charge Craig D. Fair said in a statement.

Powell, 62, of Wake Forest, North Carolina, and Quintana, 67, of Vallejo, were officers of the Western Episcopal District, Inc., an entity formed by Powell and Quintana in 2016 after Powell's selection as bishop to the Western Episcopal District of the African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church (AME Zion Church), a historically African American denomination of approximately 1.4 million adherents worldwide tracing its history to 1796.

A federal indictment filed Jan. 6 and unsealed on Tuesday alleges that Powell and Quintana conspired to defraud the AME Zion Church congregations, including University AME Zion in Palo Alto, by re-deeding the local congregations' properties in the name of Western Episcopal District Inc. (WED, Inc.), a straw entity. Prior to Powell and Quintana's actions, the congregations had little or no mortgage debt on their local church properties, which include sanctuaries, residences for pastoral staff and other structures used by the local congregations for religious purposes. In some cases, the congregations had paid off their mortgages years earlier.

Powell and Quintana used false statements and omissions to force grant deeds from local pastors, claiming the church's Book of Discipline, a guiding document, allowed Powell to place the grant deeds under Western Episcopal's ownership. Pastors who protested were removed under pretexts so that a council that met quarterly wasn't able to congregate to vote on or approve the mortgage transfers and loans, leaving Powell with absolute control and no oversight, according to a Jan. 14, 2021, lawsuit filed in federal bankruptcy court by University AME Zion Church of Palo Alto.

The congregations didn't know that he almost immediately began taking out huge loans against the

properties, according to the lawsuit, which seeks to stop Powell and Quintana from succeeding in bankruptcy proceedings that would include the church properties.

Saddled with enormous debt from private lenders, in which the congregations and churches received not a penny of the money, the scheme began to unravel after the Palo Alto church received a notice of default on one of the loans, according to the civil bankruptcy case.

According to the criminal indictment, after taking control of the church properties, Powell, Quintana and others used the real estate as collateral to obtain the high interest loans, exceeding \$14 million in net proceeds. The Palo Alto church alone was indebted for more than \$3.9

million, according to its lawsuit.

Powell and Quintana allegedly diverted funds from the loans for their benefit, including the acqui-

'We are grateful to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for bringing this case forward.'

REV. KALOMA SMITH, PASTOR AT UNIVERSITY AME ZION

sition of properties in North Carolina by Powell, ending mortgage debt on Powell's personal residence in North Carolina, and cash payments to Quintana's spouse. On July 30, 2020, WED Inc. filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy

protection and listed 11 churches in California, Arizona and Colorado among its assets, according to the Department of Justice.

The Rev. Kaloma Smith, pastor at University AME Zion, said on Jan. 25 that the church has been dealing with the case for nearly two years.

"We are grateful to the Federal Bureau of Investigation for bringing this case forward. We are grateful that somebody heard our cry and started moving on that, and we are grateful for those in the community who knew and supported us."

Palo Alto law firm Mayer Brown has taken on the civil case pro bono for the church, he said.

The church community has been resilient and bonded together to push through the situation, he added. "I'm so grateful to our church."

Powell and Quintana are each charged with one count of conspiracy to commit wire fraud and mail fraud and two counts of

wire fraud. Powell is also charged with one count of mail fraud. The maximum statutory sentence is 20 years in prison, a fine up to \$250,000 and three years of supervised release following prison, the Department of Justice said.

Powell was arrested on Jan. 25 in Wake Forest, North Carolina and made his initial appearance in federal court in the Eastern District of North Carolina. Quintana was also arrested in Vallejo, and made her initial appearance in Sacramento. The defendants were ordered to make their initial appearances in the Northern District of California by Zoom on Feb. 2.

The case is being prosecuted by the Oakland branch of the U.S. Attorney's Office and is the result of an investigation by the FBI with assistance from the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office. ■

Email Sue Dremann at sdremann@pawekly.com

Kensington Senior Living is proud to sponsor HFC's 2nd Annual CareCon

A FREE, virtual event designed to educate, inspire and empower Alzheimer's and dementia family caregivers by offering support, knowledge and community

Join Us on National Caregivers Day
Fri, Feb 18, 2022 • 12:00pm PST

A learning & support event hosted by
Lauren Miller Rogen of HFC

CareCon is back! Join us for a free, live-streamed event that's packed with celebrity-hosted, expert-led panels and workshops for the comedy-loving caregiver. Connect with others around the globe as you learn tools for resilience and best practices to help ease the stressors that often come with the caregiving experience.

This year, Kensington Senior Living is proud to sponsor The Scotty, an award in honor of Scott Miller, who was the caregiver for Lauren Miller Rogen's late mother Adele. Be sure to nominate an extraordinary unpaid caregiver you know, in recognition of their loving support during a challenging time, their patience and perseverance, and their creativity.

We also encourage you to get acquainted with Kensington Place, where we make every effort to improve your loved one's quality of life to the greatest extent possible. And, we do the same for you. Your caregiving commitment is an extraordinary gesture of devotion, yet it is a demanding responsibility. So we offer support that gives you time to catch your breath, recharge without guilt and freely enjoy the pleasure of togetherness with your loved one.

To register, go to bit.ly/hfccarecon



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RESORT-LIKE PROPERTY OF OVER 3.5 ACRES

The quintessential beauty of Portola Valley provides the perfect backdrop for this spectacular estate of over 7,400 square feet, including a beautiful guest home of more than 700 square feet, resting on over 3.5 verdant acres of resort-like grounds. A gated paver motor court introduces the property, and inside, this home presents a luxurious ambiance with soaring ceilings, fine millwork, floors of marble and hardwood, and stunning walls of glass that bring the outside in. The floorplan is scaled for entertaining yet comfortable enough for everyday living, and features the living room with a fireplace, the chef's kitchen with high-end appliances, and the expansive family/game room, plus a theater, wine cellar, yoga/fitness room, and so much more. Accommodations include 4 bedroom suites, highlighted by the incredible primary suite with a sitting room and fireplace, while the detached guest home offers an additional bedroom, bathroom, and kitchen. Experience true indoor/outdoor living as multiple points throughout the home open to a multi-level deck with a built-in grill and peaceful views of the home's magnificent grounds, featuring meandering walking trails, a gazebo, and a side area with an enticing blend of both natural and synthetic grass. Moments from beautiful nature preserves and trails, this home is just minutes to the iconic Roberts Market, and offers access to acclaimed Portola Valley schools (buyer to verify eligibility).

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Bikes, a laptop, 500-gallon water jugs among items taken during burglaries

By Angela Swartz

Someone stole \$23,800 worth of items from a home in Atherton on Jan. 26, according to a police bulletin.

Between 10:30 a.m. and 12:30 p.m., a burglar apparently slid a window open to get inside the home on the first block of Cebalo Lane, off of Selby Lane. The items taken included two bicycles, bike lights and a laptop.

Atherton has a lot of high density entry points from neighboring communities, via El Camino Real and Highway 101, according to a newsletter last week from City Manager George Rodericks.

"The town cannot prevent criminals from making

burglary attempts; but you can help the town with deterrence by hardening your home against such intrusions," the newsletter states.

Of the eight burglaries in January, police suspect six were committed by organized Chilean gang members operating out of the Los Angeles area, according to a Jan. 28 message to residents from police Chief Steve McCulley.

In 2021, officers investigated 28 residential burglaries and made two arrests of burglary suspects, he said, six of which have been linked to Chilean gang members. Chilean gang activity has been a problem throughout San Mateo County and nationwide, he said.

From 2016 to 2021, town police investigated an average

of about two burglaries per month and made two burglary suspect arrests a year, according to police.

Police plan to host a community meeting with residents about the burglaries on Thursday, Feb. 17, from 6 to 8 p.m.

The town is also asking residents to host police department Neighborhood Watch/Crime Prevention meetings. Anyone interested in hosting a meeting may email McCulley at SMCulley@ci.atherton.ca.us.

The best way to prevent being burglarized is to lock windows and doors; leave lights on; install exterior lighting; don't keep valuables in the master bedroom; and install an alarm system and security cameras, according to a town news bulletin.

Woodside and Portola Valley burglaries

Someone reportedly broke into a home on the 100 block of Chapman Road in Woodside on Dec. 8, taking two large, 555-gallon water tanks worth about \$1,800, said Javier Acosta, San Mateo County Sheriff's Office public information officer, in an email.

The burglary was reported to police on Jan. 18, according to the Sheriff's Office police blotter.

The Sheriff's Office also reported a residential burglary on the 500 block of Portola Road in Portola Valley on Jan. 27 between 4 and 6 a.m.

The burglars broke into a basement storage area but did not gain access to the living area of the residence and fled before deputies arrived, according to a town press release. ■

TRAINS

continued from page 5

A number of residents spoke in favor of the council's step toward a quiet zone Tuesday. "The long-term solution to alleviating more of the train noise is grade separations," said Complete Streets Commissioner and Caltrain advocate Adina Levin. "There's no telling how long that will take. If we have a decade of people being able to sleep at night, it is worth pursuing this."

The city has for decades been exploring how to move forward with separating the Caltrain rail line from the places it intersects with city roads. After years of debate, the city is exploring the possibility of a fully elevated grade separation alongside other approaches at three of the city's four rail crossings, at Ravenswood, Oak Grove and Glenwood avenues.

Speaking on behalf of several neighborhoods near the Caltrain tracks, Felton Gables resident Marcy Abramowitz emphasized the willingness of residents to support the project and urged the city to select a consultant with experience that is relevant to the city of Menlo Park. "We are thrilled to be embarking on this step," she said.

Funding for the study includes \$75,000 from city coffers and \$300,000 allocated from the Springline development under construction at 1300 El Camino Real. More funding would be needed to construct the improvements for the quiet zone, according to staff. Under the proposed timeline, the contractor would be expected to develop the draft implementation plan for the quiet zone by Sept. 26. ■

Email Staff Writer Kate Bradshaw at kbradshaw@mv-voice.com.

Frances Kent Dickman

1941 – 2022

Frances Kent Dickman passed away on January 14, 2022, with her beloved daughters at her side. Debbie Thomas (Tadd), Jenifer Tighe, and Kimberly Fleming (Jon), seven grandchildren, Piper and Drew Thomas, Blair and Allix Bunge and Jack, Beau and Kate Fleming, three sisters, Barbra Wood (Bill), Claudia Dickman, and Sandra Dickman, and her many nieces and nephews.



Fran was born in Oakland to W. Bernard and Edith Dickman on April 30, 1941. Her family lived in Oakland, where Fran attended Crocker Highlands Elementary School, until 1951 when they moved to Atherton, where Fran lived, attending Encinal Elementary School and Menlo-Atherton High School, until she went to University of Oregon in the fall of 1959. She joined the Alpha Delta Pi sorority, and studied to become an elementary school teacher. At Oregon she met her future husband, David Yee, the father of her three children, and they were married in 1960. They divorced in 1977.

In her twenties Fran discovered the game of bridge, and with her natural ability for numbers and strategy, and her love of competition, became an excellent and much-respected player. She enjoyed her many bridge friends in bridge clubs and on trips to play in tournaments. She reached the pinnacle of bridge success when she became celebrated as a Grand Life Master in 2008.

Over the years, Fran's extended family has maintained a special closeness, sharing in holiday celebrations, vacations to Hawaii, and trips to fish on the Rogue River. In more recent years Fran and her three sisters have enjoyed a companionable relationship.

Fran was the proud matriarch of her own family. She enjoyed an unbreakable bond with her daughters and an admiring affection for her grandchildren. The center of family gatherings, she was a sympathetic ear with a sage perspective and was the foundation of her progeny.

Fran will always be remembered for her generosity, her lovely, feminine presence, her impeccable style and flare for fashion, her warm and welcoming smile, her love of dancing, her baking prowess, and her wonderful sense of humor.

While there is a hole in all of our hearts, we are comforted by our sweet memories of Fran.

In lieu of flowers, please submit photos and written memories to: rememberingfran2022@gmail.com

PAID OBITUARY

Mark Steven Moriconi

May 7, 1948 – January 25, 2022

Mark Steven Moriconi passed away on January 25, 2022 at the age of 73 in Redwood City, California after a decade long battle with Early Onset Alzheimers.

He was born to Bill and Ardevina Moriconi on May 7, 1948. Mark will be lovingly remembered by his wife of 33 years, Susan Moriconi; his son, Alex Moriconi; brothers, Bill Moriconi (Susan) of St. Louis, Missouri and John Moriconi (Eric) of Wichita, Kansas; step children Jeff Bergman (Alexis) and Lisa Bergman (who preceded him in death), grandsons Christopher and Nicholas Bergman and his nephews and niece.

After graduating from Kapaun High School and Wichita State University majoring in English and Mathematics in Wichita, Kansas, Mark received a Ph.D. in Computer Sciences from The University of Texas at Austin and later completed the High-Tech Executive Program at Stanford University's Graduate School of Business. He published over 20 technical papers and held many patents. Mark was also an invited speaker, panelist, technical reviewer, program chair and general chair at dozens of international ACM/IEEE conferences and workshops, winning several awards for his contributions.

Mark's professional career included nearly 20 years as Director of Computer Science Lab at Stanford Research Institute and he eventually founded his own company, SecureSoft/CrossLogix. Following its sale, the technology CrossLogix was based on became a core component of Oracle Entitlements Server.

Mark and Susan moved to Atherton 35 years ago, where Mark was able to engage in his passions for gardening, sports and wine. He enjoyed fine dining, cooking and travel and, more than anything, loved sharing those experiences with the people he held dear. He also enjoyed walking to Peet's every day with his black labrador, Tori, and even started to look like her later in life when they were both grey around the muzzle and wearing all black.

A celebration of Mark's life was held on Thursday, February 3, 2022 at the Church of the Nativity.

Memorial donations may be made in his honor to the Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA. <https://phs-sPCA.org/>



PAID OBITUARY

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include **Edgar (Bud) Galt McLellan**, 86, an Atherton resident, on Jan. 11; **Rowland Whitney Tabor**, 89, a Portola Valley resident and volunteer for the city's conservation committee and geologic safety committee, on Jan. 13; **Betty Porter Sox**, 98, an Atherton resident and Hewlett-Packard employee for 47 years, on Jan. 22; **Else Muller Towle**, 88, a former Portola Valley resident and volunteer for the Portola Valley School District, on Jan. 23; and **Mark Steven Moriconi**, 73, an Atherton resident, on Jan. 25.

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

META PARK*continued from page 5*

10-minute drive from her home.

"I think the closest parking is Bedwell Bayfront Park," Chen Rekhi said. "But it's not even clear whether that path is accessible. It's probably a mile or so in terms of a walk."

Another option could be to park on Chilco Street and walk through Meta's campus, but Chen Rekhi said it was yet another inconvenient way to access a 2.2-acre park. She also said it didn't feel safe to park on such a busy street.

"We were just really disappointed, so we ended up turning around and going to Bedwell Bayfront Park," she said.

Some street parking is available in the Belle Haven neighborhood. From Terminal Avenue the entrance is a few minutes away.

When asked about the challenges of getting to the park, Clayton said the space was designed to be accessed by foot or bike. He also said that Meta's Park is one of several parks in the city that don't have designated parking lots, such as Hamilton and Karl E. Clark parks.

"We worked extensively with the city on the design and function of the park to ensure it would be enjoyed and accessible by the local community," Clayton said.

Sean Reinhart, library and community services director of Menlo Park, said that the primary entrance by Chilco Street complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act.

CRIME BRIEFS*continued from page 6*

clerk after leaving the 7-Eleven on Oak Grove Street without paying for a few items. When the clerk approached him, Bertolucci stabbed the man in the neck, the side of the head and finger. Police later found the victim in the store where he was bleeding profusely.

Judge Donald Ayoob of the San Mateo Superior Court placed Bertolucci on three years supervised probation and 140 days in county jail, which can be modified with completion of the Our Common Ground residential treat program and the Pathways Mental Health program.

Bertolucci must follow all rules, including taking prescribed medications, abstaining from alcohol and drugs, and staying away from the 7-Eleven. Any violations will result in a five-year prison sentence.

— Lloyd Lee

"All of the sidewalk and curb cuts are ADA accessible," he said. In addition, the park itself is "completely level" and has ADA-accessible walkways. The bridge also has a very "gentle slope" and there are no steps, Reinhart said.

Unlike the park, the 1,026-foot-long bridge is accessible around the clock. Park rules prohibit dogs and other animals, commercial photography and filming, drones and amplified sound. ▣

Email Lloyd Lee at llee@almanacnews.com

Visit
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Go to:
AlmanacNews.com/obituaries

Edgar (Bud) Galt McLellan Jr.*March 5, 1935 – January 11, 2022*

Edgar Galt McLellan, Jr. (Bud) died peacefully in his sleep on January 11, 2022 at the age of 86, at his home in Atherton, California.

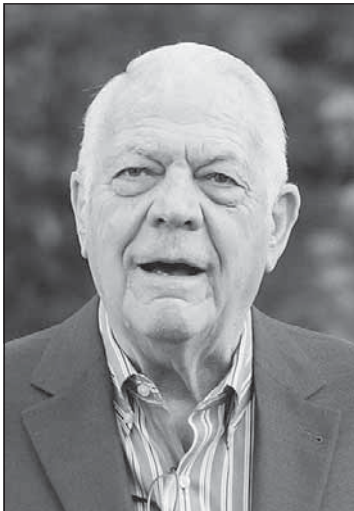
Bud was born in San Mateo, California in 1935 to Edgar Galt McLellan and Oneita Jantzen McLellan. He spent his childhood in Hillsborough, California and Portland, Oregon. His maternal family had founded and run Jantzen swimwear, and his paternal family had been early and successful real estate investors in Belmont and San Mateo, on the San Francisco Peninsula. Bud was a 1953 graduate of Menlo School in Atherton and graduated with a degree in Social Sciences in 1957 from Stanford University. He was a member of the Alpha Tau Omega fraternity at Stanford, where he played junior varsity football.

Bud was a gregarious man, who made friends easily. After graduation from Stanford, he entered the Loop executive training program for Bethlehem Steel in Portland, Oregon where he became a successful salesman. In 1958, he married Jacqueline Plank, and together they raised two children, Reed and Jana. In the 1970's, Bethlehem asked him to relocate to Cleveland, Ohio to represent the company throughout the Midwest, where the family settled until his retirement in 1984. He succeeded his father on the Board of Directors of the McLellan Estate Company and continued as a member of the board until this year.

After retiring, Bud and Jacqui returned to Portland Oregon. Sadly, Jacqui died in 2001 from cancer. In 2002, he reconnected with Sonia Shepard, a classmate from Stanford whose husband had also died of cancer. Bud had been a groomsman in their wedding. They were married in 2002 and spent the next two decades traveling the world, hosting students in their home, attending Stanford sporting events, and hosting a myriad of gatherings for their family. Bud enjoyed a fine scotch, a nice meal, good conversation and a few hands of dominoes. In retirement, he became a focused stamp collector and an enthusiastic creator of glass sculpture and art. He was a caring, warm, and thoughtful man who will be missed by his family and those who were privileged to know him.

Bud is survived by his wife, Sonia Shepard McLellan, his son Reed McLellan (Chagrin Falls, Ohio) and Jana McLellan (Portland, Oregon). He has three grandchildren and was a wonderful surrogate grandfather to eight Shepard grandchildren. He was also preceded in death by his brother, Carl McLellan and his parents. The family is holding private services later this month.

PAID OBITUARY

**Rowland Whitney Tabor***June 10, 1932 – January 13, 2022*

We are born of and sustained by the planet earth, and the elements of its rocks and seas are our nearest cosmological relatives. When we can understand the earth and its history, we have come a little closer to understanding ourselves and our place in the universe.

R.W. Tabor, 1975

Rowland Tabor died January 13, 2022, at his home in Portola Valley, in the company of family and dear friends. He was born and grew up

in Denver, where he began his enduring love of mountains.

Rowland attended Stanford University as an undergraduate. A fortuitous college summer job as a geologic field assistant in Alaska set him on the path to his life's work as a mountaineering geologist. He pursued graduate studies in geology at the University of Washington. Upon receiving his PhD in 1961, he was hired by the U. S. Geological Survey in Menlo Park, CA. He spent a season in Antarctica, and then over the next 34 years went on to write professional papers and create geologic maps of Kentucky, the Moon, Nevada, the Olympic Peninsula, and the North Cascades. He served several years as Chief of the Branch of Western Regional Geology. After his retirement in 1995, he stayed on at the Survey as Geologist Emeritus, where he continued to publish geologic maps of his beloved North Cascades.

While at Stanford, Rowland found his tribe with the Stanford Alpine Club. There he made life-long friendships forged during memorable mountaineering adventures. The stories of his SAC climbs and skiing expeditions are legend. As an accomplished mountaineer, he was a long-time member of the American Alpine Club. Notable climbs included Lost Arrow Spire (CA), Shiprock (NM), Hoover Tower (CA), and first ascents of Mt La Perouse (AK) and the North Ridge of Mt Johannesburg (WA). While on a Fulbright in Austria he also enjoyed climbs in the French Alps, and an ascent of the Matterhorn.

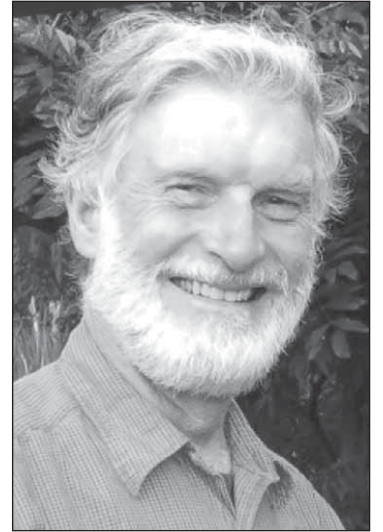
While his summers were devoted to field work, during the rest of the year at home in Portola Valley, he enjoyed working in his darkroom, remodeling his 1920's-built home, and volunteering on Portola Valley's Conservation Committee and its Geologic Safety Committee. He was instrumental in persuading the Town to move the Town Center to the west, away from the San Andreas Fault. He was also a familiar figure on his bicycle on his daily commute, rain or shine, to work in Menlo Park.

For years, he sang bass in the Stanford Symphonic Chorus, and in field camps he entertained his field assistants and fellow geologists with his guitar and an endless repertoire of folk- and climbing songs.

Rowland believed geology should be accessible to the wider public, and enjoyed writing for the curious layman. With his good friend and colleague, Dwight Crowder, he co-authored *Routes and rocks: hiker's guide to the North Cascades from Glacier Peak to Lake Chelan* (The Mountaineers, 1965). He followed this with his popular books, *Guide to the geology of Olympic National Park* (University of Washington Press, 1975), and, co-authored with colleague and friend, Ralph Haugerud, *Geology of the North Cascades: a mountain mosaic* (The Mountaineers, 1999). His last book, *Rock pick and ice axe: recollections of a mountaineering geologist* (2022) is published by his family.

Rowland is survived by his devoted wife of 52 years, Karin (Kajsa) Eckelmeyer, his sons Whitney and Michael, their mother Lesley Stark Tabor, and grandsons Merce Tabor and Kaito Tabor. His sister, Anne Tabor Winston, predeceased him. Contributions in his memory may be made to any organization devoted to the preservation of our beautiful, natural world.

PAID OBITUARY



COMMUNITY BRIEFS

continued from page 6

2022 May Day logo art contest

Apply to create the logo for Woodside's 100th annual May Day celebration. This year's theme is "homecoming."

The competition is open to preschoolers through eighth graders. The logo will appear on Woodside banners around town, the May Day web page, and communications for May Day 2022.

Submit an entry by Friday, Feb. 18. Winners will be announced on Monday, Feb. 28.

Find out more at tinyurl.com/maydayartcontest2022.

Town of Portola Valley updates

Due to supply chain issues, conversion of Portola Valley's Historic Schoolhouse for hybrid government meetings has been delayed.

Town staffers are hopeful that by March they can start holding meetings there again.

Town Hall has been closed since Dec. 24 and the closure was extended until Feb. 14 while staff works remotely.

Anyone with questions or concerns about the policy can contact Town Manager Jeremy Dennis at jdennis@portolavalley.net.

Go to portolavalley.net for more information and to access online services.

PV-based Lyme disease foundation raises \$8 million

The Bay Area Lyme Foundation announced last week that it's raised \$8 million since the start of the pandemic for research and education programs aimed at making Lyme disease easy to diagnose and simple to cure.

"Although the pandemic presented us with many extraordinary hurdles, it also helped people understand the complicated aspects of infectious diseases — including the importance of accurate diagnostics, the role of antibodies, and the power of effective treatments — all of which are — and continue to be — huge factors in our fight against Lyme and tick-borne diseases," said Linda Giampa, executive director of the Portola Valley-based nonprofit, in a press release.

"The similarities between Lyme and COVID-19 clearly show the critical nature of scientific pursuit, progress and education," Giampa said. "The foundation demonstrates consistent, measurable progress unlocking the mysteries of tick-borne diseases, which remain one of the most important health crises of our time."

Learn more at bayarealyme.org.

Sacred Heart recognized for increased diversity in computer science

The College Board awarded the AP Computer Science Female Diversity Award to Sacred Heart Preparatory in Atherton for its work to expand young women's enrollment in AP Computer Science Principles during the 2020-21 school year, according to a school press release. Sacred Heart is one of 760 schools nationwide that's being recognized for the honor.

"There are all sorts of bias issues, even in things like facial recognition algorithms," computer science teacher Kevin Morris said in the release. "The biggest barrier is getting students to see themselves as computer scientists ... I don't want students to think, 'I've never done this before, so it's not for me.'"

He said that all of the computer science courses at the school



Courtesy Sacred Heart Schools, Atherton

Thea Fonstad, left, a junior, and sophomore **Pierce Gurtner** in an AP Computer Science Principles course at Sacred Heart Schools in Atherton.

are designed for total novices. "I'll teach you what you need to know," Morris said.

There are more than a half-dozen girls enrolled in AP computer science this semester and several are considering majoring in computer science in college, he said.

— *Angela Swartz*

Purchase tennis court keys

Keys to access to the Arrilaga Family Gymnasium tennis courts on 600 Alma St. are now available for purchase that will be valid through Feb. 1 to Jan. 1,

2023.

Keys purchased between Jan. 1 and June 30 are \$63 for residents and \$127 for nonresidents, which includes those living in unincorporated Menlo Park. Between July 1 and Dec. 31, the prices drop to \$42 for residents and \$84 for nonresidents. Tennis court reservations are \$17 for residents and \$22 for nonresidents per hour.

Courts are open Monday to Friday, 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. For more information call 650-330-2220.

County clerk's office extend hours for February marriages

The San Mateo County Clerk's Office is extending office hours on a few days in February for those who want to seal the deal on Valentine's Day or on dates full of twos.

The clerk's office will perform wedding ceremonies from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Feb. 14 and Feb. 22. (The office also held extended hours on Feb.

2.) This will allow the office to double the number of ceremonies held in one day, from four to eight.

The office is located at 555 County Center, Redwood City. To view details on fees or schedule a ceremony, go to smcacre.org/civil-wedding-ceremonies.

Menlo Park resumes Sunday library hours

As of Jan. 30, the Menlo Park and Belle Haven libraries are open again on Sundays. Hours are now Monday to Wednesday, from noon to 6 p.m., and Thursday to Sunday, from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

— *Lloyd Lee*

New toll lanes open on Highway 101 this month

New express lanes on U.S. Highway 101 from the Santa Clara County line to Whipple Avenue in Redwood City officially open on Friday, Feb. 11, officials with the San Mateo Transit District announced. The express lanes will operate from 5 a.m. to 8 p.m. on weekdays.

Express lanes are available for drivers enrolled in the FasTrak system. All customers must have a FasTrak Flex to qualify for free or reduced tolls in the express lanes, as it allows them to disclose how many passengers they are carrying, officials said. Those without valid FasTrak accounts will be in violation and are subject to fines and penalties.

People driving in carpools with three or more people, as well as buses, will be able to travel free of charge in the express lanes. Customers driving clean air vehicles such as cars that run on fuel cells, battery, or plug-in hybrids that have a valid clean-air vehicle decal from the Department of Motor Vehicles will qualify for a 50% toll discount when the lanes first open, officials said.

The express-lane project will continue, with lanes being extended to the northern end, up from Whipple Avenue to Interstate Highway 380. The lanes lead directly into express lanes in Santa Clara County.

More information about the project can be found at 101express.com

— *Bay City News Service*

THE ALMANAC OPEN HOMES

LOS ALTOS

6261 Desert Flame Drive	\$1,575,000
Sat/Sun 1:00-4:00	4BD/2BA
Compass	650-996-0123
686 Spargur Drive	\$7,600,000
Sat 12:30-4:00	6BD/6BA
JLee Realty	650-857-1000

MENLO PARK

433 O' Connor Street	\$2,988,000
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30	5BD/3.5BA
DeLeon Realty	650-669-8088

PALO ALTO

3673 Ramona Circle	\$1,988,000
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30	3BD/2BA
DeLeon Realty	650-459-3888

PALO ALTO

173 Creekside Drive	\$2,788,000
Sat/Sun 12:30-4:30	4BD/3BA
Compass	650-788-9235
470 Martinsen Court	\$3,188,000
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30	4BD/2BA
Compass	650-740-1580
1566 Hamilton Avenue	\$4,998,000
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30	5BD/4BA
Sereno - Palo Alto	650-269-7266
3462 Bryant Street	\$3,300,000
Sat 1:30-4:30/Sun 2:00-4:00	6BD/4BA
Midtown Realty Inc	650-321-1596

PORTOLA VALLEY

835 Westridge Drive	\$8,988,000
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30	5BD/7.5BA
DeLeon Realty	650-900-7000

Legend: Condo (C), Townhome (T).

Agents: submit open homes at AlmanacNews.com/real_estate

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SCHOOLS

continued from page 1

“The month of January has been eventful!” Woodside Principal Karen van Putten said in a note to families on Monday. “I applaud all of our students, staff and families for working through the health and safety protocols and doing your best to return to teaching and learning with consistency and demonstrating grace and understanding as we learn to live and thrive in the midst of the uptick in COVID cases. Daily attendance has steadily increased and I appreciate everyone’s efforts in following health and safety protocols.”

In the Ravenswood City School District, there were 63 cases reported last week. These numbers are comparable to the week before (65 cases), but down from the district’s peak of 120 cases the second week back from winter break.

“We want to hope that we have reached the peak, but the most recent data does not change our behavior in implementing safety protocols,” said Superintendent Gina Sudaria in an email, adding that the district is continuing to test aggressively and host vaccine clinics.

Last week there were four cases in the Woodside

Elementary School District, which has roughly 360 students. The surge had a high of 19 cases reported the week of Jan. 10.

“As the current COVID outlook improves, which it has this week, we will begin to get back some of what we have missed and what we were on the verge of before this surge,” said Superintendent Steve Frank in a message to families on Jan. 28.

“The last two years have taught us much,” he said. “... What lies ahead as far as mandates and guidelines from the state regarding COVID-19 is a mystery, but we do seem to be coming to a much better place, and it will be here sooner than we realize.”

He said he’s hopeful that annual events like May Day, the Operetta and the eighth grade graduation ceremony will go on as planned, and that parent volunteers will be back on campus soon.

Last week, there were 19 cases in the 1,100-student Las Lomitas Elementary School District, which has a middle school in Menlo Park and elementary school in Atherton. It reported 37 cases the week prior.

The Portola Valley School District, which has about 470 students, reported just five cases last week after seeing 26 cases its first

week back from winter break.

Private schools

At Sacred Heart Schools in Atherton, which has 1,195 students in preschool through 12th grade, there were 27 cases reported last week, on par with the number of cases it reported the week prior (30).

The school went to remote learning for its first two days back from winter break to give students time to test. It reported 166 cases that week.

The 400-student Woodside Priory, a Catholic Benedictine day and boarding school in Portola Valley, went remote its first week back from the holiday break as well. There were 23 cases reported to the school that week and 15 the following. On Jan. 24 there were six cases. **A**

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

Else Towle

September 25, 1933 – January 23, 2022



Else Muller Towle passed away on January 23, 2022, in Monterey, California. Else was born in San Mateo, California, to Paul and Asta Muller. She attended San Mateo Junior College and received an Associate of Arts Degree in 1953. It is here when she met the love of her life, Herb Towle, who was a cadet in the Air Force. Else continued her education at San Jose State in which she was a member of Kappa Alpha Theta Sorority. Herb and Else married in 1954 in Greenville, South Carolina, where Herb was stationed.

Herb and Else moved to Portola Valley, California, where they raised their three children. Else and Herb were very active in the tennis community at Alpine Hills and Ladera Oaks Tennis and Swim Clubs.

Else volunteered in her children’s classroom in the Portola Valley School District. She enjoyed her weekly Bridge games with friends and summers in Lake Tahoe with her family. In 1978, the family moved to the Monterey Peninsula where she and Herb belonged to the Beach and Tennis Club in Pebble Beach. She remained in Monterey until her death. Else is survived by her children Kathy Kopf (Jamie), Brad (Leanna), and Karen Rynewicz (Steve), as well as 5 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren. She is predeceased by her husband, Herb, and her sister, Lillian. Private services will be held.

PAID OBITUARY

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GHOST GUNS

continued from page 5

The Redwood City Police Department reported that two ghost guns were recovered in 2019 and in 2020, of 75 and 57 total guns, respectively. By comparison, seven ghost guns out of 56 guns total were recovered by December 2021.

In South San Francisco, nine ghost guns were recovered in 2019; in 2021, over a fourth of the 46 firearms recovered were homemade firearms, according to Sgt. Sean Curmi.

Curmi said the majority of ghost guns seized in South San Francisco have been handguns, while an estimated four to five have been AR-15 type rifles. The firearms were recovered during a variety of incidents, including traffic stops, shootings, robberies, and auto burglaries.

Only one ghost gun was recovered in 2019 in Daly City, but 10 each were seized in 2020 and

2021, according to Daly City Police Department Sgt. Brandon Scholes — most seized in conjunction with drug possession or drug sales.

The city of San Mateo reported 16 ghost guns recovered in 2021, an increase of 166% since 2019. The East Palo Alto Police Department reported six ghost guns recovered in 2021. One ghost gun was recovered in Menlo Park in 2021.

In Santa Clara County, the Mountain View Police Department recovered four ghost guns and 20 traditional firearms in 2021, spokeswoman Katie Nelson said.

One of the ghost guns was found during a disturbance call; two were found during separate traffic stops; and one was recently found during the execution of a search warrant. The department doesn't disclose the types of ghost firearms, she said.

Homemade guns have even begun appearing in cities such as

Palo Alto. Palo Alto police confiscated two ghost guns in 2021, one each in May and June, Lt. Brian Philip said. Police captured one ghost gun in 2020 but none in 2019.

Each of the three ghost guns was discovered by patrol officers during vehicle stops for traffic violations.

"It is unknown what sort of crimes or incidents in which those firearms may have been involved prior to us seizing them. The guns were submitted to the crime lab for tracing; as of now, they have not yet been connected to any known crimes," Philip said.

Given the low number, Palo Alto police wouldn't characterize the ghost guns as a "trend" in the city, Philip said.

"With that said, other jurisdictions in the Bay Area have seen substantially more cases, including cases where the guns were seized or used during or after the commission of major



Courtesy Getty Images

This illustration shows a pistol manufactured using fused-deposition modeling (FDM) and stereolithography (SLA) 3D printing technologies.

crimes," he added.

Ghost gun confiscation is rapidly rising in Santa Clara County, said Marisa McKeown, supervising deputy district attorney for the county's Crime Strategies Unit. In 2015, there were just four confiscated ghost firearms in Santa Clara County. In 2018, the total rose to 63; by 2020, that figure was 135, a 114% increase. Although the figures for 2021 aren't complete, McKeown said the number would be higher.

drop-off isn't clear, although San Mateo District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe speculated that it may have something to do with the pandemic.

"Law enforcement was very cautious in their contact with the public during the last two years and perhaps contacts or detentions of citizens, where guns are sometimes found, that might have occurred in other years were not occurring during the pandemic," he said in an email.

Undersheriff Mark Robbins shared similar thoughts. "Especially in 2020, with lockdowns, there were far less people out. While I can't say for certain, this certainly is something to consider," he wrote in an email.

According to David Silberman, San Mateo County's chief deputy counsel, all items on the Sheriff's Office list are guns or parts that are defined as being a firearm (such as frames/receivers). The list is limited to those recovered from contract jurisdictions, such as Half Moon Bay, Millbrae, San Carlos, Portola Valley and Woodside, as well as unincorporated areas.

But even small numbers can be a cause for worry, given what they represent, said Redwood City's Captain Ashley Osborne.

"You look at the numbers, and it's not an overwhelming concern, although the increase is significant," said Osborne, noting that the numbers in Redwood

'The bottom line is, it's pretty unusual that there's a really legitimate reason for a ghost gun.'

PROFESSOR JOHN DONOHUE,
STANFORD LAW SCHOOL

"I would bet my paycheck it's probably at about 200," a roughly 48% increase over 2020, she said.

Although the overall rise in privately made firearms has been noticeable, some jurisdictions have contradictory data that their officials are struggling to explain.

The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office has seen a sharp decline in confiscation of homemade firearms: There were 33 ghost guns/parts seized in 2019, five in 2020 and six in 2021, according to a list the office compiled.

The reason for this significant

Public Notices

995 Fictitious Name Statement

EPRINTS AND DOCUMENT SERVICES
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 289862
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
EPrints and Document Services, located at 1120 Broadway Ave., Burlingame, CA 94010, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
F. SHARABIANLOU
1120 Broadway Ave.
Burlingame, CA 94010
S. SHARABIANLOU
1120 Broadway Ave.
Burlingame, CA 94010
This business is conducted by: Married Couple.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 10/31/2018. This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on December 31, 2021.
(ALM Jan. 21, 28; Feb. 4, 11, 2022)

YADIRA'S HOUSEKEEPING
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 289947
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Yadira's Housekeeping, located at 1431 Hill Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
YADIRA MAGANA GALVAN
1431 Hill 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 1-13-2022. This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 13, 2022.
(ALM Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25, 2022)

SELECT PHYSICAL THERAPY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 289976
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: Select Physical Therapy, located at 268 Redwood Shores Parkway, Redwood City, CA 94065, San Mateo County; Mailing address: 4714

Gettysburg Rd., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055.
Registered owner(s):
SELECT CAL PHYSICAL THERAPY, P.C.
4714 Gettysburg Rd.
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
California
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 January 19, 2022.
(ALM Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25, 2022)

SELECT PHYSICAL THERAPY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 289977
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Select Physical Therapy, located at 900 Veterans Blvd, Suite 230, San Mateo County; Mailing address: 4714 Gettysburg Rd., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055.
California
Registered owner(s):
SELECT CAL PHYSICAL THERAPY, P.C.
4714 Gettysburg Rd.
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
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 January 19, 2022.
(ALM Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25, 2022)

SELECT PHYSICAL THERAPY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 289979
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: Select Physical Therapy, located at 3532 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County; Mailing address: 4714 Gettysburg Rd., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055.
Registered owner(s):
SELECT CAL PHYSICAL THERAPY, P.C.
4714 Gettysburg Rd.
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
California
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 January 19, 2022.
(ALM Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25, 2022)

SELECT PHYSICAL THERAPY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 289978
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):
SELECT CAL PHYSICAL THERAPY, P.C.
4714 Gettysburg Rd.
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
California
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 January 19, 2022.
(ALM Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25, 2022)

SELECT PHYSICAL THERAPY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 289980
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Select Physical Therapy, located at 540 Ralston Ave., Suite B, Belmont, CA 94002, San Mateo County; Mailing address: 4714 Gettysburg Rd., Mechanicsburg, PA 17055.
Registered owner(s):
SELECT CAL PHYSICAL THERAPY, P.C.
4714 Gettysburg Rd.
Mechanicsburg, PA 17055
California
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 January 19, 2022.
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City tripled in 2021, from two to seven. “If we saw that triple again, that would certainly start to get into a territory where we’re much more concerned about it.”

Efforts to combat the proliferation

Law enforcement agencies throughout the Bay Area are trying to figure out how to track down and stop the proliferation of these elusive weapons.

San Mateo County Sgt. Michael Leishman operates a task force that collaborates with all local police departments, as well as the ATF, the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Areas program and Northern California Regional Intelligence Center. He said that social media has helped facilitate the ghost gun industry by creating a sort of online marketplace for people to network and share ideas, adding that these platforms also provide a new source of investigative material.

“A lot of these individuals will use open source media or social media to communicate ... and oftentimes we can use that as investigative leads,” he said. “We’ll see certain patterns or images that catch our attention, and we’ll start digging further.”

At a local level, South San Francisco’s Curmi said there’s little that can be done to directly combat the ghost gun industry, other than locating the illegal firearms and assisting with investigations led by other local and state agencies.

Redwood City’s Osborne agreed, saying that, while the department works diligently to enforce existing gun laws, “a municipal police department doesn’t play a big role in the regulation of firearm sales.”

‘We have no clue how many of these firearms are actually still on the street.’

MIKE SENA, WESTERN REGION CRIME GUN INTELLIGENCE WORKING GROUP

In an effort to unite local and statewide efforts against crime guns, including privately made firearms, Mike Sena, executive director for the Northern California High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area and the Northern California Regional Intelligence Center, helped establish the Western Region Crime Gun Intelligence Working Group, a collection of law enforcement staff, prosecutors, crime analysts and forensic lab professionals from California, Nevada and Arizona.

“There was a huge disconnect between prosecutors, the forensics labs, officers on the street, the investigators and the analysts



Courtesy San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office

On Jan. 20, federal and local law enforcement agents and detectives executed multiple arrest and search warrants throughout San Mateo County and at one residence in Oakland and seized 15 firearms of various types including ghost guns, thousands of rounds of ammunition, automatic pistols and a 3D printer.

who were looking at various aspects of the manufacture and distribution and use of these types of weapons and criminal activity,” he said.

Sena started hearing reports about unserialized weapons and 3D printers in early 2020, and at first, he said, “it didn’t make a whole lot of sense.” Over the course of the next few months, as it became clear that something significant was happening, he began gathering a group of experts and analysts to look into the new spate of illegal gun-related incidents.

One of Sena’s main goals is to work on educating law enforcement about firearm laws and reporting unserialized guns to get a better sense of the scope of the problem — and the networks of illegal trafficking. The group is also working to develop sources and increase communication among agencies, which is important for identifying when different jurisdictions are investigating the same suspects.

Silberman said in an email that the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office is actively collaborating with the Western Region Crime Gun Intelligence Working Group: San Mateo County Sheriff Carlos Bolanos “is dedicated to supporting the (group’s) effort to combat illicit ghost guns with the combined resources of his crime lab, crime analysts and detectives.”

The Santa Clara County District Attorney’s Crime Strategies Unit has established the Gun-Related Intelligence Program (GRIP), a crime-reduction initiative that is specific to illegal firearms, including ghost guns.

With three intelligence analysts, investigators and prosecutors, GRIP each week identifies shooters and traffickers and plans out strategies to apprehend and prosecute criminals involved in gun-related crimes. They look at trends and patterns and get restraining orders.

The GRIP team works with law-enforcement agencies to plan and execute searches and find the guns and perpetrators and get them off the streets — preferably before they commit any violent crimes, McKeown said.

This year, more than 1,000 law-enforcement officers received training on gun laws. And detectives from multiple cities in Santa Clara County meet regularly with members of the GRIP unit to share information, Palo Alto’s Philip said.

Could new legislation stem the tide of ghost guns?

Leaders at all levels of government are actively working to close loopholes on ghost guns.

In September, San Francisco — which has seen a 2,600% increase in confiscated homemade firearms since 2016 — the city’s supervisors voted unanimously to ban the sale and possession of ghost gun kits and parts and prohibit construction of unserialized firearms. Violation of the ordinance, which was officially signed into law in early December, is punishable by a \$1,000 fine and further legal action from the police and the city attorney.

In the East Bay, Oakland recently joined other cities like Los Angeles in proposing new legislation to ban ghost guns outright.

Federally, the Biden administration is pursuing several possible regulations, such as amending federal legislation so that laws about firearms are extended to include gun kits and parts.

In May 2021, the ATF published Proposed Rule 2021R-05 in the Federal Register, which, if adopted, would amend the definition of a “firearm.” The rule would require serial-number registrations on the gun frame, or “receiver,” and would define which licensed firearms dealers

can be registered to add the serial number. The rule would also require certain manufacturer’s identifying information.

“If it passes, it would be a major departure. Ghost-gun kits could potentially be illegal,” McKeown said.

In a controversial move, Gov. Gavin Newsom proposed last December a law that would allow “private citizens to sue who manufactures, distributes, or sells an assault weapon or ghost gun kit or parts.”

In response, the California Rifle and Pistol Association said in a statement: “The latest attack on law-abiding California gun owners is Newsom’s response to a recent Supreme Court ruling reacting to a Texas law prohibiting abortion. Law-abiding gun owners and businesses are not the cause of criminal misuse of firearms. Yet, Newsom and other anti-gun politicians seem to believe the threat of frivolous lawsuits will somehow address their own failures.”

Similar to Newsom’s idea, in January, state Assemblymember Mike Gipson (D-Carson), chairman of the Select Committee on Police Reform, introduced Assembly Bill (AB) 1594. The bill would allow civil lawsuits against a gunmaker or industry member for creating or maintaining a public nuisance — conditions that are dangerous to public health and welfare — if their failure to follow federal, state, or local law caused injury or death.

There are also California state laws that have been approved and are waiting to go into effect. On July 1, 2022, anyone selling ghost-gun parts must follow similar rules to those for selling ammunition, including requiring background checks of buyers.

Also on July 1, the state’s expanded “red flag” law will make it possible for concerned employers, coworkers, family members and schools to request a court to

seize ghost guns from a person who might pose a danger to themselves or others.

Another law, state Assembly Bill 879, which goes into effect in July 2024, requires the sale of firearm precursor parts — necessary components such as a receiver or frame — to be conducted by or processed through a licensed firearm precursor part vendor. The bill requires an application process for firearm precursor part vendors. A currently licensed firearm dealer or licensed ammunition vendor would automatically qualify.

In July 2025, the Department of Justice will be required to electronically approve and retain the records of the purchase or transfer of firearm precursor parts through a vendor. Sena said violations of these AB 879 will be misdemeanors.

“Unfortunately that does not always translate to deterring criminals,” she said.

The dangerous bottom line

In some ways, ghost guns are a novel development amplifying an existing problem of illegally owned weapons.

“It’s just another avenue for bad things to happen,” said John Donohue, an economist and professor at Stanford Law School. Of primary concern is that most of the people buying ghost guns are, for criminal or other reasons, not supposed to have access to guns in the first place.

“The bottom line is, it’s pretty unusual that there’s a really legitimate reason for a ghost gun,” Donohue said. With “more gun dealers in the United States than Starbucks and McDonald’s combined,” he said it’s fairly easy for a legal buyer to find and purchase an already assembled firearm.

Leishman agreed. “With no checks and balances, you’re really going to find yourself in a position where the guns are going to get in the wrong hands,” he said, adding that the black market is now “saturated” with illegal weapons. “And unfortunately, individuals who are really targeting these types of firearms are the ones that are either prior felons or engaging in criminal activity.”

Though Sena said law enforcement has made some progress in the last year, he thinks what’s being uncovered is just the tip of the iceberg.

“When you talk about getting a handle on the situation, I think we have a long way to go,” he said. “We have no clue how many of these firearms are actually still on the street.” ■

Email Staff Writers Leah Worthington and Sue Dremann at lworthington@rwcpulse.com and sdremann@pawekly.com.



Art therapy

Palo Alto Art Center show explores creativity as response to challenging times

By Sheryl Nonnenberg

What have people been doing to keep calm and sane during the pandemic? Cleaning closets, baking bread, learning a new language?

Karen Kienzle, director of the Palo Alto Art Center, was musing about this over a year ago and thought it might be a good theme for a show. She recruited Ann Trinca, an independent curator, to organize a group exhibition that is now on display. “Creative Attention: Art and Community Restoration” features the multimedia work of 18 artists and, according to the press statement, addresses “practices of mending, healing, restoration, belonging, sustainability and resiliency.” The show is on view until May 21.

Trinca explained that she was contacted in October of 2020 with the idea of an exhibition that would respond to current political events and discord, as well as the impact of the pandemic.

“We wanted to incorporate programs, partnerships and installations that would help people cope with distress and suffering,” she said. “We also wanted to celebrate the positive effects of looking at art, learning about others and opening your



Top: Tucker Nichols’ “Flowers for Sick People” addresses the need for healing during a time of illness.

Above: The “Creative Attention” show includes Lynn Beldner’s “Emergency Blankets,” center background, and Johnna Arnold’s “Expanding Space Project,” right foreground. Show title lettering by Christine Wong Yap. Photos courtesy Palo Alto Art Center.

heart.”

Because she believes that “every artist is a healer,” it was no small task to narrow the scope to just 18 artists. “We researched artists who had previously partnered with their communities or had produced new work in reaction to the pandemic,” she said.

It might be expected that a show with such serious themes might be heavy going. That’s not the case here, both because there is an array of media (everything from video to ceramics) but also because the artists were free to express their own take on the subject.

Most of the work is contemporary, often created just last year, but the show opens with four bright, bold and hopeful prints by Corita Kent, dated from the early 1970s. The serigraphs here are typical of her playful abstractions, usually involving calligraphic strokes in primary colors, each with thoughtful quotations by such literary notables as D.H. Lawrence penned

at the bottom. They may not be current but they are still relevant and food for thought.

Jeremiah Jenkins is represented by an eye-catching display of ceramic bowls and plates, each a simple form in off-white, that have been embellished with shards of blue and white pottery. These broken pieces are affixed in such a way as to be decorative, as well as a great example of recycling. According to the label statement, the artist is interested in “the way things are made and the way they break.”

Addressing the need for healing during a time of illness is the work of Tucker Nichols. His “Flowers for Sick People” could not be more homespun — small, childlike renderings (done in oil on canvas) of flowers that are displayed with a penciled message on the wall below. The artist started posting the flower drawings on his website and social media in order to “use the everyday language of flowers to soothe everyday suffering with everyday kindness.” Just looking

at them will bring a smile.

On a more somber note, Angela Hennessy has created a large-scale wall hanging that is dedicated to her African American ancestors. Made from synthetic hair that has been braided, woven and crocheted, the piece commands attention, both because of its bold black and white contrast but also the laborious nature of its construction. In her label statement, Hennessy, who is an associate professor at California College of the Arts, said that her work “calls upon African and European grief and mourning practices, as well as the significance of hair in racial identity and beauty politics.”

Lynn Beldner, a fabric and fiber artist, has three pieces in the show, including “Emergency Blankets.” This piece consists of nine small squares of flannel fabric in an array of colors and patterns that have been bordered in corresponding colors of satin and hung on the wall. It may be the colors, or the softness of

the fabrics, but this piece felt like a comforting hug. The label explains that Beldner made these pieces right after 9/11, “but they still feel emotionally and conceptually necessary.” And, she sagely notes, “emergencies seem to be our new norm.”

A lighter approach has been taken by San Francisco artist Leah Rosenberg with her video piece, “At a Loss for Words.” As the title implies, the piece consists of 10 one-minute videos created to look like silent movies — complete with ragtime soundtrack. In these charming black-and-white vignettes, the artist turns the camera upon herself as she makes tea, sorts a stack of books, plays guitar and ices a cake (to name just a few tasks), all in the comfort of her white pajamas. It’s a fun and clever take on how we have all learned to make the best of isolation by making even the simple tasks meaningful and fun.

When asked why this exhibition is especially timely, given the current pandemic situation, Trinca responded, “I see artists as second-responders, attending to our emotional needs and offering hope. Art can help us relax and slow down and it helps us to connect to other people. My hope for this exhibition is that visitors are deeply affected and have the chance to process complicated emotions.”

The center will host an artist discussion on March 4, a Community Day Celebration on April 10 and is sponsoring weekly virtual meditation sessions, Thursdays at noon through June 30. For more information, visit cityofpaloalto.org. ■

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Food & Drink

CUBAN KITCHEN DUO COOKS UP 'A MEAL AND TWO MIC'S'

MOTHER-DAUGHTER TEAM ON OPENING PENINSULA'S ONLY FAST-CASUAL CUBAN EATERY, LAUNCHING PODCAST



By Sara Hayden

Lynna Martinez grew up hearing from her parents who'd immigrated from Cuba and Mexico that acceptable career paths included becoming a doctor or a lawyer. Not on that list? Becoming a cook, which was what she really wanted to do.

Still, "I (had) this dream of being the first fast-casual Cuban restaurant in the nation," Martinez says. She studied for a degree in economics while day-dreaming about going to culinary school in France and reading about Ray Kroc, the man behind McDonald's.

After a career in banking and being a self-proclaimed soccer mom, Martinez decided to pursue that dream she'd held since high school. Now, Martinez and her daughter Lilah Arrazcaeta run Cuban Kitchen with their small team in San Mateo, drawing customers from across the country. The journey has been filled with twists and turns — which they share with hilarity and heart in their new mother-daughter podcast "A Meal and Two Mics."

"It's never too late, but it's easier to start when you're young," Martinez says with a laugh. "I'm pushing 60, and it would be a lot easier if I were pushing 30."

"Everything works out. We all end up where we're meant to be. This whole journey we've been doing together now, the biggest lesson I've taken away (from it) is your perspective can make or break you," Arrazcaeta says.

What is their perspective? "Really, really optimistic, and looking for the humor in everything."

Recently, Martinez and Arrazcaeta caught up with the Peninsula Foodist and shared a healthy helping of wisdom and humor. You can check out "A Meal and

Two Mics" on the Cuban Kitchen website, delightfully accompanied by "Cafe con Leche" from John Santos and the Machete Ensemble.

A FOOD TRUCK GETS ROLLING

While in New Jersey in 2009, Martinez launched a colorful food truck — actually a converted delivery truck.

At the time, Martinez and Arrazcaeta took their chances with parking tickets amid 20-minute parking limits. Simultaneously running a coffee maker, rice cooker and other appliances would blow out the electricity.

The goal was to secure a brick-and-mortar space, but that didn't pan out in the beginning. One space fell through, another closed after a short stint. Martinez says it closed because it was the wrong place for their business model; Arrazcaeta says it was because she was headed to college.

In any case, it was time for both Martinez and Arrazcaeta to pursue their individual dreams elsewhere.

Arrazcaeta decided to study visual media arts and philosophy, animation and motion media, so she set her sights on the West Coast. Martinez thought that sounded good too, so in 2013 they made their move to the Peninsula.

"The reason I moved to San Mateo was the weather. It's that simple," Martinez says. "I was really not having the Northeast. We did that because the money was good coming out of business school."

Getting back into the workforce after her time as a soccer mom was tough, Martinez recalls. "I was happy to get whatever job I could get."

She worked as a finance

manager at a dealership in Half Moon Bay, and then sold high-end electronics in Sunnyvale. On the job, someone asked what she would do if she could. The answer: "I'd open my own Cuban restaurant."

FROM ELECTRONICS TO CHIPOTLE

Martinez didn't have the money upfront to start a restaurant, so she started working at Chipotle to get a view of how its fast-casual concept worked. She left her six-figure sales salary and became a crew member at a Chipotle store in 2014.

Soon after, Chipotle recruited Martinez for a restaurateurship program. "That kind of appealed to me because it made good coin," Martinez says. It was a good opportunity — but it wasn't her own restaurant.

As luck would have it, a San Mateo landlord Martinez initially contacted about finding a restaurant space reached out several years later, saying that someone had helped him when he was younger and he wanted to pay it forward. He offered to help with her restaurant's equipment plans, layout, electrical, plumbing, signage and more.

Martinez borrowed enough money from her relatives and the landlord to pay down the first couple of weeks. Then, in 2015, Cuban Kitchen opened in its own brick-and-mortar location.

"Within three months I was able to pay the first month of rent," Martinez says.

CUBAN KITCHEN TAKES OFF

In those early days, Martinez pawned her Cartier and Tiffany jewelry from her time as a banker.

One of the first customers, who remains one of the restaurant's biggest clients, was a woman that they had babysat for before. They got the support of an angel investor.

Now, customers are drawn to Cuban Kitchen's fast-casual concept and dishes influenced by the Martinez family's Cuban recipes.

"I always had the good fortune of living with home chefs who were not only passionate about cooking and entertaining, but really good home chefs, starting with my dad, my mom. When I went away to college, I lived with my dad's sister in Chicago who was the best cook," Martinez says. "I was already around people who loved to cook — and cook really well."

The menu touts the "Best" Cubano S'wich with a choice of sauces such as guava-habanero barbecue and mint-mojito dressing; plates of chicken schnitzel-milanesa, pulled pork and vaca frita (fried, crispy shredded flank steak); and limited-time specials like arroz con pollo and oxtail stew.

UPLIFTING OTHER ENTREPRENEURS

Starting a restaurant was Martinez's idea; making a podcast was Arrazcaeta's. They do both together.

"The podcast was a way for us to share our story," Arrazcaeta says. "It was very sweet to do that with my mom."

Their small business continues to face challenges daily. As it does, Martinez and Arrazcaeta want to use their

platform to uplift other female entrepreneurs in the hospitality industry and other industries similar to theirs.

"There are hundreds of thousands of restaurants that didn't survive the last two years. We're fortunate to still be around," Martinez says.

"We're looking to give back to our community because in the last two years we survived because of this local community," Arrazcaeta says.

Sometimes they give back in the form of "compassion projects," using a portion of what they make to support local schools or fundraisers and efforts to stop anti-Asian hate. Lately, giving back has also taken the shape of conversations with other entrepreneurs to discuss permits and licenses, the pandemic and more.

Cuban Kitchen keeps cooking, and Martinez and Arrazcaeta keep their sights set on that first dream of sharing their fast-casual Cuban concept.

"She's probably the most ambitious person that I know. She's a great example of how you can never be too old to pursue your passion," Arrazcaeta says of her mom. "She's always doing what she loves, and always doing it with love. It's really inspiring. That's what I love to see her do in the restaurant with me. That's what inspires me to go to work every day. It's her."

Cuban Kitchen, 3799 S. El Camino Real, San Mateo; 650-627-4636. Instagram: @cubankitchen. ■

Clockwise from top right: Mother and daughter Lynna Martinez and Lilah Arrazcaeta outside of their restaurant, Cuban Kitchen; guava-cranberry nectar; New York cheesecake drenched in homemade guava purée; the "Best Cubano S'wich; ropa vieja served with rice, Cuban black beans and sweet plantain. Photos courtesy Cuban Kitchen.

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