

# The Almanac

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

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## A new Guild-ed age

Renovated Menlo Park movie palace reopens this weekend as the Peninsula's newest live music venue

By Heather Zimmerman

The Guild Theatre is no stranger to big names: For over 90 years, a steady parade of stars flickered across the screen of the Menlo Park movie palace. But now, the names that appear on the marquee will be performing live inside The Guild. After an extensive renovation, it will open on Friday, Feb. 25, as a rare, brand-new venue for live music on the Peninsula.

First among those names on the marquee will be jazz pianist and songwriter Robert Glasper on Feb. 25, kicking off an opening weekend that also features “psychedelic-soul” band Monophonics on Feb. 26 and funky blues and R&B with Eric Krasno and Son Little on Feb. 27.

A love of live music spurred the founding of the Peninsula Arts Guild, the nonprofit that operates The Guild Theatre, said Drew Dunlevie, the organization's president.

“I'm one of these people who goes to a lot of concerts. I really enjoy live music and I have for a long time. I have a group of friends and we hit a lot of shows,” Dunlevie said, noting that with many bands on tour stopping in San Francisco, it's not always feasible to make the trip up the Peninsula for shows, especially mid-week.

“I would like to be able, on a Tuesday or Wednesday night, to see something close (to home),” he said.

Dunlevie, a Menlo Park resident, founded the Peninsula Arts Guild with investor Pete Briger and entrepreneur Thomas Layton. The group broke ground on The Guild Theatre's renovation in late 2019. The theater, at 949 El Camino Real, was built in the mid-1920s, according to the Menlo Park Historical



Courtesy Monophonics

**Monophonics plays** The Guild Theatre during its opening weekend on Feb. 26.

Association, and showed films up until fall 2019. It was last operated as an art house by Landmark Theatres, which still runs Palo Alto's Aquarius Theatre.

The Almanac toured The Guild Theatre a few days ahead of its Feb. 25 opening, as workers were putting finishing touches on a \$35 million renovation.

The venue's opening, originally slated for early February, was delayed several times by pandemic-related issues.

“What was really difficult for us, and I'm sure anyone who tried to build anything during a pandemic, was that there were

supply chain issues. We didn't know what parts were coming in,” said Tom Bailey, general manager of The Guild Theatre.

The stage curtain, for instance, is likely to arrive after the official opening night, but that won't be much of an obstacle after a renovation that amounted to almost a full rebuild.

The theater was taken down to just two original walls. The renovation included digging out a full basement and adding a mezzanine level, installing a state-of-the-art sound system, a high-quality ventilation system

See **GUILD THEATRE**, page 20



Magali Gauthier

**The Guild Theatre** in Menlo Park is set to open Feb. 25 after a \$35 million renovation.

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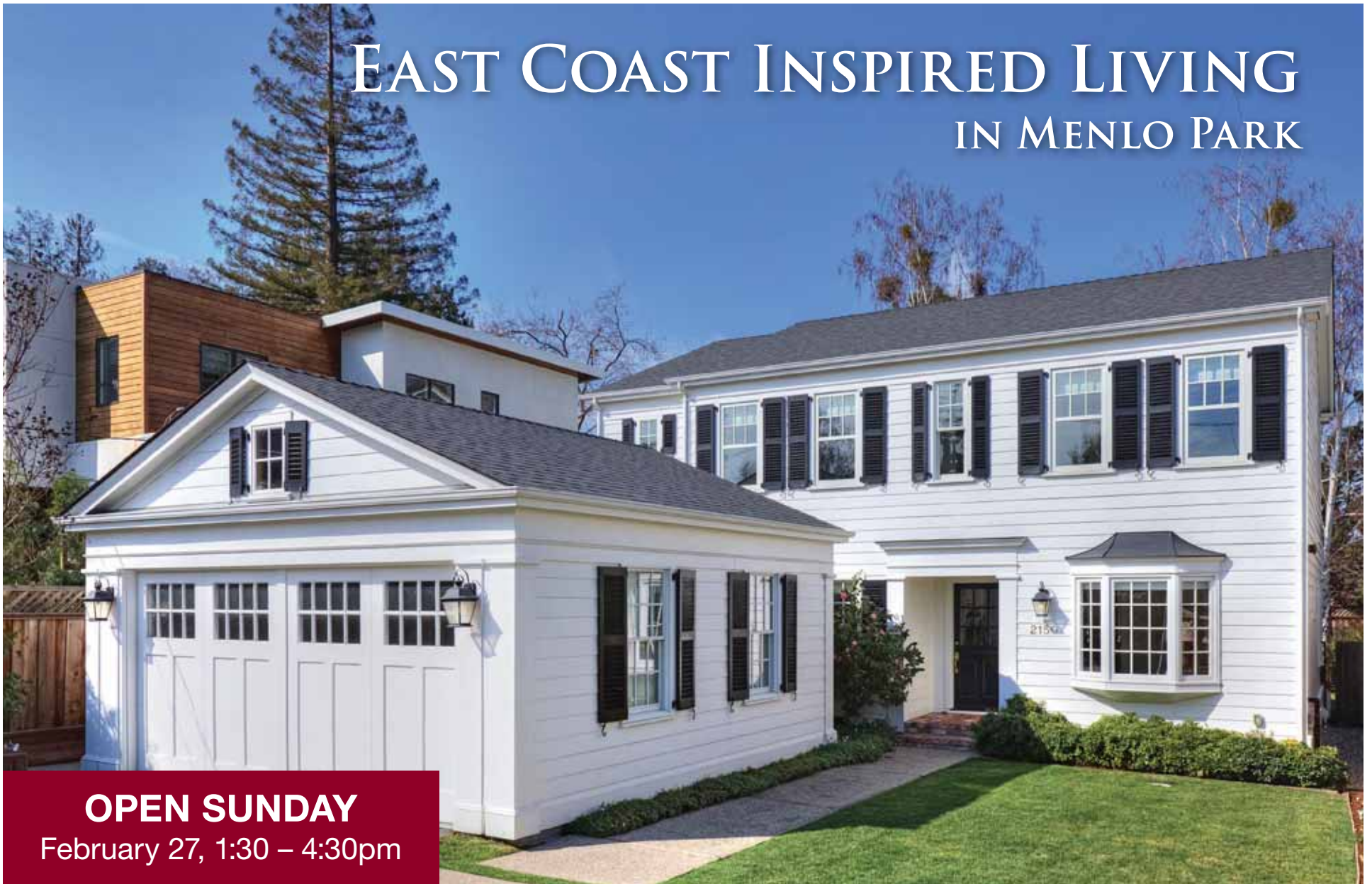
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# Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY



Magali Gauthier

**Mickey and Sloane**, students in Ormondale Elementary School's transitional kindergarten program, color in class in Portola Valley on Feb. 15.

## 'A gentler start' as districts prepare to expand transitional kindergarten

By Angela Swartz and Zoe Morgan

Fetching a classmate a Band-Aid, putting crayons away and gardening are just some of the activities on a typical day of transitional kindergarten.

Transitional kindergarten (TK) teachers say students are gaining important life skills in addition to academics. Although several local schools already offer TK, state legislation is taking effect this fall that requires all districts to add free programs for children who turn 5 between Sept. 2, 2022

and Feb. 2, 2023.

During the following school year, schools must offer TK to children who turn 5 between September 2023 and April 2023. The law requires that districts offer free education to all 4-year-olds once it is fully implemented during the 2025-26 school year.

Woodside Elementary School TK teacher Sonja Virgallito said the timing of the expansion is perfect since many students were kept home from preschool during the pandemic.

"It's a gentler start," she said, noting that there is a

lot of important development for children between the ages of 4 and 5. "Some kids really do struggle in kindergarten from the lack of experience. Depending on the kid, if they start their school career not having confidence, that can really affect their whole school career."

The average cost of private preschool in San Mateo County is about \$15,300 a year, according to 2018 data from the Population Reference Bureau. A free option for 4-year-olds could help level

See **TK**, page 14

## High school district reports zero new COVID-19 cases

The first week of school in January saw 710 reported cases in SUHSD

By Angela Swartz

The Sequoia Union High School District reached an important milestone on Feb. 18 — it's the first week of the school year with no new cases of COVID-19 reported on its campuses.

Although case counts remained in the single digits during the fall

semester, numbers jumped when students returned from winter break in January, with some 710 infections that week.

Cases have been steadily dropping, with 35 cases reported in the district last week, compared to 121 the week before.

"Although the updated data is promising, we continue being vigilant and focused on providing

our school community with as safe an environment that we can provide during a pandemic," said Superintendent Darnise Williams in a statement. "I would like to thank our school district team for being on the front lines and working to keep our schools open."

See **COVID-19 CASES**, page 13

## How to make a pretty good downtown even better

New Menlo Park study suggests cosmetic fixes, more housing, parking upgrades

By Lloyd Lee

While the city awaits the new Springline mixed-used development, Menlo Park released a study that examines the economic state of downtown Menlo Park and what the city could do to make Santa Cruz Avenue a more attractive retail strip.

The recommendations include continuing the street closures on the 600 and 800 block of Santa Cruz Avenue, using vacant stores for "pop-up" businesses and building more mixed-use development with residential units.

The study was conducted over several months last year by HdL, an economic consultant agency. HdL looked at Menlo Park's demographics and previous citywide measures, compared surrounding downtowns on the Peninsula, examined consumer demand and market supply data, and conducted a few focus group meetings in July and August with business owners, commercial real estate brokers and other key stakeholders.

The overall takeaway from the 30-page report is that the city's downtown is healthy, and that Menlo Park has been proactive to enliven the area with the street closures, the revival of

The Guild theater, the midweek French-themed street market "Bon Marché," and approving developments with residential units in the downtown area. Since the adoption of the Downtown Specific Plan in 2012, the city has approved 489 new residential units as of March 2019.

The city has also welcomed new businesses despite the pandemic, including Pedego Electric Bikes, 360 Fitness Superstore, Main Gallery, The Mandarin, Farmhouse Kitchen Thai Cuisine, Rug Center and Philz Coffee, the study said. But the city can do more.

"Downtown Menlo Park, with its strategic location, should be well positioned for new retail and restaurant possibilities," the study said, adding that it "has a solid foundation" that it can build upon, enabling it to better compete with the downtown in Redwood City, Palo Alto, Mountain View, Los Altos and other cities on the Peninsula.

The study defines Menlo Park's downtown as the six-block strip of 222 retail stores and other services on the square bordered by University Drive, El Camino Real, Oak Grove and Menlo avenues, with Santa Cruz Avenue being the "main

See **DOWNTOWN**, page 13



Lloyd Lee

**Left Bank restaurant** is one of several that set up an outdoor dining area when the city of Menlo Park closed part of the 600 block of Santa Cruz Avenue. Improving the look of the barricades with a consistent design is a quick fix recommended by consultants HdL.

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# Scott Wiener weighs in on Woodside's attempt to block SB 9 housing

'Two of my favorite things for a moment collided,' lawmaker said

By Angela Swartz

State Sen. Scott Wiener, D-San Francisco, said he rolled his eyes when he heard the news that Woodside would suspend projects under Senate Bill 9, California's new split-lot law, using an exemption for being a mountain lion habitat.

"Two of my favorite things for a moment collided," said Wiener, a prominent housing advocate, of housing and mountain lions, in an interview with The Almanac.

"I rolled my eyes because Woodside's argument was so frivolous and so absurd. The idea that you can build a mansion and it won't harm mountain lions, but if you build a duplex that will harm mountain lions. Unfortunately, this type of approach is not uncommon," he said.

Wiener noted that most cities in California are working very hard to comply with the law and it's just a minority who are trying to evade it.

For decades, the state looked the other way when cities and towns didn't comply with housing laws, he said. Over the last six or seven years, California has tightened longstanding 40- to 50-year-old laws and put teeth to them, he said.

Just days after The Almanac broke the story, Attorney General Rob Bonta sent a letter to Woodside officials warning that the town can't exempt itself from state housing law by claiming it's a mountain lion habitat, Wiener noted.

## Other resistance to state housing mandates

In Pasadena, residents have pushed to exempt historic districts in town from SB 9, state legislation that took effect last month and allows homeowners to split single-family lots and construct up to four residential units.

Some city officials take "aggressive positions" about wildfire zones in their communities to block housing projects, he said.

"We always exempt very high severity wildfire zones from our bills," Wiener said. "The reality

is we need housing in a lot of different locations and we need to make communities more fire resilient."

San Mateo County, like much of the state, is confronting a housing shortage. Since 2010, just 10,000 homes have been built, while 100,000 jobs have been created. Many residents are spending more than 30% of their income on housing, said Brandi Campbell Wood, a senior planner with the firm Baird + Driskell Community Planning, during a talk last April on housing needs on the Peninsula.

Portola Valley residents have implored the Town Council to limit building because of concerns about fire safety. Two Portola Valley residents asked the Town Council follow Woodside's lead on claiming a mountain lion exemption in a Feb. 1 letter to town officials.

Drought concerns could become one more way to stifle development, according to a report by Bloomberg Law. A possible moratorium on new water connections by the Marin Municipal Water District stalled one affordable housing project last year.

"Buildings don't use water, people use water," Wiener said.

Atherton officials agreed to discontinue Caltrain service in town in 2020 because of decreased ridership at the historic station, but also because they thought that they could be on the hook to allow more housing to be built nearby if it continued operating. The concern was Wiener's SB 50, a bill that would have required cities to allow new apartment buildings in any place that is within a half-mile of a rail transit station, within a quarter-mile of a high-frequency bus stop or within a "job-rich" neighborhood. State lawmakers rejected SB 50.

Atherton's reaction didn't surprise Wiener, who said towns and cities have all sorts of strategies for blocking housing.

Wiener said he has several housing projects he's working on this year and he is "very focused" on student housing initiatives.

Wiener said he will continue to monitor SB 9's implementation and that of other state housing laws. ■

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



State Sen. Scott Wiener

# Palo Alto neighborhoods littered with antisemitic flyers

Similar flyers have been found in other Bay Area communities in recent weeks

By Sue Dremann

Dozens of antisemitic flyers were found on Sunday morning around Palo Alto, one of many Bay Area cities where hate-based misinformation has recently been spread, Palo Alto police confirmed on Tuesday.

The sheets of paper attempt to blame the COVID-19 pandemic on Jewish officials and includes a list of numerous federal officials that it identifies as Jewish. The same misinformation has been spreading nationwide. The flyers were in plastic zip-close bags weighed down with rice, perhaps to prevent them from being blown away by the wind, police Lt. Con Maloney said.

"The flyers directed people to a website with various videos espousing certain viewpoints, many on topics of a political nature," he said.

They were tossed on the front portion of private properties, with many close to or on the sidewalk. The locations appear to be random, and the same flyers were distributed over a large area in the northern part of Palo Alto, including in the Barron Park and Old Palo Alto neighborhoods.

"There is no indication that recipients of the flyers were targeted in any way. Police do not know who distributed the flyers," Maloney said. "We have seen news reports of similar, if not identical, flyers being distributed elsewhere in the state and across the country within the past few weeks. This was not unique to Palo Alto."

In a statement released on Tuesday night, Feb. 22, the city of Palo Alto said Sunday's incident, which occurred in multiple neighborhoods, raises community concerns about hate crimes and hate incidents and follows calls by faith leaders, the Palo Alto City Council and city officials for a community response of belonging and kindness.

"Our community is strengthened by its diversity. We call

**'This is a country that has been wonderful to Jewish people ... Its true soul is goodness and kindness.'**

RABBI YOSEF LEVIN,  
CHABAD PALO ALTO

on all of us to stand together in support of our neighbors and our community values. We are inspired by the grace of Rabbi (Yosef) Levin and Santa Clara County District Attorney (Jeff) Rosen who have called on us to respond to these vile acts with deliberate acts of goodness and kindness to each other. Together, we can overpower individuals who would try to undermine our goodwill," Palo Alto Mayor Pat Burt said.

"These types of acts are a reminder to all of us that hate crimes and hate incidents are serious and are taken seriously by the personnel of the Palo Alto Police Department," police Chief Robert Jonsen said. "We will continue to review information as it becomes available to determine if criminal charges need to be brought forward to the district attorney for review. Similar flyers, if not identical, have been distributed in other cities in the Bay Area and elsewhere over the past few weeks."

The antisemitic flyers were found in Danville on Thursday, Feb. 3, town public information officer Nicola Shihab said in a statement. The town was made aware of the flyers posted on the Iron Horse Trail, which is under the jurisdiction of East Bay Regional Park District. A town maintenance crew was sent to the area, but they did not locate any of the flyers. Shihab said the town believes that members of the public removed all the materials.

"The leaflets obviously fly in the face of our values in Danville," she said, noting the town's Commitment

to Inclusivity webpage. "Our town's mission statement focuses on providing services that make people's lives better. In pursuit of that mission, we are committed to inclusivity, welcoming families and people from all backgrounds to live, work and visit.

"We value dialogue and respectful differences of opinion. Our differences can make us stronger; however, respect is the key. We will not condone or tolerate violence, intimidation, or hate in any form. We are committed to making Danville a safe place for all where we celebrate diversity, dignity, and equality for all members of our community," she said.

While its authors claimed the flyers "were distributed randomly without malicious intent," members of the Jewish community said the spread of such misinformation is a concerted effort by a group bent on spreading extremist views to foment hate. Last week, the flyers were also dropped off in Tiburon and El Cerrito, said Rabbi Serena Eisenberg, regional director of the American Jewish Committee Northern California.

"It's sickening. We know antisemitism is in the rise in other places, and yet, when the material is found in (your) hometown, it hits close to home," said Eisenberg, who lives in Palo Alto.

The claim that Jewish people are somehow connected to COVID-19 in any way is unfounded and despicable, she said. It harkens back to medieval antisemitism when people spread the false claim that Jews had poisoned the wells and caused the bubonic plague in Europe. Now, antisemitic groups are trying to stir up fear and hatred using the same trope again, she said.

Publicizing the actions of hate groups is a double-edged sword. On the one hand, Eisenberg said Jewish organizations don't want to amplify the false messages of hate groups. But "we do believe it's important to educate the public about serious threats to the Jewish community," she said.

Jews make up 60% of all religious-based hate crimes but they represent only 2% of the population, she noted. More than 80% of the Jewish population who took part in a survey by the American Jewish Committee think antisemitism is a growing problem. Just 40% of the general population does, she noted.

But the hatred and misrepresentations have deadly consequences. The annual survey is taken on the anniversary of the 1988 mass shooting in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania at the Tree of Life synagogue. Robert Gregory Bowers killed 11 people and wounded seven others, including Holocaust survivors and police officers, according to news reports.

It was the deadliest attack on the Jewish community in the United States and took place during morning services. Bowers, who was arrested for the mass shooting, previously spread falsehoods linking a Jewish aid organization with importing immigrants who he claimed were killing Americans.

Santa Clara County District Attorney Jeff Rosen, who also is Jewish, said on Tuesday that he is disappointed and angry that a small fringe group is trying to sow hatred in the community.

**'It's sickening. We know antisemitism is in the rise in other places, and yet, when the material is found in (your) hometown, it hits close to home.'**

RABBI SERENA EISENBERG,  
AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE  
NORTHERN CALIFORNIA

It's not an accident that Palo Alto is the place in the South Bay the antisemitic group chose to leaflet. "It's the largest Jewish community in the Bay Area," Rosen said. "It's an attempt to intimidate Jews."

Barron Park, one of the Palo Alto neighborhoods where the flyers were found, has many Jewish residents, he said.

Rosen noted the diversity and value most people in the area place on inclusion and respect for the Bay Area's melting pot of cultures and faiths. Because of that, "I think these attempts will fail," he said.

Rosen spoke with Chief Jonsen after learning of the incidents. Investigators will try to find the culprits and he said he is confident they will succeed. But whether the flyers or their distribution are a crime is questionable. Hate crimes involve a criminal act such as vandalism or battery that are perpetrated out of hatred; the flyers likely fall into the

category of hate incidents.

Whether prosecutable or not, Rosen said it's important to identify the people behind the hate literature and its distribution.

"I would love to have a conversation with some of these people to try to change their hearts and minds. I don't know if that's naive, but I would be willing to try," he said.

Rabbi Yosef Levin of Chabad Palo Alto said the way to fight hatred is through positivity and friendship.

"Darkness is an absence of light, and the way to fight darkness is by lighting a candle," he said. "Good people have to do the opposite (of hatred). That's what I believe. What I feel I can do is I can teach people. At the same time, it's extraordinarily important to combat this with light," he said.

He recalled a story about antisemitic individuals smashing the window of a home displaying a menorah. In response, the residents of every house in the neighborhood placed a menorah in their picture windows, he said.

"This is a country that has been wonderful to Jewish people," he said. "This is the true soul of this country. Its true soul is goodness and kindness," he said.

The community can learn more about how to report hate crimes at [medium.com/paloaltoconnect](http://medium.com/paloaltoconnect). Additional information about hate crimes can be found at the California Department of Justice website, [oag.ca.gov/hatecrimes](http://oag.ca.gov/hatecrimes).

The police department encourages reporting any new incidents, the city and police said in the joint statement, by calling its 24-hour dispatch center at 650-329-2413, or 911 if it is an emergency. For confidential reporting, visit [cityofpaloalto.org](http://cityofpaloalto.org). ■

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

## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

### City Council meeting canceled this week

The Menlo Park City Council canceled its regular meeting on Feb. 22. The next meeting will be on March 1.

Earlier this month, the council held three closed session meetings in one week, on Feb. 15, 17 and 18, all regarding the city manager position. City Manager Starla Jerome-Robinson resigned last month after coming out of retirement to take the top job on city staff in 2018.

No action was reported out of the closed sessions.

— Lloyd Lee

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# Sequoia district teachers 'pleased' to see salary increase with new contract

School board unanimously approved the agreement during meeting last week

By Leah Worthington

The teachers, librarians, counselors and other members of the Sequoia District Teachers Association (SDTA) will soon see a significant bump in their paychecks after the high school district's board of trustees voted unanimously to approve a new contract on Feb. 16.

"I just wanted to take the time to extend appreciation from the bottom of my heart for teachers," said Sequoia Union High School District Superintendent Darnise Williams. "Our agreement was reflective of the concern and support we have for each and every one of you."

During a brief discussion, Trustees thanked the teachers for their hard work over the last year and throughout the

pandemic. The vote was completed in under 10 minutes.

The two-year agreement includes a salary increase of 2.5% for both the 2021-2022 and 2022-2023 school years, with an additional 2% increase from benefits-related savings, effective Jan. 1, 2023. The SDTA, which represents 627 members, originally proposed a 4% raise for this year, with a subsequent round of discussions in the coming year.

SDTA President and Sequoia High School math teacher, Edith Salvatore, also addressed the board before the vote was taken.

"This has been a unique round of bargaining for us," she said during her presentation. Ultimately, she said, the proposed contract was reflective of the needs of both the district and the union — which ratified it

with over 98% of the vote.

"We had a lot of talks, a lot of shared values around maintaining our benefits for our employees while helping to contain costs for the district," she said. "Looking at ways that we can make some of those jobs more sustainable in the long run and also looking at ways that we can create time for ongoing, unified professional development, which is one of the superintendent's goals."

Based on up-to-date salary schedules, certificated, non-management staff, which includes many teachers, have a starting salary of \$70,979, which will increase to \$72,753 for the current year. Salary increases for classified and certificated management staff, as well as confidential and unrepresented employees will be

commensurate with those of the SDTA.

Everything in the new contract that can go into effect immediately will, according to Salvatore. Union members will see the salary increase, as well as a retroactive payment dating back to summer 2021, in their March 31 paychecks.

With the spring term already underway, the contract comes later than usual. While the union's original proposal was presented during a public school board meeting in February 2021, COVID and hiring delays put off active bargaining until October, Salvatore said.

"The tricky part, when you settle and everything happens after winter break, is that the salary increase goes on your 2022 taxes," she said. "That's unfortunate, but there was no

way around it this year."

Still, she said that she was pleased with the contract, which, beyond securing a raise for members, "has a number of improvements that will help make jobs more manageable and will allow us to provide stronger services to our students."

Committees will begin convening immediately to discuss changes to health benefits, professional development, job descriptions and workloads for counselors and other non-classroom staff, she added.

"We have some job descriptions that haven't been updated since 1979. And I was in first grade in 1979," said Salvatore, laughing. "So we think some things have changed since then." ▀

Email Leah Worthington at [lworthington@rwcpulse.com](mailto:lworthington@rwcpulse.com).

## CRIME BRIEFS

### Traffic stop in Menlo Park leads to arrests for drugs, weapons

A traffic stop in Menlo Park on Feb. 18 ultimately led to the arrest of three men in connection with various crimes.

A 67-year-old Menlo Park resident was arrested on suspicion of several charges related to possession of a controlled substance for sale, possessing a controlled substance in concert with possessing a firearm, possession of drug paraphernalia, being a prohibited person in possession of a firearm and being in illegal possession of a firearm, according to a Menlo Park Police Department press release.

A 71-year-old East Palo Alto resident was cited and released on suspicion of possession of drug paraphernalia.

A 33-year-old Menlo Park resident was cited and released on suspicion of child abuse.

On Feb. 18 at 7:41 a.m., officers conducted a traffic stop on a vehicle for a code infraction. During the stop, the driver, identified as the East Palo Alto resident, was found to be in possession of drug paraphernalia, police said.

The passenger, identified as the 67-year-old man, was found to be in possession of a large amount of heroin and cocaine base and other items associated with the sale and use of narcotics, police said.

Police executed a search warrant for the 67-year-old man's residence in Menlo Park and during the search located firearms, heroin and items used in the manufacturing of cocaine base.

Two other structures were located on the property.

Police said one of the structures was being used as a grow house for marijuana, and the other was being used to weigh and package dried marijuana.

Police seized approximately 20 pounds of loose and packaged dried marijuana.

Police said the marijuana was later determined to belong to the 33-year-old man, who was located smoking marijuana while with a child, police said. He was detained on suspicion of child abuse and was cited and released pending a case review by the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office, police said.

The child was put into the care of family.

*Editor's note: The Almanac's policy is to withhold the names of those arrested for most crimes until the district attorney has determined there is sufficient evidence to file charges in the case.*

—Bay City News Service

## Webb Ranch on lockdown after virus outbreak sickens dozens of horses

By Kate Daly

For more than a month, Webb Ranch in Portola Valley has been dealing with its own pandemic lockdown due to an outbreak of equine herpesvirus that has led to one horse being euthanized and sickened dozens more.

With no new cases reported by the California Department of Food and Agriculture (CDFA) since Feb. 17, the quarantine at the 300-horse facility at Highway 280 and Alpine Road is loosening up. An employee at its riding lessons office said they hope to reopen to the public in another week or so, and that boarders and people who lease school horses have been able to return to riding on the property.

CDFA issues regular updates on the website: [equinediseasecc.org/alerts](http://equinediseasecc.org/alerts).

According to CDFA, the first sign of trouble started with two feverish horses and confirmed positive tests for a strain of equine herpesvirus called EHV-1 on Jan. 24. One of the horses was taken to a hospital. The other one had traveled to an equine event the day prior.

The most serious case at Webb involved a 22-year-old paint gelding "with acute neurological signs." He was not feverish, was isolated, and then euthanized in late January "due to poor prognosis," CDFA reported.

Monitoring at Webb Ranch is ongoing with temperatures being taken twice a day to see if any additional cases occur.

EHV-1 is common in horses around the world, and like human herpes, can lie dormant. There is a vaccine and treatments available, but no proven cure.

It can cause respiratory and/or neurologic disease, mares to abort and foals to die. The neurological form (EHM for myeloencephalopathy) may be caused by blood vessel damage in the brain and spinal cord brought on by EHV-1 infection. Symptoms include a fever over 102 degrees, nasal discharge, and poor coordination, especially in the back end.

A recent report confirmed two

EHM cases (EHV-1 positive with neurologic signs) and 17 EHV-1 febrile only cases at Webb, saying that the quarantine will be lifted "when all positive horses have had two consecutive negative tests seven days apart."

The virus is easily spread via nasal secretions or aerosol droplets, and can contaminate shared water supplies, surfaces and equipment.

To avoid acting as carriers, people are advised to disinfect shoes, wash hands and clean clothes with hot water, detergent and a dryer. ▀

Email Contributor Kate Daly at [katherinemunroedaly@gmail.com](mailto:katherinemunroedaly@gmail.com).



Almanac file photo

**Webb Ranch** has been under lockdown restrictions for the past month due to an outbreak of equine herpesvirus that has sickened dozens of horses.



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## Palo Alto's Avalon Yoga International closes after nearly four decades

By Sue Dremann

A nearly 40-year-old yoga studio on California Avenue in Palo Alto has closed due to the rising cost of a new lease, leaving yet another vacant space in the business district. Avalon Yoga International, which was located at 370 California Ave., was popular for its variety of yoga classes that attracted students and instructors alike.

Barbara Wilcox, a yoga instructor who practiced at Avalon, said she was stunned when the studio canceled her class on Feb. 11 and then closed. She also found the website had been taken down.

"It's devastating for Palo Alto. Now, more than at any other time, we need businesses that support health and Avalon Yoga has been doing that for about 40 years," she said.

She credited the yoga studio with offering quality teachers and many varieties of yoga, she said.

"It's brutal that this should happen just as mandates (for COVID-19) are lifting. It's a legacy business," she said.

Owner Steve Farmer drew people from all walks of life, Wilcox said. He hired only the best teachers and his prices were fair.

"He's trained hundreds of teachers. I hope he can reopen elsewhere. He does have loyal customers who support him," she said.

Farmer declined to comment beyond saying that the cost of an extended lease was too high and the future of California Avenue, often called Palo Alto's second downtown, has gotten worse. ■

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



Avalon Yoga International at 370 California Ave. has closed after nearly 40 years in business.

Embarcadero Media file photo

## Report: Nearly half of Silicon Valley children need supportive services

By Lorraine Gabbert/  
Bay City News Service

Silicon Valley households with children are struggling to make ends meet, and the data is eye-opening.

Joint Venture Silicon Valley recently released its 2022 Silicon Valley Index, shedding light on the stark challenges these families face. In Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, approximately 46% of children live in households that don't earn enough money to cover basic needs, the study said.

Russell Hancock, CEO of Joint Venture Silicon Valley and president of the Silicon Valley Institute of Regional

Studies, said these families wouldn't survive without assistance.

"It's staggering, he told San Jose Spotlight. "Here we are, in the world's most wealthy region, but almost half our children are living in households that aren't self-sufficient."

In Silicon Valley, Hancock said 244,000 of 534,000 children, or more than 45%, live in households below the standard of living. The majority of these children — 51% — are Latino, while 25% are Asian Pacific Islander. Costs add up with needed additional housing, food, clothing, school and day care, he said.

Joint Venture defines Silicon Valley as Santa Clara, San Mateo and Santa Cruz counties, and part of Alameda County including Fremont. The report's data comes from a variety of sources, including the census and California's Employment Development Department.

Officials from Joint Venture Silicon Valley, which analyzes regional issues affecting the economy and quality of life, found wealth disparity is growing. While jobs are back to prepandemic levels in the region, income inequality has widened, inflation has skyrocketed and housing prices have soared.

Almost 33% of all Silicon Valley households do not earn enough money to meet their most basic needs without assistance, according to the study, compared with 30% in San Francisco and 32% in the general Bay Area. Households with children headed by limited-English speakers face the greatest struggles, with an estimated nine out of 10 living below self-sufficiency levels. This includes 87% of Latina single mothers and 82% of families with four or more children.

Hancock said in Silicon Valley, a couple without children needs to make a minimum of \$18.54 per hour per adult to

be self-sufficient, but it would barely cover a small apartment and basic needs.

In 2021, a family of four with two school-aged children would have to earn \$33.13 per hour per adult to meet its basic needs. In Santa Clara County, a single adult with an infant and preschooler would need to make \$76.75 per hour to survive, according to the study.

**'Families with children are doing worse than everybody else.'**

WENDI MAHANEY-GURAHOO,  
FIRST 5 SANTA CLARA COUNTY

"Having a job isn't enough," Hancock said. "Just because you're employed doesn't mean you're making it. It's not the job that matters as much as the income."

Wendi Mahaney-Gurahoo, chief community impact officer for FIRST 5 Santa Clara County, which supports the healthy development of children through age five, said the pandemic exacerbated and highlighted existing problems.

"Families with children are doing worse than everybody else," she said. "Parents are working, but can't afford

to pay for basic essentials. They're having to access what the nonprofit agencies provide or they're not doing things like taking their kids to the dentist."

FIRST 5 distributed 3 million diapers in two years during the pandemic, she said. It also distributed 13,824 cans of baby formula.

Mahaney-Gurahoo said family child care providers, many who are women of color, don't earn much and that more than 300 day cares closed in Santa Clara County during the pandemic. According to FIRST 5's annual report from March 2020 to September 2021, the organization awarded \$5.28 million in stabilization funding to 528 child care providers. She said FIRST 5 also partnered with the city to provide \$11 million in child care scholarships to low-income families with children under age 5.

Mahaney-Gurahoo said private infant care can cost almost \$20,000 a year. She said with young children, it's more cost effective to stay home and as a result, women left the workforce during the pandemic.

"It's a perfect storm," Mahaney-Gurahoo said. "It's all the things that have always been true and a tidal wave of increasing need." ■

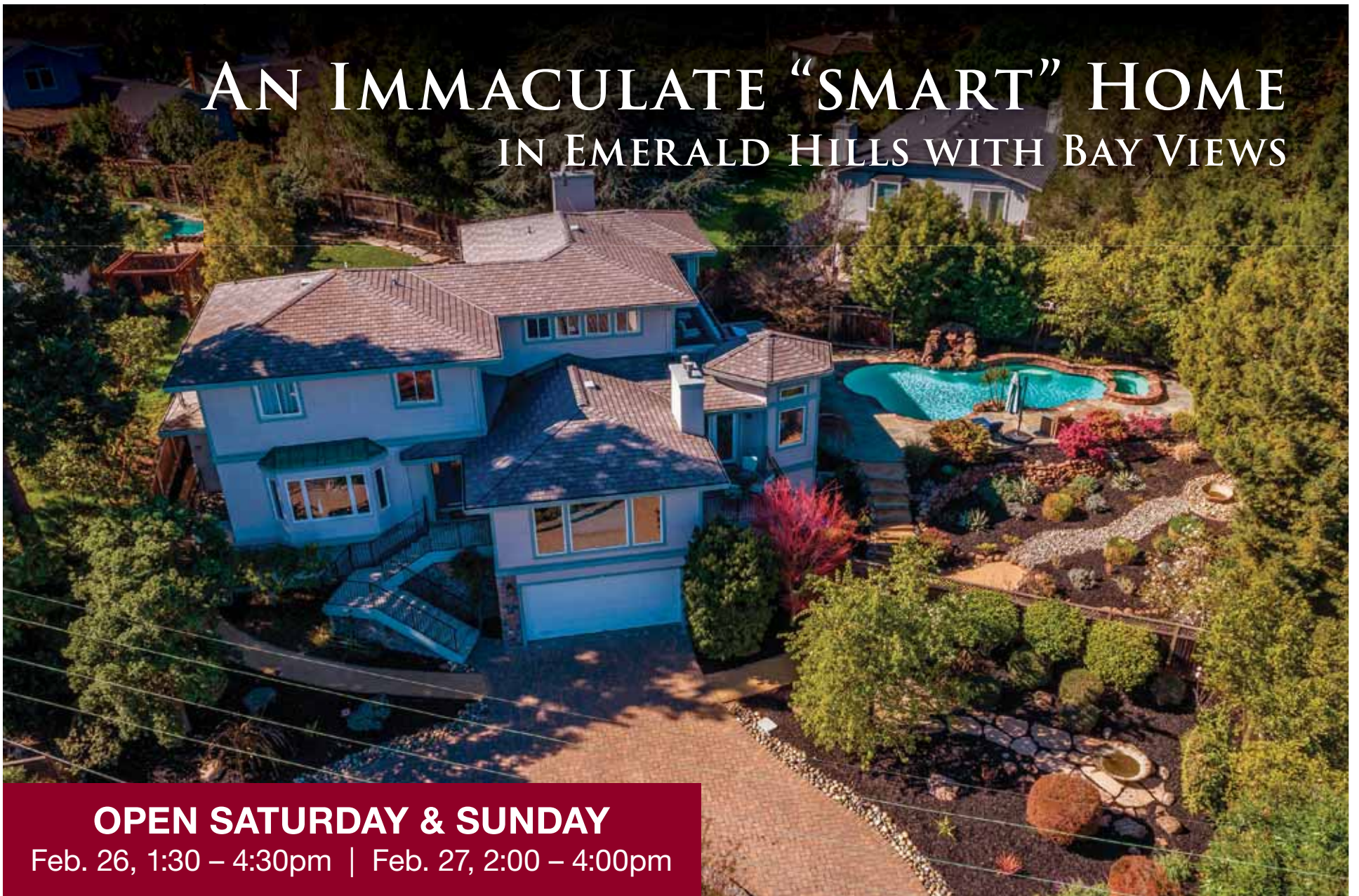
This story was originally published by San Jose Spotlight.

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Photo by Mick Haupt



Magali Gauthier

**Students construct** a Rube Goldberg machine with the help of their teacher Phil Hopkins, third from left, in their Green Academy physics class at Woodside High School in Woodside on Feb. 1.

## DOWNTOWN

*continued from page 5*

corridor” of the retail hub.

Pulling supply and demand data from the U.S. Census and Bureau of Labor Statistics, HdL calculated the “consumer demand/market supply index” — which scores how well the area is meeting the market demand of its residents — and found that the downtown performs well.

“Downtown Menlo Park retailers and restaurants are doing a good job of pulling in consumers from the adjacent communities to spend their dollars in Menlo Park,” the study said, giving the downtown a score of 80. A result above 100 means that the demand is not being met and residents are doing their shopping outside of the area.

In addition, based on the city’s “sales dollars per capita,” or SDPC — which shows whether residents are shopping outside of their locale or if outside visitors are coming into the “local retail market” — Menlo Park had an SDPC score two to three times higher than San Mateo County in the business and industry, and restaurants and hotels categories.

The city’s overall average SDPC value was lower than the county by 11% between 2014 and 2020, but the study highlighted that “non-residents and visitors were staying in Menlo Park to fulfill much of their shopping and dining.”

At the same time, the downtown isn’t meeting the full demand potential of retail categories in which the city has the greatest opportunities for growth. HdL calculates that

there’s a \$31.6 million consumer demand in clothing stores, and the city only met 60% of that demand. It was the same case for “building material/supplies dealers.”

Menlo Park met 0% of the city’s demand for bars but that may be due to the barriers of obtaining the required permits, the study said.

The pandemic and its health restrictions hemorrhaged the city’s sales tax revenue from businesses by 24% in 2020, after the city saw several years of growth since 2016. The study said that this was a trend seen statewide.

In spite of the new businesses in the area, the report also noted that the downtown has 11 vacancies on Santa Cruz Avenue as of October 2021. Last year, Ann’s Coffee Shop on 772 Santa Cruz Ave. closed after 75 years in business due to the pandemic.

Fran Dehn, president and CEO of the Menlo Park Chamber of Commerce, clarified in a brief interview that five of those vacancies include buildings that are not up for lease, because the property recently changed hands and the new owners are determining what to do with them. This includes Ann’s Coffee Shop and the Menlo Bazaar flea market next door, she said.

In other cases, the businesses relocated nearby, such as the Felgels Design furniture store, or the owners retired.

“Sometimes it’s a matter of retirement, not necessarily the business was closed because the business wasn’t viable in Menlo Park,” Dehn said. “So it’s a combination of things.”

Dehn couldn’t immediately speak about businesses that may

have left since October 2021.

## Recommend changes for downtown

The study looks at several traits that make a “successful downtown” and compared competing retail hubs in Redwood City, Palo Alto, Mountain View and Los Altos to make some of its recommendations.

In its examination, a few common areas were highlighted. One was that Redwood City, Palo Alto and Mountain View had downtowns that supported businesses staying open until 10 p.m. or later.

In looking at Redwood City’s retail strip, the study also suggests that bringing in more residential units can encourage a vibrant nightlife.

“Incorporating significant new residential units into downtown Redwood City has helped extend the environment of downtown Redwood City to more of a 15- to 18-hour downtown, as many more restaurants have located in the downtown area and extended hours to 10 p.m. or later,” the study said, hoping that new residential units will do the same for Menlo Park.

The report also pointed to mixed-use development in Redwood City, Mountain View and Los Altos as another key trait for a healthy downtown.

Some recommendations from the study will take “light effort” and can be executed in the next six months. This includes establishing consistent design standards for street barricades for the Santa Cruz Avenue Street Cafe parklet program, creating more special events such as concerts and farmers markets,

## COVID-19 CASES

*continued from page 5*

The decline comes as omicron cases are falling countywide.

District students are on mid-winter break this week. As with other holiday breaks, there is a chance that student travel and social gatherings could cause infection rates to rise again in the district once they return to class.

Masks have been optional when outdoors in the district, but are still required indoors, per state regulations.

## Other school districts

There were few cases reported in the local elementary school districts last week as well:

■Las Lomas School District: 3  
■Menlo Park City School District: 3

■Portola Valley School District: 1

Ravenswood City School District and Woodside Elementary School District hadn’t reported case numbers as of The Almanac’s Wednesday press deadline. ▣

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

## Your COVID-19 vaccine questions — answered

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



Lloyd Lee

**A “For Rent” sign** hangs in the window of the vacant Juban Yakiniku House restaurant at 712 Santa Cruz Ave. Filling downtown vacancies with pop-ups or temporary businesses is one of several recommendations for improving Menlo Park’s downtown in a recently released study.

and embarking on a “shop local” marketing campaign. Installing more bike racks and considering handicap and senior parking accommodations were other “near-term” recommendations.

Other steps are considered moderate to high effort and may take one to two years. The recommendations range from attracting “pop up” or temporary businesses for vacant spaces to adding more mixed-used development in the downtown area with residential units. The study also recommends developing parking structures on city-operated parking plazas and a comprehensive review and update to the city’s Downtown Specific Plan.

Dehn declined to say what she thought of the overall assessment of the study until the City Council discusses it in March, but said there were several suggestions she agreed with such as upgrading the parking plazas

and putting up signages that can help with wayfinding.

“There are many things that are in this study that we have known for a long time,” Dehn said. “Now, the question is, are we willing to act on them or not?”

Read the report along with the full list of recommendations at [tinyurl.com/mp-hdl-study](https://tinyurl.com/mp-hdl-study). ▣

## OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include **Mary E. Rudow**, 92, a former Atherton resident of 43 years, on Feb. 8; and **Charlotte (Carlotta) Palmer Maurice**, 94, an Atherton resident, on Feb. 19.

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

## TK offerings

District	What it currently offers
<b>Portola Valley School District</b>	Half-day program (8:15 to 11:45 a.m. until Feb. 23, then 8:15 a.m. - 1:45 p.m) for those born Sept. 2 and Dec. 2
<b>Ravenswood City School District</b>	Full-day program (8:25 a.m. to 3:10 p.m.) for those born between Sept. 2 and Dec. 2
<b>Woodside Elementary School District</b>	Half-day program (8:30 a.m. to noon) for those born between Sept. 2 and Dec. 2
<b>Las Lomas School District</b>	No TK offerings
<b>Menlo Park City School District</b>	No TK offerings
<b>Los Altos School District</b>	Full-day program (8:45 a.m. to 2:45 p.m.) for those born Sept. 2 to Dec. 2
<b>Mountain View Whisman School District</b>	Full-day program (8:15 a.m. to 1:45 p.m. most days and 8:15 a.m. to 12:10 p.m. on Thursdays) for those born Sept. 2 to Dec. 2
<b>Palo Alto Unified School District</b>	Half-day program for those born Sept. 2 to Dec. 2. Also offers "expanded transitional kindergarten" (ETK) for those turning 5 after Dec. 2 but before the last day of the school year who meet one of the following criteria: 1) parents did not receive a high school diploma 2) student is eligible for free or reduced price meals 3) student is migrant, homeless or in foster care.



Courtesy Ravenswood City School District

**Osbaldo**, a Costaño School TK student, shows his work during the summer of 2021.

### TK

*continued from page 5*

the playing field for families who can't afford to send their kids to preschool, early childhood education leaders say.

Families will still have the option not to enroll their children. Each district must submit a plan to the state by June.

Next school year, class size ratios will be one teacher or teaching assistant per 12 students; classes can have up to 24 children with one teacher and an aide. The ratio will shrink down to 1:10 by the 2025-26 school year.

TK, which is considered the first year of a two-year kindergarten experience, first came about in California in 2012.

### What each district currently offers and what's to come

The Woodside, Portola Valley and Ravenswood school districts

already offer TK programs this school year for children who turned 5 by Dec. 2.

Ravenswood has 46 students enrolled in full-day classes between Costaño and Belle Haven elementary schools.

Los Altos and Mountain View offer full-day programs for students born between Sept. 2 and Dec. 2, and Palo Alto Unified has half-day TK for kids born during that same date range. All three districts plan to expand to include students born through Feb. 2 next school year.

The Las Lomas and Menlo Park City school districts don't currently offer transitional kindergarten programs.

The Menlo Park district, which runs three elementary schools in Menlo Park and Atherton, will offer half-day slots for those turning 5 before Feb. 2 next school year, according to staff. The district estimates about 250 to 300 students will enroll.

Las Lomas, which runs an

elementary school in Atherton, expects to have two to three TK classrooms, administrators said during a Jan. 12 governing board meeting.

"I think that TK is a fantastic use of district resources," said Superintendent Beth Polito during the meeting. "It levels a lot of playing fields."

The Woodside and Portola Valley districts each have one class of about a dozen students enrolled in their half-day TK programs.

Portola Valley will immediately adopt the 2025-26 requirements

from the state and offer TK to all children who turn 4 before Sept. 1. Officials are prepared to offer up to three TK classes.

The Woodside district's board voted in early February to start offering TK to children who turn 5 before Feb. 2 next school year. The board is also leaning toward a half-day option for students.

Palo Alto intends to offer TK to students who turn 5 before Feb. 2, 2023, during the 2022-23 school year, like other districts. According to Brown, the expansion is likely to only pencil out to one additional classroom next fall on top of the three that the district currently has. Over time though, the rollout will be more substantial as the eligible age range expands.

For the time being, Palo Alto intends to keep TK as a half-day program, with three hours and 10 minutes of daily instruction.

Like Palo Alto, Los Altos

Assistant Superintendent Sandra McGongagle predicts that next year's expansion will mean one additional classroom on top of the two that already exist.

"Everybody's trying to figure out enrollment right now, but I think we're going to be at three unless we get a surprise bump and make it to four," McGongagle said.

Mountain View Whisman School District Assistant Superintendent Cathy Baur called enrollment the "million dollar question" for a lot of districts. Her district also expects to have four TK classes in the fall, up from three this school year.

The uncertainty around just how many families may sign up is in part because TK is optional. Parents can stick with their existing preschool or daycare, or keep their children at home. Parents surveyed by the Menlo Park district were most likely to not

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#### PUBLIC HEARING

#### 1. Town-wide

GPAM2022-0001

Housing Element, Cycle 6 (2023-2031)

Jackie Young, Planning Director

Review of the first draft chapters of the Cycle 6 (2023-2031) Housing Element Update.

THE APPLICATION MATERIALS ARE AVAILABLE FOR PUBLIC REVIEW BY CONTACTING JACKIE YOUNG AT [JYOUNG@WOODSIDETOWN.ORG](mailto:JYOUNG@WOODSIDETOWN.ORG)



Magali Gauthier

**Students** in Ormondale Elementary School's transitional kindergarten program color in workbooks on Feb. 15.



Magali Gauthier

**Sherry Andrighetto**, a transitional kindergarten teacher at Ormondale Elementary School, leads her students through an activity in Portola Valley on Feb. 15.

want to enroll their kids in TK, because they work full time and need a full-day child care option.

Brown estimated that roughly 50% of eligible families are currently participating in Palo Alto's TK program.

**A pricey addition for school districts**

Districts say it's pricey to add a new grade level and there won't be much extra funding coming from the state for the initiative.

The majority of local districts are "community funded," or basic aid, meaning they receive most of their revenue from local sources, including property taxes, parcel taxes and donations. Little of their funding depends on enrollment, so they won't receive more funding per student.

The Ravenswood district, which currently relies on enrollment-based funding from the state, expects to become a basic aid district next school year, and hasn't yet ironed out the potential costs of the additional students and facilities needed for TK, according to Chief Business Officer Will Eger.

The Las Lomitas and Woodside

districts also have not finalized their TK budgets for next school year.

It will cost the Menlo Park district a little over \$1 million to start a TK program, but will only receive around \$100,000 from the state to jumpstart it. The bulk of the cost will go toward paying new staff members (about \$733,000). Curriculum, furniture and facilities (at least five portables) make up the rest.

The Portola Valley district expects to spend about \$450,000 to hire two teachers, two teaching assistants, develop curriculum and train staff. Facilities and furniture costs are dependent on enrollment and haven't yet been determined.

District administrators said they are "not holding their breaths" that the state will step in with extra TK funding.

Palo Alto Unified expects to receive \$190,000 in state funding for the transitional kindergarten expansion, which Brown said will not cover the district's costs, leaving it to pay out of the general fund.

Los Altos is in a similar boat.

"The state is providing some funding, but certainly not

adequate funding to fully cover the cost of implementing a TK program," McGonagle said.

Beyond additional staff, McGonagle said that her district also expects to spend money on new curriculum and supplies that are appropriate for the younger students.

Looking at next year, Mountain View Whisman doesn't expect any substantial added cost, because it had already budgeted for an extra TK class this school year that didn't end up being needed, Baur said. In the longer term though, the program, and the expense, will likely grow more substantially.

**Staffing concerns**

Administrators, already facing staffing shortages, are concerned about filling TK teacher slots.

By August 2023, TK teachers are required to have completed at least 24 units in early childhood education (ECE).

"I'm not going to lie, given the teacher shortage right now, we have concerns," said Menlo Park district's Assistant Superintendent Jammie Behrendt.

The San Mateo County Office

of Education recently applied for a \$250,000 state grant to plan for professional development for teachers to fulfill ECE units.

Dayna Chung, co-founder and executive director of the Community Equity Collaborative, a Menlo Park-based nonprofit that was formed in 2017 to help solve educational inequities, said legislators have succeeded in pushing for sizable investments in early care and education.

"I can say we have a long way to go in building the career pathways required to equip a workforce capable of meeting expanded care demands," she said in an email.

**Studies show benefits of TK curriculum**

Studies have shown that children who attend transitional kindergarten are better prepared for school than other students. TK students enter kindergarten with stronger mathematics and literacy skills and are more engaged in their learning than students who did not attend transitional kindergarten, according to one 2017 study.

"It's getting kids in school and getting them used to routines and being exposed to some academics," Baur said.

In TK, kids will work on tasks like writing their names, counting to 10 and learning their letters, Baur said.

Beyond academics, a big part of kindergarten is building social skills and learning to work with others. Teachers help students learn how to express their thoughts and feelings, McGonagle said.

"(It's) definitely more play-based and developmental, as opposed to academic," Baur said.

There are five areas of focus at Woodside Elementary's TK: fine motor skills like tracing lines and shapes; social and emotional skills; self-regulation; academics; and self-care (toileting, washing hands), according to Virgallito.

The minimum number of daily instructional minutes for TK next school year is 180 minutes, including recess.

**Achievement gaps**

Expanding transitional kindergarten is part of an effort to reduce gaps in academic achievement between under-served students and their more advantaged peers. The idea is that by getting kids in classrooms earlier, they will see more equal outcomes later on.

Statewide, the high school graduation rate last year was 86.8%, but that number was lower for socioeconomically disadvantaged students (84.1%), those learning English (72.8%) and kids with disabilities (70.5%).

There are also disparities by race. Over 90% of white students and nearly 95% of Asian students in California graduated high school on time last year, compared with 84.1% of Hispanic students and 80.3% of Black students.

According to Brown, Palo Alto is focusing on making sure that students' backgrounds don't pre-determine their outcome in school. Having kids in classrooms early can only help, she said.

Palo Alto Unified already offers an "extended transitional kindergarten" program that enrolls certain students — those who turn 5 after Dec. 2 but before the last day of the school year — to take part in TK. To qualify, a student has to either have parents who haven't received a high school diploma, be eligible for free or reduced-price school meals, or be homeless, migrant or in foster care.

The program is intended to give students access to TK whose families may not be able to afford a traditional preschool program, Brown said.

With the new state law expanding TK, all students will ultimately be eligible for transitional kindergarten, regardless of their birthday or family background. ▣

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Zoe Morgan at [zmorgan@paweekly.com](mailto:zmorgan@paweekly.com).*

**TK Timeline**

Type of Requirement	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26
<b>Eligibility</b>	Turn 5 between September 2 and February 2	Turn 5 between September 2 and April 2	Turn 5 between September 2 and June 2	Turn 4 by September 1
<b>Ratios</b>	1:12	1:10*	1:10*	1:10*
<b>Maximum class size</b>	24	20*	20*	20*

\* Expected. Information from California Department of Education.

School districts are required to add transitional kindergarten programs next school year.



Magali Gauthier

**Sonja Virgallito's** transitional kindergarten students at Woodside Elementary School gather around her on Feb. 10.

## 'SMARTER': Newsom administration outlines future plans for COVID-19

By Ana B. Ibarra and  
Kristen Hwang/CalMatters

Looking to be smarter after lessons learned over the past two years, the Newsom administration on Thursday gave a glimpse of what the next few months — and potentially years — may look like in California with COVID-19 likely to stick around.

Gov. Gavin Newsom's health secretary, Dr. Mark Ghaly, said the state's new plan marks a shift in the handling of the pandemic toward preparedness, acknowledging that officials will have to be flexible to respond to any new variants of concern.

The state dubbed its new plan "SMARTER," an acronym for its seven areas of focus: shots, masks, awareness, readiness, testing,

education and Rx treatments.

"It is clear the virus will remain with us for some time, if not forever. It is less clear how often and how much it will continue to impact our health and well-being," the state's plan reads.

The strategy unveiled Thursday, Feb. 17, includes preventive planning like stockpiling 75 million masks and bringing in 30 million over-the-counter tests, as well as the ability to increase the health care workforce by at least another 3,000 staff.

It also includes building on current wastewater surveillance and genome sequencing to have a better understanding of the evolving virus, and pursuing a public-private partnership with a COVID-19 test manufacturer that can secure a supply chain for California.

The administration's plan intentionally does not set thresholds that would trigger certain actions, like its controversial multi-colored tiered plan for closing and reopening businesses in 2020.

Instead, flexibility is important now, Ghaly said. For example, a deadly variant may require that the state focus on preventing cases, while a less virulent variant may prompt the state to focus on hospitalizations.

"Today is about balance," Ghaly said. "Balance between a message of hope and successful adaptation but also prepared vigilance."

The strategy comes as more than 20,000 new COVID-19 cases a day were reported in California, according to the state's seven-day average on Wednesday. So far 8.2 million infections have been

reported and 82,382 people have died since the pandemic began two years ago.

The administration promised to be more precise and targeted in its efforts to combat COVID: "We will be smarter than ever before, using the lessons of the last two years to approach mitigation and adaptation measures through effective and timely strategies," the plan's introduction says. "Throughout the pandemic, we have leaned on science and relied on tools that create protection."

The strategy comes in the wake of two years that have prompted widespread criticism of the state's handling of the pandemic:

■ COVID-19 testing has been slow and fraught with shortages and long wait times — even now. Backlogs up to 65,000 people in the early months of the pandemic prompted partnerships with UC labs and the rushed building of a \$25-million lab. The Valencia Branch Laboratory's \$1.7-billion no-bid contract has yet to

deliver on its lofty promises of high-capacity testing.

■ Booster uptake has been slow despite California making them widely available ahead of federal regulators. So far, 74% of eligible Californians have received two doses and 55% have received a booster, according to state data.

■ Hospitals have struggled under the weight of the pandemic with staffing shortages and high case counts. The National Guard has been deployed multiple times, particularly in the Central Valley.

■ Workers and the economy have taken a beating, with widespread omicron illnesses devastating many businesses.

Dr. George Rutherford, an epidemiologist at UC San Francisco, said the timing of the state's plan is prudent. "There are two epidemics going on, there is the biological epidemic and there's the epidemic of fear and angst. I think we may have aged out of that second one at a time when the biological epidemic is falling," he said.

The plan sends a message of "we're not going to be in the war room all the time," he said.

Asked if the administration's plan lacked anything, Rutherford said he thought the plan was comprehensive, and perhaps other states could look at it for guidance.

California — and the world — has been hit by four surges since the pandemic's start. The winter 2020-21 surge killed the most people. Omicron at its peak recorded nearly three times as many cases compared to last winter, although fewer people have died.

Ghaly said Californians should expect seasonal upticks, like when school starts up or during the winter. With that could come masking rules and a need for more testing.

Experts predict that COVID-19 will eventually become "endemic." To reach that phase, however, infections would have to stabilize, meaning no outbreaks or rampant upticks.

Endemic "means it's at a constant level — that constant level may be low or it may be high, it may be somewhere in between, but it's not going up and down," Rutherford said.

Ideally, that case rate would be much lower than the current rates, county health officials say.

"Right now our case rate is on the high side, it is coming down, which is good to see, but it is still pretty high," Fresno County's public health officer Dr. Rais Vohra said in a press briefing last week. Fresno has a 7-day average daily case rate of 67.7 new cases per 100,000 people. Statewide, it's 42.3 cases per 100,000.

"If the case transmission rate came down to say, five in 100,000 people, that would be a really good sign," Vohra said. ■

### Mary Lou Shumway

September 26, 1927 - February 20, 2022

Mary Lou Shumway passed peacefully on February 20, 2022 at the Sunrise retirement community in Palo Alto. She was 94.

She was born in the Red River Valley town of Erskine, MN on September 26, 1927 to Mary Lucille Brandley and Sheldon Harry Stuurmans. Her mother, a nurse, and her father, a physician, ran the local hospital out of their home there. Remarkably, Mary Lou survived staph sepsis and an empyema when she was only 3 years old. When her father changed medical paths to become a pathologist, the family moved to Minneapolis where she attended high school.

Mary Lou attended the University of Minnesota nursing school from 1945-1950 and then worked as a school nurse. In 1951, she met and married Norman E. Shumway, Jr. In 1957, they moved to California where Norman began his long career as a researcher and cardiothoracic surgeon at Stanford University. Mary Lou helped ground Norman as he became a dedicated and undaunted medical pioneer while raising 4 children largely on her own. When Mary Lou recently reflected on how she wished she had done more with her life, her children quickly reminded her how her love and support facilitated the success of heart transplantation. They were married for 30 years and remained lifelong friends.

She was a private person who enjoyed long walks, devouring novels and biographies, and listening to KQED. She enjoyed trips to San Francisco. She delighted in taking her children to the theater, Magic Pan, and Blum's for hot fudge sundaes. She loved Carmel and Point Lobos. She was known for her chocolate pie and angel food cake. She was a doting grandmother. She insisted on driving her two grandchildren to school every morning. She was affectionately known as "Mama Lou" and "Louster."

She is survived by her son, Michael, sons-in-law Thomas Kaster and Glenn Haller, and daughters, Sara, Lisa and Amy, and her grandchildren Siena and Sander.

A celebration of her life is planned for June. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests making a memorial contribution to the Michael J. Fox Foundation. The family wishes to thank the staff at Sunrise for their loving care of Mary Lou.



PAID OBITUARY

### Julie Zarcone

April 12, 1951 - February 9, 2022

Julie was a loving and generous wife, mother, grandmother, sister and friend. Julie was raised in Menlo Park on Holly Ave. After her family's memorable two year stint in Racine, Wisconsin, Julie graduated from Castilleja High School.

Julie received her Masters in Teaching from University of the Pacific. She taught elementary school in Livermore and Monterey before meeting the love of her life Mike and returning to Menlo Park. She took time away from teaching to raise her two children. She volunteered and served on the Junior League Board and as PTA President for Oak Knoll School.

She returned to teaching kindergarten and first grade at Oak Knoll School, the same school she attended as a child. Upon retirement from teaching, she continued her involvement in education through volunteering with the Ravenswood Education Foundation.

When she wasn't in the classroom, Julie could be found on the tennis court at Ladera Oaks, supporting her kids at numerous sporting events, staying connected with old friends on the phone, spending time at her family cabin "The Bean", or playing dominoes late into the night with dear friends. She and Mike became well known for their annual Christmas Caroling party among others and for all the stories that ensued.

Julie was full of warmth, generosity, love and a "wry" sense of humor. She was quick to laugh and to offer an embrace. She will be remembered by many for her deep sense of connection - once she knew you, you were never forgotten. Even as dementia made conversation difficult she never forgot a name or a face and it was people who brought her the greatest joy.

Julie was preceded in death by her parents Charles and Betty Anderson and her husband Mike. She is survived by her daughter Lindsay Zarcone-Medeiros (Helen), son Zack Zarcone (Karli), grandsons Tennyson and Clinton Zarcone, and her brothers Peter (Elena) and Steve (Debbie) Anderson.

A memorial service to celebrate her life will be held Friday, February 25th at 11am at New Community Church at 1100 Middle Ave, Menlo Park.

Donations in her honor may be made to National Adult Protective Services Association, The American Cancer Society, or Donors Choose to support teachers.



PAID OBITUARY

# THE ALMANAC OPEN HOMES

## ATHERTON

**327 Stockbridge Avenue \$12,988,000**  
Sat 1:30-4:30 5BD/8BA  
DeLeon Realty 650-900-7000

## MENLO PARK

**2150 Mills Avenue \$4,250,000**  
Sun 1:30-4:30 4BD/4BA  
Coldwell Banker Realty 650-619-6461

## MOUNTAIN VIEW

**184 Ada Avenue (T) \$1,299,000**  
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30 2BD/2.5BA  
DeLeon Realty 650-963-5062

**201 Monroe Drive \$2,498,000**  
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30 4BD/2BA  
DeLeon Realty 650-963-5062

## PALO ALTO

**2140 High Street \$3,000,000**  
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30 3BD/2BA  
Compass 650-465-5958

**966 Blair Court \$2,998,000**  
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30 3BD/2BA  
Compass 650-248-3950

**2261 Saint Francis Drive \$4,250,000**  
Sat 1:30-4:30 4BD/3.5BA  
JLee Realty 650-857-1000

## PALO ALTO

**756 Stone Lane \$3,988,000**  
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30 4BD/2BA  
DeLeon Realty 650-459-3888

**912 Cowper Street \$3,998,000**  
Sat/Sun 1:00-4:00 4BD/3BA  
Keller Williams Realty Palo Alto 650-483-2710

**717 & 723 Ellsworth Place \$2,388,000**  
Sat 12:00-4:00/Sun 12:00-3:00 4BD/2BA  
Coldwell Banker Realty 165-086-25506

**2252 Louis Rd \$3,688,000**  
Sun 1:30-4:30 5BD/3BA  
JLee Realty 650-857-1000

**1420 University Avenue \$8,988,000**  
Sun 1:30-4:30 6BD/7.5BA  
DeLeon Realty 650-900-7000

## PORTOLA VALLEY

**199 Mapache Drive \$14,988,000**  
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30 5BD/6.5BA  
DeLeon Realty 650-900-7000

## REDWOOD CITY

**3828 Hamilton Way \$3,895,000**  
Sat 1:30-4:30/Sun 2:00-4:00 5BD/3.5BA  
Coldwell Banker Realty 650-619-6461

Legend: Condo (C), Townhome (T).  
Agents: submit open homes at  
[AlmanacNews.com/real\\_estate](http://AlmanacNews.com/real_estate)

# Public Notices

## 995 Fictitious Name Statement

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 MAGAÑA 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.  
(ALM Feb. 4, 11, 18, 25, 2022)

AKTive hoMes  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
File No.: 290155  
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:  
AKTive hoMes, located at 533 Airport Blvd. Suite 400, Burlingame, CA 94010, San Mateo County.  
Registered owner(s):  
ANNE KAREN MANNING  
555 Bryant St. #451  
Palo Alto, CA 94301  
This business is conducted by: An Individual.  
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 02/10/2022.  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 4, 2022.  
(ALM Feb. 18, 25; Mar. 4, 11, 2022)

File No.: 290190  
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:  
Menlo Rotary Community Foundation, located at 75 Arbor Road, Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County; Mailing address: P.O. Box 876, Menlo Park, California 94026.  
Registered owner(s):  
ROTARY CLUB OF MENLO PARK FOUNDATION  
75 Arbor Road  
Menlo Park, California 94025  
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 February 9, 2022.  
(ALM Feb. 18, 25; Mar. 4, 11, 2022)

MENLO PARK DESIGN DISTRICT  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
File No.: 290149  
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:  
Menlo Park Design District, located at 800 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.  
Registered owner(s):  
MENLO DESIGN DISTRICT, INC.  
800 Santa Cruz Ave.  
Menlo Park, CA 94025  
California  
This business is conducted by: A Corporation.  
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on February 1, 2022.  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 4, 2022.  
(ALM Feb. 18, 25; Mar. 4, 11, 2022)

JMFINLEY PROPERTIES  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
File No.: 290249  
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:  
JMFinley Properties, located at 1172 La Rochelle Terrace E, Sunnyvale, CA 94089, Santa Clara County.  
Registered owner(s):  
JAY M. FINLEY  
1172 La Rochelle Terrace E  
Sunnyvale, CA 94089  
This business is conducted by: An Individual.  
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on N/A.  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 15, 2022.  
(ALM Feb. 25; Mar. 4, 11, 18, 2022)

**997 All Other Legals**  
T.S. No.: 201-019263 Title Order No. 91221683 APN: 069-041-030 Property Address: 235 HARCROSS ROAD, WOODSIDE, CA 94602 NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE NOTE: THERE IS A SUMMARY OF THE INFORMATION IN THIS DOCUMENT ATTACHED 注: 本文件包含一个信息摘要 참고사항: 본 첨부 문서에 정보 요약서가 있습니다  
NOTA: SE ADJUNTA UN RESUMEN DE LA INFORMACIÓN DE ESTE DOCUMENTO TALA: MAYROONG BUOD NG IMPORMASYON SA DOKUMENTONG ITO NA NAKALAKIP LUU Y: KEM THEO ĐÂY LÀ BẢN TRÌNH BÀY TÓM LƯỢC VỀ THÔNG TIN TRONG TÀI LIỆU NÀY [PURSUANT TO CIVIL CODE § 2923.3(a), THE SUMMARY OF INFORMATION REFERRED TO ABOVE IS NOT ATTACHED TO THE RECORDED

OR PUBLISHED COPY OF THIS DOCUMENT BUT ONLY TO THE COPIES PROVIDED TO THE TRUSTOR.] YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST DATED 12/23/2019. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDING AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER. A public auction sale of the Trustor's interest will be made to the highest bidder for lawful money of the United States, payable at the time of sale in cash, cashier's check drawn on a state or national bank, cashier's check drawn by a state or federal credit union, or a cashier's check drawn by a state or federal savings and loan association, or savings association, or savings bank specified in Section 5102 of the Financial Code and authorized to do business in this state will be held by the duly appointed trustee as shown below, of all right, title, and interest conveyed to and now held by the trustee in the hereinafter described property under and pursuant to a Deed of Trust described below. The sale will be made, but without covenant or warranty, expressed or implied, regarding title, possession, or encumbrances, to pay the remaining principal sum of the note(s) secured by the Deed of Trust, with interest and late charges thereon, as provided in the note(s), advances, under the terms of the Deed of Trust, interest thereon, fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee for the total amount (at the time of the initial publication of the Notice of Sale) reasonably estimated to be set forth below. The amount may be greater on the day of sale. Trustor: NIRVANA INVESTMENT GROUP, LLC, A CALIFORNIA LIMITED LIABILITY COMPANY Duly Appointed Trustee: PLM LOAN MANAGEMENT SERVICES, INC. Recorded 12/31/2019, as Instrument No. 2019-111954, of Official Records in the office of the Recorder of San Mateo County, California, Date of Sale: 3/11/2022 at 1:00 PM Place of Sale: At the Marshall Street entrance to the Hall of Justice at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063 Amount of unpaid balance and other charges: \$2,794,297.97 (estimated as of the first publication date) Street Address or other common designation of real property: 235 HARCROSS ROAD WOODSIDE, CA 94602 A.P.N.: 069-041-030 The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address or other common designation, if any, shown above. The property heretofore described is being sold "as is". If the Trustee is unable to convey title for any reason, the successful bidder's sole and exclusive remedy shall be the return of monies paid to the Trustee, and the successful bidder shall have no further recourse. If no street address or other common designation is shown, directions to the location of the property may be obtained by sending a written request to the beneficiary within 10 days of the date of first publication of this Notice of Sale. The following statements; NOTICE TO POTENTIAL BIDDERS and NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNER are statutory notices for all one to four single family residences and a courtesy notice for all other types of properties. NOTICE TO POTENTIAL BIDDERS: If you are considering bidding on this property lien, you should understand that there are risks involved in bidding at a trustee auction. You will be bidding on a lien, not on the property itself. Placing the highest bid at a trustee auction does not automatically entitle you to free and clear ownership of the property. You should also be aware that the lien being auctioned off may be a junior lien.

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## California must not undermine the advance of clean energy

By Josh Becker

### GUEST OPINION

The California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC) recently set aside plans to vote on a controversial proposal to revise the state's rooftop solar program. That's good. This time-out gives regulators a chance to rethink their proposal and tackle what Gov. Gavin Newsom described as "still ... some work to do."

I agree there is still work to be done. California is the U.S. leader in solar energy and adds a power plant-worth of rooftop solar about every five months. As of last year, our state had 25 gigawatts (GW) of solar on

the grid, with utility-scale solar accounting for 15 GW and 10 GW of distributed solar, nearly all of it from rooftop solar. To put that into perspective, 1 GW is enough to power 110 million LEDs or about 9,060 Nissan Leafs.

However, being the leader doesn't mean our work is over. Our state's current plans assume California will need as much as 208 GW from a mix of clean energy technologies to reach the goal of 100% clean electricity by 2045. We need more clean energy of every kind, and I'm working on

legislation to encourage that.

The CPUC's pause on its proposal is important because it provides time to craft a better solution to balance incentives for clean energy and remedies to address affordability concerns for non-solar customers. An updated approach shouldn't slam the brakes on the growth of solar, or other clean energy technologies. Our goal is a clean energy transformation. We need to get there faster, and we need to bring everyone along in the process.

The CPUC proposed changing the key incentives that enabled Californians to put solar on more than 1 million roofs of

homes, apartments, schools and businesses — including many in the 13th Senate District. Supporters of the CPUC's proposed changes say these benefits have gone mostly to the wealthy, but in recent years almost half the growth in rooftop solar occurred in working- to middle-income neighborhoods, according to a study of solar-adopter income trends.

The CPUC proposed several changes:

- A "participation fee" only for solar customers
- Changing the payments to existing solar customers
- For new solar customers, dramatically reducing the rate

of compensation customers get for selling excess energy to the grid.

I strongly agree that more support is essential for low-income Californians to participate in clean energy transformation and to incentivize storage. However, there are ways to accomplish this without drastic changes that kill new rooftop solar and change the deal for existing solar customers.

We should protect existing customers.

*Josh Becker is a Menlo Park resident and a California state Senator representing the 13th Senate District.*

## Stop building new apartments in Menlo Park

By Sloan Citron

### GUEST OPINION

Menlo Park has a strong and bustling residential climate. Along with other Bay Area communities, prices have increased dramatically in the last two years. The strength of our community — with its excellent schools, beautiful recreational facilities and fine people — continues to motivate developers to build here. The trouble, however, is that most developers want to build the wrong kind of housing: apartments.

Developers want to build apartments because it is better for them, both financially and from a liability position. As a result, most new housing being developed in Menlo Park is in the form of apartments, and few condominiums and townhouses

are being built. Apartments serve an important purpose, of course, but compared to homeownership they are not as positive for a community.

Our founding fathers knew that property ownership leads to security and general happiness. Owning a home — in whatever form it may be — is the cornerstone of the American Dream, providing families with a sense of emotional and financial stability and, historically, boosting household wealth through equity and appreciation over time.

Homeownership plays a vital role in helping to build strong, stable communities. Owners often get involved in the politics of the community, attending city council meetings and volunteering for

groups and organizations, such as neighborhood watches and school boards. They feel a sense of belonging that is often greater than someone who is renting for a short term. Homeowners are also likely to buy more services and goods in their towns, further benefiting local stores.

For many people, owning a home represents the stability, independence, and freedom of reaching adulthood. Real estate offers unique wealth-building opportunities. Buying a home expands options for the future, allowing growing families to move up the real estate ladder.

As the New York Times wrote in 2014: "Homeownership long has been central to Americans' ability to amass wealth; the net worth of homeowners over time has significantly outpaced that

of renters, who tend as a group to accumulate little if any wealth."

Homeowners do what even the best absentee landlords can't do: keep money in the communities and remain committed to and active in civic life, activities that are critical to the health and welfare of neighborhoods and cities alike.

In the end, to paraphrase the 2014 Times editorial: Renting can make sense as a lifestyle choice or because of income constraints. For building wealth, however, both individual and community, there is no substitute for homeownership.

Many young people who grew up in Menlo Park and others who would like to live in Menlo Park, even with hard-won down payments and strong incomes, cannot afford to live in the

community that they love. As such, they are moving to lower cost options in other communities and, indeed, in other states. If we don't want to lose this Menlo Park generation who wishes to enjoy the benefits of and make contributions to our city, then it is imperative that new, lower cost home ownership opportunities be created.

More apartments will serve developers well but not our town. As our City Council considers future development projects, especially large ones such as at the U.S. Geological Survey office property, it is imperative that they require that the majority of new housing starts be ones where ownership is possible.

*Sloan Citron is a Menlo Park resident.*

### LETTERS

Our readers write

#### SB 9 could create problems in Woodside

SB 9 creates "cart before the horse" lot splits by exempting considerations for offsite environmental, health and fire safety requirements embedded in hundreds of California laws.

In Woodside, SB 9 allows lots to be approved without consideration for widening narrow roads needed for fire evacuation. Woodside west

of Interstate Highway 280 is shown on state fire maps as a wildland fire area. Woodside west of I-280 is mostly on septic systems. Woodside has stringent septic system standards to prevent contamination of the Bear Gulch Creek's steelhead spawning grounds and to prevent health hazards from a leaking septic field.

Woodside's 5,500 citizens have been good custodians of a uniquely rural area that buffers open space from the developed areas to the east. SB 9's slippery slope to higher density threatens Woodside's

unique rural nature and the indispensable buffer it offers between the open space and the densely populated areas to the east.

Over 71% of Californians disapprove of SB 9 as do 240 other cities and the League of California Cities established in 1898. If Sacramento politicians can pass a state law to seize zoning authority from towns and cities and exempt environmental, health and safety laws, what else can they pass on a voice vote?

*Ed Kahl*

*Whiskey Hill Road, Woodside*

### What's on your mind?

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

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

Letters should be no longer than 300 words.

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


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# Artscene

PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCES IN ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

## GUILD THEATRE

*continued from page 1*

and extensive soundproofing so as not to disturb neighbors.

The Guild's stage was built to be significantly bigger than those typically found in small venues, in order to accommodate larger acts, Dunlevie said.

"If you're standing in the audience, or sitting upstairs or wherever you are inside the venue, you really feel like you're super close," Bailey said.

In fact, the audience's proximity to the stage is immediately obvious when stepping into the venue. The Guild's capacity is about 500 people standing and 200 seated, making for an intimately sized venue. (For comparison, The Warfield's capacity is about 2,250 and The Fillmore holds about 1,100, according to the venues' websites.)

Bailey knows his local venues — a Bay Area native and Stanford grad with strong roots in the local music scene, having worked for Bill Graham Presents, handling such places as The Warfield, The Fillmore and Shoreline Amphitheatre before moving to New York in the aughts, where he managed the Knitting Factory and the Blue Note. Most recently, he served as general manager for the Capitol Theatre in Port Chester, New York, before returning to the Bay Area in 2019 to take the reins at The Guild Theatre.

"I think one of the most important things about any concert venue — the thing that was great about (the Capitol Theatre) — is the vibe. And vibe is something that Fillmore has; vibe is something that I think all good venues have. And so we're trying to create a very unique vibe for this place in Menlo Park," Bailey said.

As intangible as finding a "vibe" may seem, The Guild seems to be getting a good start in that regard, with the Peninsula Arts Guild enlisting designer Ken Fulk to give the space an upscale modern look with retro touches.

Polished wood, stone and unique tiling give a luxurious feeling to common spaces such as the bar areas and bathrooms. But the interiors also embrace The Guild's 1920s heritage in light fixtures and other details, perhaps most notably in an art deco chandelier salvaged from the theater that hangs over the ground-floor bar.

There are also echoes of its movie theater past in the lobby



Magali Gauthier

**The new mezzanine** at The Guild Theatre in Menlo Park includes a second bar..

floor, finished with a colorful design reminiscent of vintage movie theater entrances — and the theater's blade sign remains, refurbished with "Guild" spelled out in new neon lights, Dunlevie noted.

"It's going to be one of the fancier places to go see a concert you could even possibly imagine. It'll be a feast for the eyes — an amazing place for the patrons as well as the artists," he said.

The Peninsula Arts Guild also made sure to pinpoint what amenities would make the space most comfortable and useful for musicians.

"We did a ton of research. We talked to artists themselves. We talked to production managers, we talked to tour managers," Dunlevie said.

The basement, off limits to patrons, includes a literal green room (paneled in wood painted a deep shade of green), with plush couches and a kitchenette. Off of the green room are two dressing rooms with adjoining bathrooms, complete with showers. A washer and dryer, stashed neatly behind folding green doors, are surprisingly sought-after amenities that not all venues offer, Dunlevie said.

The basement level also has a small kitchen that can provide musicians with meals designed by celebrity chef Michael Mina.

Though avoiding a "commute" to shows in the city was a driving force in the venue's creation, Peninsula Arts Guild's aim is not to compete with San Francisco, but when possible, offer a more local option for Peninsula music fans.

"We're really trying to make this a home-base kind of venue where people can stay close to home and don't have to drive an hour there and drive back. And with public transportation not being the most popular way to travel these days too, I think that there will be more regional attendance of concerts than there has been in the past," Bailey said.

The Guild's small size could actually complement larger venues in the region, as Dunlevie said one aim is to make The Guild Theatre attractive to big names on tour as a venue for charitable fundraising concerts.

Many well-established artists have causes that they support, he said, so a big-name act could play a larger Bay Area venue on their tour and then play The Guild to raise money for their

cause.

This possibility is supported by the venue's non-profit status, which means not having to maximize profit on every event they book.

"One of the most important parts about being involved in the 501(c)(3) is remembering that our goal is to present a variety, a wide range of music," Bailey said.

The model offers more flexibility in programming, including the ability to make the venue available to local groups and special events, such as book releases, talks and lectures or performances by school bands, he noted.

And booking-wise, the Guild's current schedule reflects an open approach, with diverse genres represented, at various ticket price points, as well. Upcoming dates include performances from folk-rock band Michigan Rattlers, rapper Lyrics Born, rock band Low Cut



Magali Gauthier

**The retro design** of this sconce was inspired by an old wallpaper pattern discovered when the 1920s-era theater was being renovated.

Connie and soul singer-songwriter Macy Gray.

"We've got a wide range of stuff. We're really gonna try a lot of different things and see what the community wants to see," Bailey said.

For more information and a full schedule of upcoming shows, visit [guildtheatre.com](http://guildtheatre.com). ▣

*Email Arts & Entertainment Editor Heather Zimmerman at [hzimmerman@almanacnews.com](mailto:hzimmerman@almanacnews.com).*

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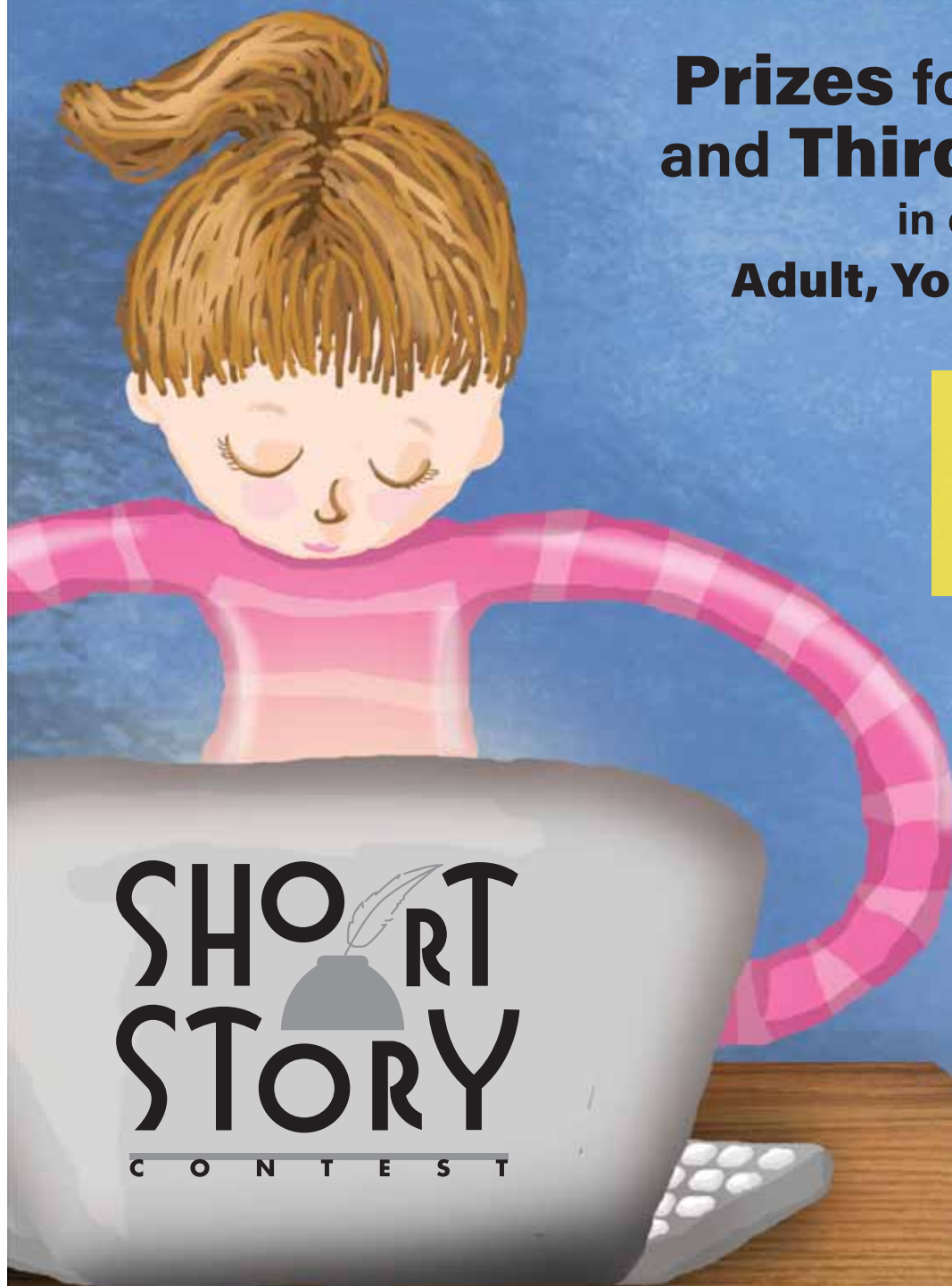
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# Food & Drink

## Decadent newcomers join the local restaurant scene

Premium pizzas and indulgent brunches land in Palo Alto,  
Italian specialties shine in Burlingame

By Anthony Shu

If you're in the market for something indulgent, a trio of new businesses is ready to cater to your needs. In downtown Palo Alto, the house specialty at Sweet Maple is thick slabs of sweet, spiced bacon, while at Wood Oven Pizza, it's premium pies with carefully sourced ingredients. Up the Peninsula in Burlingame, products imported from Italy are the star of the show at Caffè Stellato.

### Sweet Maple brings its brunch hits to Palo Alto

Walk down University Avenue and you might see a crowd forming in front of Palo Alto's newest brunch spot, Sweet Maple. The restaurant's original location opened in San Francisco in 2010, and images of their signature dishes still spread throughout social media. They hold a trademark on their most recognizable menu item: thick slabs of Millionaire's Bacon seasoned with brown sugar and cayenne.

Owner Steven Choi's restaurant group, which is best known for Asian-influenced brunch, is in the midst of expanding throughout the Bay Area from its roots in San Francisco, including upcoming locations in Cupertino and Mountain View. He even has a vision of opening locations across the country. Choi says that he picked University Avenue for this second location of Sweet Maple because he's always looking for "the most premium locations."

Sweet Maple's menu items also attract attention. Matcha moffles (chewy mochi waffles) are covered in green tea-flavored "lava" that spills across the plate. "Big Hip" deep-fried French toast is stacked with plenty of fresh fruit and powdered sugar.

While many diners visit Sweet Maple for these creative dishes, Choi said that his primary goal is to create a neighborhood restaurant that patrons can visit multiple times a week. "Maybe because of the decorations, because we care about the plating and presentation, people might think (our food) is trendy, but that's not what we're after," Choi says.

Alongside their Instagramma-

ble creations, Sweet Maple serves breakfast classics like scrambles, eggs Benedict and sandwiches. Choi hopes Bay Area residents can all find something familiar at his restaurants, and he credits his diverse staff for creating menu items that reflect many different cultures. Sweet Maple Palo Alto's head chef, Nick Yoon, has worked in kitchens preparing European, Japanese, Chinese and Korean cuisines. Thanks to staff members like Yoon, Sweet Maple's offerings include fried rice made with the iconic Korean instant ramen Shin Ramyun alongside a version of huevos rancheros that stacks chicken breast on top of a poached egg, roasted salsa and corn tortillas.

Sweet Maple is now open for breakfast and brunch and aims to start serving dinner next month.

*Sweet Maple is located at 150 University Ave., Palo Alto, 650-521-0764; Instagram: @sweetmaplesf. Check their website for the latest operating hours.*

### North Beach deli veteran opens 'one-stop shop' for Italian treats

The latest addition in downtown Burlingame, Caffè Stellato serves morning espresso, sandwiches made with imported Italian ingredients and over 40 flavors of gelato. Open from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. daily (11 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays), the deli and dessert shop aims to welcome a variety of customers. "It's your one-stop shop ... A lot of people eat their sandwich, then they come back in and get their gelato or get their

coffee," says Lana Abu-Arafeh, who runs Caffè Stellato with her husband Malik Zughayar.

Zughayar lived in San Francisco's historically Italian American neighborhood of North Beach for 15 years and worked as a manager at the Italian deli and gelato shop Alimento. He fell in love with Italian culture and food amidst hanging salumi and a case filled with colorful gelatos. Now, he's sharing these beloved flavors on the Peninsula.

Signature sandwiches include The Goodfella, which layers roast beef, prosciutto di Parma, salami, provolone cheese and basil on crisp ciabatta, and The Stellato Special Sandwich, which pairs turkey, artichoke, sundried tomatoes and mozzarella with calabrese spicy spread (hot calabrian chilis blended with other vegetables).

The gelatos are made by chef Tony Bonviso, who has over 40 years of experience in the business. Caffè Stellato's 42 offerings include traditional Italian flavors like stracciatella dotted with chocolate shavings and dark green pistachio, but they also draw from international influences with lychee, blackberry cabernet and peanut butter. Zughayar helped inspire some of the gelatos, including cardamom and rocky road. "Nobody would ever think (of cardamom in a gelato), but everyone falls in love with it," Abu-Arafeh says. Thanks to Abu-Arafeh and Zughayar's children, cotton candy will be added to the menu soon.

Rounding out the menu are assorted pastries from Dianda's Italian American Pastry and a



Courtesy Sweet Maple

**Matcha moffles** (mochi waffles) are covered in green tea-flavored "lava" that spills across the plate at Sweet Maple in downtown Palo Alto.

small assortment of salads.

*Caffè Stellato is located at 1112 Burlingame Ave., Burlingame, 650-315-2003; Instagram: @caffestellato.*

### Sisters go from backyard to business with Wood Oven Pizza

Raised in Argentina, sisters Cecilia Lee and Elizabeth Wong grew up in a country filled with high-quality pizza. Inspired by making wood-fired pizzas at home, Lee and Wong recently opened Wood Oven Pizza in downtown Palo Alto.

After attending the University of Pennsylvania, Lee and Wong eventually settled in the Bay Area. Lee built a career teaching in the Fremont Union High School District, and Wong is a local developer.

Wong had a wood-fired oven constructed at her home, and friends and family enjoyed her homemade pizza. Motivated by Argentinian and European chefs who dedicate themselves to perfecting a specific dish, Wong decided to turn her hobby into a business. She imported a wood-fired oven from Italy and installed it at one of her properties on Ramona Street. Wong then enlisted the retired Lee, who once operated a pizza restaurant in Sunnyvale, to manage the business.

"It's fun, we're old of age but doing something that we like," Lee says.

Lee describes Wood Oven Pizza's style as "a combination of American and Italian Neapolitan." The menu has two sections: white pies with creamy white bechamel sauce and red pies topped with tomato sauce. All of the pizzas are formed on a base of bubbly dough made with a recipe from Italy. The restaurant prides itself on simplicity and high-quality ingredients. Lee is enthusiastic about the menu's two pesto options, one of which is topped with mushrooms, spinach, soft ricotta and Parmigiano cheeses.

Customers can add red onions, olives, jalapenos or garlic to any pizza for no extra charge and receive a discount if ordering additional pizzas to take home. Wine, beer and sodas accompany the pizza offerings.

Lee recognizes that the pizzas, almost all of which cost \$29, are premium products. She wants customers to feel that they have paid an appropriate price for carefully sourced ingredients and attentive service. "I just want my customers to feel the way I wanted to feel after I went to a restaurant," Lee says.

*Wood Oven Pizza, 532 Ramona St., Palo Alto, 650-494-4241. Open 11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and 5 to 8:30 p.m. (9:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays.) Closed Mondays. ▣*

*Email Associate Digital Editor Anthony Shu at [peninsulafoodist@embarcaderopublishing.com](mailto:peninsulafoodist@embarcaderopublishing.com).*



Courtesy Lana Abu-Arafeh

**An assortment of gelatos** at Caffè Stellato in Burlingame.



Courtesy Wood Oven Pizza

**Margherita and pineapple pizzas** at Wood Oven Pizza.

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