

The Almanac

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

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Muwekma Ohlone seeking a tribal home

Despite being here for over 2,000 years, the government says they're not a tribe

By Sue Dremann

They have lived in the Bay Area for thousands of years, were enslaved by the Spanish conquerors and bounty hunted by Americans. The Native American tribe the Muwekma Ohlone were forced to hide on Spanish rancherias, landless, their numbers dwindling to the point that scholars in the 1920s claimed they were extinct.

Yet, they've held on. Their tribal membership hovered around 600 in 2003 — the most recent count — with many more born since then, Tribal Vice Chair Monica Arellano said.

But the Bay Area's first people want more than to merely exist: They're seeking federal recognition of their tribal status, which would give them the same benefits as other Native American tribes for housing, medical care, higher education and the ability to establish a land trust.

The government used to

recognize them as a tribe, but their status was removed from the Federal Register in 1927 after the U.S. decided their numbers were too small to matter. Separately, the tribe enrolled with and was approved by the Bureau of Indian Affairs from 1928 through 1933, 1948 through 1957 and 1968 through 1971 under the 1928 California Jurisdictional Act, evidence that the tribe was implicitly recognized by the BIA. But

they can't legally be considered a tribe without first obtaining reaffirmation and formal acknowledgement by the Secretary of the Interior. Efforts to regain that recognition have been stymied by politicization and arbitrary

definitions of what constitutes a tribe, according to the Muwekma.

The Bureau of Indian Affairs decided in 2002 it wouldn't confer tribal status on the Muwekma, claiming the tribe didn't meet the criteria in part because the tribe had failed to prove that it "has identification as an

'Our goal is to have a village in the Bay Area, to have a community.'

TRIBAL VICE CHAIR
MONICA ARELLANO



Magali Gauthier

Vice Chair Monica Arellano, left, and Chair Charlene Nijmeh of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe look through the exhibit "California Stories from Thámien to Santa Clara" in the de Saisset Museum at Santa Clara University on April 4. The tribe is pushing to regain the federal recognition that it lost in 1927.

Indian entity on a substantially continuous basis; comprises a distinct community at present; (and) has a governing body exercising political influence or authority within the group," the bureau wrote.

The Muwekma then spent six months repackaging its documents and adding new ones to

answer the preliminary determination of the bureau's Branch of Acknowledgement and Research. The Bureau of Indian Affairs failed to be swayed.

Now two initiatives are revitalizing their push for renewed recognition. Armed with new genetic evidence and a state bill, California Senate Joint

Resolution 13, which would support the tribe's federal recognition, the Muwekma are working to solidify their legitimacy despite what they call "the politics of erasure" and have started a Change.org petition to support passing the Senate bill.

See **TRIBAL HOME**, page 12

Report: Meta's Willow Village project aims to build around Native American site

Environmental study of new Menlo Park neighborhood also cites impacts to air quality and traffic

By Lloyd Lee

With Meta's plans to completely redevelop a 59-acre office park on Willow Road into a new neighborhood — replete with more office space, housing units, a hotel and a grocery store,

among a slew of other amenities — there's bound to be significant impacts to the environment during and after construction. Those effects range from impacts to air quality, noise, transportation and the potential of disturbing human remains, according to a newly released

draft environmental impact report on the development.

Meta's Willow Village has the potential to dig up Native American remains and destroy an archaeological site. That's due to the unique location of the development. Experts believe that an ancient Native American

village is buried beneath the ground there.

"There will be burials there. There's no doubt about it," Michael Wilcox, archaeology professor at Stanford University, told the Almanac in 2019. The land where Meta will develop is an archeology site known as

Hiller mound, he said.

To reduce the level of impact to the burial site, the developer proposes construction techniques that essentially attempt to build around the Hiller mound as much as possible to

See **WILLOW VILLAGE**, page 14

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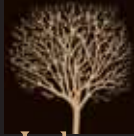
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Magali Gauthier

Dogs weren't the only critters strutting their stuff at the Trinity School pet parade in Menlo Park on April 6. Students and staff showed off everything from favorite stuffed animals to guinea pigs, a rabbit and a lizard.

Animals small and large converge on Trinity School for a pet parade

By Angela Swartz

With music blasting, a turtle, a bearded dragon in a wagon, guinea pigs, a dog dressed as a caterpillar, a cat, a rabbit, stuffed animals and more all congregated at Trinity School's Upper Campus in Menlo Park on the morning of April 6 for the school's first pet parade.

It's been two years since the small Episcopal school has held its blessing of the animals because of the COVID-19 pandemic, school officials said, so it was special for kids to see their friends' pets again during the carnival-themed event.

Students, teachers and their families walked their pets around the school, one of the few times parents, who until

recently couldn't come on campus, were able to interact with each other in person.

"Today was amazing," said Maya, a fourth grader, as she managed her two black labs, Simba and Walter. "There was a sea of dogs." She said her rabbit, Halo, who actually isn't much of an angel because he

See **PET PARADE**, page 18

Vice chair of Portola Valley wildfire committee ousted, and town officials won't say why

The nine-member advisory body has lost six members in six months

By Angela Swartz

The town of Portola Valley removed the Wildfire Preparedness Committee's vice chair on April 5, the latest in a spate of members to leave the committee in recent months. It's making it difficult for the committee to operate. The committee's April 5 meeting was canceled when there weren't

enough members present to reach a quorum.

Recruitment for the committee won't come easily, with "all the vitriol, conspiracy theories and legal threats directed at the town and committee volunteers about housing and fire safety issues," in recent months, said Mayor Craig Hughes in an email. The committee, which is designated to have nine members, shrank to five on

April 6 when another committee member resigned, citing pressing personal commitments pulling her away from the volunteer position.

Two members of the Town Council and a wildfire committee member agreed to oust Dale Pfau from the committee, which advises the Town Council on

See **COMMITTEE MEMBER**, page 17

Police investigating hate crime after Palo Alto's Ukrainian flag torn down

Resident found feces bundled inside the torn flag

By Lloyd Lee and Sue Dremann

Palo Alto police are investigating a recent vandalism as a hate crime, after a resident's Ukrainian flags were torn down and left in the yard rolled up with feces in the Old Palo Alto neighborhood.

The resident, who lives near the 1400 block of Alma Street, not far from the Churchill Avenue intersection, made the discovery around 10 a.m. on April 7, according to a press release. The two flags were attached to a hedge in the front yard before they were torn off and bundled up with feces.

Police believe the vandalism occurred between the evening of April 6 and the morning of April 7, the news release stated. They are investigating the incident as a hate crime.

No similar cases involving the Ukrainian flag in Palo Alto have occurred, police said.

The resident, who asked to remain anonymous out of privacy concerns, told this news organization that whoever engaged in the vandalism had entered her yard to deposit the two damaged and soiled flags. The flags, which measure 2.5 feet by 4 feet, had been up for about 45 days and were securely fastened to a hedge. They were torn down with considerable violence, she added.

"That's a sick mind," she said. "I'm not going to fight hatred with hatred."

In a Nextdoor post on April 7, the resident offered free Ukrainian flags to those who wanted to display them in their yards.

"The response to this is for me to make many, many Ukraine flags for display in Palo Alto," she wrote. "Please let me know if you would like a Ukraine flag to display in solidarity with the Ukraine people who are suffering atrocities of Russia's invasion."

The resident has since made dozens more flags of various sizes. The largest is 4 feet by 6 feet, she said. She plans to add another 20 flags this coming Saturday, April 16, for people to take and display at their

homes. People have come from Palo Alto, Redwood City and Mountain View, she said.

She started sewing the flags on Friday last week after returning from work and spent all day Saturday flag-making. She had blood blisters on her hands by the end of her sewing session, a small price compared to those suffering in Ukraine, she said.

Some people consider flags to be political statements, but the resident said she is "a nonpolitical person."

She and her family are not Ukrainian. The display didn't say anything about Russia or about Russian President Vladimir Putin, she said. She has been moved by the atrocities she has seen on television against the Ukrainian people. She hoped that passersby who see the flags will "pray for the safety of the people of Ukraine," she said.

The flags aren't perfectly sewn, she said: "No seamstress has to fear her day job from me."

But her 97-year-old mother, who as a young Irish girl fought in World War II, had a different opinion, the resident said.

Handmade flags, which came from the heart, are the very best kind, her mother told her.

During the war, people called homemade flags "war flags," which people made to show their support for the war effort, her mother said.

The vandalism has had one silver lining. She learned new things about her mother.

"From this evil thing came an opportunity to share and discuss her World War II experiences," the resident said.

Anyone with information about the vandalism is asked to call the department's 24-hour dispatch center at 650-329-2413. Anonymous tips can be emailed to paloalto@tipnow.org or sent by text message or voicemail to 650-383-8984. ■

Email Lloyd Lee at llee@almanacnews.com and Sue Dremann at sdremann@paweekly.com

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NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Town Council of the Town of Portola Valley will hold a Public Hearing on the proposed changes to the fee schedule. The Public Hearing will be held on Wednesday, April 27, 2022 at 7:00 p.m., via a Zoom teleconference meeting. To join the Zoom meeting, access the link provided on the April 27, 2022 Town Council agenda.

Data associated with the proposed changes will be available to the public by emailing the Town Clerk at mthurman@portolavalley.net, beginning 10 days prior to the meeting date above.

Public Hearings provide the general public and interested parties an opportunity to provide testimony on these items. If you challenge a proposed action(s) in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at a Public Hearing(s) described above, or in written correspondence sent to jdennis@portolavalley.net prior to the Town Council meeting date.

All interested persons are invited to appear before the Town Council to be heard at the time and place mentioned above.



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N E W S

COMMUNITY BRIEFS



Magali Gauthier

Debbie Mendelson shows a diseased bay laurel tree leaf. During "The SOD Blitz," volunteers will be collecting leaves like this to have them tested for sudden oak death. Bay laurels carry the disease, but are not killed by it.

Sudden Oak Death survey

It's time for the annual Sudden Oak Death Blitz survey.

The 15-year old project is a citizen science program designed to map the distribution of sudden oak death (SOD) in California and identify locations where native oaks should be treated to prevent infection and death.

The Peninsula's survey takes place May 21 to 23. Portola Valley's SOD Blitz Station will be located on the Historic Schoolhouse porch, 765 Portola Road. Woodside's station will be located between Independence Hall and Town Hall, 2955 Woodside Road.

Sign up online at sodblitz.org or email sodblitz@gmail.com.

Atherton Arbor Day 2022

The town of Atherton will be hosting a free Arbor Day festival on Friday, April 29, from 9 a.m. to noon at Holbrook-Palmer Park, 150 Watkins Avenue.

There will be a tree planting from 9 to 11 a.m., followed by a tree walk from 11 a.m. to noon.

For questions about the event, email treecommittee@ci.atherton.ca.us, and to volunteer for the event, contact volunteer@ci.atherton.ca.us.

For more information, go to the town's website: ci.atherton.ca.us.

Woodside Preschool accepting applications

Details and information for the 2022-23 school year, enrollment options and application can be found at woodsideschool.us/Pre-school/index.html.

The priority application period ends April 15.

2022 Peninsula Libraries Comic Arts Fest

The Peninsula Libraries Comic Arts Fest is returning this year, with virtual events from April 23 to 30.

There will be author visits, workshops, panel discussions and other comics-related programs.

Check out the festival schedule at smcl.org/comicartsfest.

Ravenswood's new take home tech program

The Ravenswood City School District has launched an initiative, dubbed the Take Home Tech Program, so all students have access to district-owned devices in the classroom as well as having one at home, according to an April 11 district newsletter.

The district has started handing out student devices for home use to all sixth through eighth graders who indicated a need. The district will next provide home Chromebooks to second through fifth graders, and home iPads for TK to first graders, plus WiFi hotspots. It can also now provide a hotspot to district instructional staff who have poor quality or no broadband internet at home.

"The Take Home Tech Program will help accelerate learning at Ravenswood by providing students a home device for homework, connectivity to curriculum, and easy access to eBooks," the newsletter states. "In addition, this resource bridges the digital divide in our community. New Chromebooks and WiFi hotspots were purchased using a federal stimulus-funded ECF (Emergency Connectivity Fund) grant. ■

— Angela Swartz

Commission sets new Menlo Park City Council district lines

Changes affect the Downtown and West Menlo neighborhoods

By Lloyd Lee

More than 600 Menlo Park residents in portions of Downtown and West Menlo neighborhoods will find themselves in new districts that determine when they next vote for a City Council member to represent them.

On April 7, the Independent Redistricting Commission — established to redraw Menlo Park's five district voting boundaries without City Council oversight — wrapped up the redistricting process following two months of careful review involving over two dozen maps, submitted by both the public and commission members.

"I think that the process went very well overall," said Caio Arellano, chair of the redistricting commission, who was not present at the April 7 meeting due to work commitments. "There were some challenges, I think, in getting the amount of outreach and public input that we would have liked based on restrictions around COVID ... but overall I'm pleased."

The changes to the new district lines are slight, but will impact about 662 people based on 2020 U.S. Census data, and the boundaries will be set for the next decade until 2030. The two neighborhoods impacted by the new boundaries are Downtown Menlo Park and West Menlo.

In a corner of downtown Menlo Park, a portion of District 3 residents, currently represented by Jen Wolosin, will become part of District 4, which is represented by Mayor Betsy Nash. Based on Census data, this moves around 248 residents residing in the L-shaped area bordered by Valparaiso Avenue, Hoover Street, Oak Grove Avenue, El Camino Real, Santa Cruz Avenue and Crane Street.

The new lines will also move a chunk of downtown businesses, from the former Menlo Bazaar store to the Stacks diner on the corner of Santa Cruz Avenue and El Camino, into Nash's district.

In West Menlo, an area with about 414 people, bordered by Santa Cruz Avenue, Cotton Street, Middle Avenue and Wallea Drive, will be taken out of District 4 and put into District 5, which is currently represented by Ray Mueller.

The new boundaries means

that the portion of District 3 residents who voted in 2020 and will be moved into District 4 will have an opportunity to vote again this November for a new council representative. And voters in District 4 who are moved to District 5 will have to wait until 2024 to pick a new City Council member.

City Council election runs on a four-year cycle but is staggered between Districts 1, 2 and 4, which had an election in 2018, and Districts 3 and 5, which had an election in 2020.

It was a gripe council member Drew Combs brought up about the city's election cycle, when the council voted 3-2 last year to create an independent group to draw the district borders. Combs called making a resident wait six years to vote "disenfranchisement."

It was also a point that partly deterred members of the redistricting commission from adopting any map that significantly reshaped the boundaries and one that left members feeling stuck when it boiled down to two maps left in the running.

However, Alex Sainz, a consultant for GEOinovo Solutions, who helped provide calculations and guidance throughout the redrawing process, said that some voters will have to see a change in election date.

"Regardless of how the lines change, whenever redistricting happens, it's inevitable that some number of people will be pushed either back two years or move forward two years," Sainz said. "I'm not sure if it should be a significant determining factor for one map or the other, especially when considering population balance, easily recognizable boundaries, neighborhoods, communities of interest, all these great things that the commission has discussed up to this point."

No changes were made to District 1 or District 2.

"That was something that we, as a commission, coalesced around pretty early on — that that neighborhood is very much well defined," Arellano said of District 1, referring to how 101 Highway provides an easy, guiding border. "One of the criteria of the elections code says boundaries should be easily identifiable and understandable by residents."

A range of factors can be considered when redrawing district borders. On top of

requirements outlined by the California Fair Maps Act, which stipulates that the districts must be geographically contiguous and that an effort must be made to keep neighborhoods intact within the same district, the commission could also consider school attendance figures, shared demographics including levels of income or education, areas where there are parks or major upcoming developments, as well as existing dividing lines such as major roads or highways.

But on April 7, as the commission deliberated over six maps left in the running, the final decision boiled down to how to reduce the variance in population between each district without moving too many voters around.

Menlo Park has a total population of 33,830 residents, according to census data, which means the "target population" for each district is 6,766. By law, the city must remain within a 10% variance between the lowest and highest populated district. In this case, it was Districts 1 and 5.

The new map deviates from 6,766 by 8.08%, which commissioners said is about a one-point reduction from the current district boundaries.

While District 1 is facing a slew of major developments — the planning commission just approved another mixed-used building with 158 rental units near Meta headquarters — the commissioners' final decision was largely driven by current census figures.

There also appeared to be some confusion around what the new maps would actually achieve.

One of the hopes commission members had for the new maps was to split the district locations of the upcoming Springline development on 1300 El Camino Real and Stanford University's Middle Plaza development along a stretch of 500 El Camino Real. However, both developments are already located in different districts, with the former in District 3 and the latter in District 4.

Six commission members were initially evenly split between two maps, with Arellano not present, before unanimously voting on the final map. ■

Email Lloyd Lee at llee@almanacnews.com.

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Care for Your Trees

Dear Monica:

We are interested in buying a property that has several large trees. Should I be concerned about them?

Richard M.

Dear Richard:

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Strong winds take down power lines and trees in Menlo Park, Woodside

By Lloyd Lee and Angela Swartz

Strong winds on Monday, April 11, took utilities agencies and first responders for a ride in Menlo Park with at least 10 incidents of downed trees and power lines — in some cases blocking roads or landing on vehicles.

Reports were popping up all afternoon and into the evening,

according to Nicole Acker, public information officer for the Menlo Park Police Department.

Around 1:13 p.m., half a tree landed on two vehicles near the 1200 block of Carlton Avenue.

Less than two hours later, Menlo Park Fire Department had to handle a downed phone line on the 100 block of San Andreas Drive, while the city public works department

moved a tree branch that blocked a bike lane and partially blocked a traffic lane.

In the biggest incident, around 3:13 p.m., a tree near 1125-1205 San Mateo Drive took down multiple power lines that required personnel from the Menlo Park Fire Department, PG&E and the public works department, with help from the police department to

control traffic. The power lines were de-energized, Acker said, and the incident was closed by 4:45 p.m.

Acker said that the incidents were most likely caused by the strong winds. The National Weather Service issued a wind advisory for the greater Bay Area that lasted until 9 p.m. Wednesday and reported wind gusts as high as 37 mph in Palo Alto.

Across the Peninsula, trees and power lines fell victim to the weather on Monday.

According to the Woodside Fire Protection District Fire Marshal Don Bullard, a few

trees came down in Woodside that blocked roadways, including on Portola Road near the Windy Hill Open Space Preserve parking lot area. No power lines were involved, he noted in an email.

In Palo Alto, on the corner of Emerson Street and Homer Avenue, a large tree hit two vehicles after it fell from the strong gusts, according to local media reports. ■

Email staff writers Lloyd Lee at llee@almanacnews.com and Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com

Climate issues heat up during District 15 congressional forum

The debates around nuclear power and oil prices were particularly contentious

By Leah Worthington

In a fast-paced, two-hour forum, four candidates for California's 15 Congressional District competed to present themselves as the state's best choice for action on climate change.

Wednesday night's Climate and Environment Forum, which was hosted by the Citizens' Climate Lobby in partnership with Acterra, Sustainable San Mateo County and Thrive Alliance, featured David Canepa, Gus Mattammal and Kevin Mullin, who are all vying to replace outgoing congresswoman Jackie Speier.

Emily Beach, a United States Army Veteran and former mayor of Burlingame, called herself an "avid cyclist and public transportation nut" whose top campaign priority is climate action and justice. Her talking

points included protecting open space and biodiversity, imposing a carbon tax and building sustainable infrastructure to prepare for rising sea levels and wildfire.

Beach cited a lack of diversity among U.S. Representatives, highlighting her experience as a veteran and mother.

"Right now there are only 27% women in Congress. Only 17% have any military service," she said. "We need more women, not fewer to champion things like pay equity, affordable childcare, reproductive freedom."

David Canepa, a member of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors and lifelong county resident, touted his commitment to "systemic change." Describing himself as the only candidate not accepting any corporate PAC money, he added, "let's take out the dirty money in politics."

He listed his top three

priorities as Medicare for all, free community college and the Green New Deal and heralded technology as a key tool for addressing climate change, calling on Congress to innovate to create "commercially viable carbon capture."

Gus Mattammal, a businessman and educator, and the only Republican in the race, presented his political affiliations as advantageous in what he said "will almost certainly be a Republican congress." Promoting a economy-focused campaign, Mattammal said he wants to reduce carbon by creating jobs, "without demonizing entire industries that employ thousands of Americans."

He asked voters to consider "how we get to a cleaner environment by relying on the strengths of our markets."

Kevin Mullin, former mayor of South San Francisco and

current state assembly member representing the 22nd district, emphasized his experience both in state politics and in working directly with Speier.

"I believe qualifications still matter," he said. "I have been preparing for this role my whole life."

Mullin said addressing climate change requires a "Marshall Plan-level effort" and endorsed a carbon tax. He also spoke about his work to address sea level rise in San Mateo County and called himself the "architect of a \$3.7 billion climate resiliency package adopted in the state budget."

All four candidates answered questions about incentivizing green transportation, creating equitable and inclusive policies, reducing military emissions and engaging the youth.

Canepa pushed for creating "something like the Peace Corps" to engage youth in climate issues and give them the training and opportunity to do real work.

Beach, for her part, said she would bring young people on as advisors and members of her staff.

In response to a question about current political divides, Beach spoke about living as far as Texas, Korea and Saudi Arabia, saying that she has the experience to "build those cultural bridges" and create policies sensitive to the needs of people from different socioeconomic and political backgrounds.

Mullin was more direct, calling Trumpism a "cancer" that needs to be "excised...from the political discourse."

Nuclear power was a particularly contentious issue among the candidates.

While Canepa called the question of using nuclear power "extremely difficult," ultimately opposing it out of fear of "economic and environmental destruction," his competitors disagreed.

"With all due respect to David I think it's an easy question. Yes, we should absolutely have nuclear as part of the solution," Mattammal said. "We should be building more of them. It is emission free."

Mullin and Beach both expressed a preference for alternative options, like wind power, but supported nuclear as a perhaps necessary evil.

"Nuclear has to be part of the conversation, if we can manage the waste, safely and if it's cost-effective," Beach said. "It should be on the table and thoroughly studied because we do have a climate emergency."

The candidates were also divided about how to tackle the current oil crisis.

With gas going for \$6 or more per gallon, Mattammal argued in favor of increasing the U.S.'s domestic oil production.

"A little bit more fuel capacity protects us so we're not dependent on Vladimir Putin, we're not dependent on the Middle East," he said. "Our energy independence is one the things that allows us to influence world affairs more than we otherwise would."

However, his three rivals stood in stark opposition, with Canepa describing the moment as an "opportunity to get people back on public transit" and Beach calling on legislators to play the long game and let the market incentivize people to drive less.

"I'm not supportive of any rebate or subsidy for people to drive. I just think it's foolish," Canepa said. "We need to tax the profiteers — these oil companies that are making record profits."

All U.S. congressional districts, including California's District 15, are up for election on Nov. 8, 2022. The primary is scheduled for June 7. ■

Email Leah Worthington at lworthington@rwcpcpulse.com



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COMPASS

Longtime Ladera resident, author and hiking enthusiast Jean Rusmore dies at 101

By Angela Swartz

Jean E. Heying Rusmore, a longtime Ladera resident and co-author of the hiking guide Peninsula Trails, died on April 1 at age 101 in Aptos.

Rusmore, who lived in Ladera for nearly six decades, was a person of wide-ranging interests, guided by her love for other people nature, and this fascinating world, according to an obituary written by her family.

"It's hard to say what I'll miss the most," said her daughter, Kaki Rusmore, in an email. "Her ability to see the good in every person and every situation, her deep love of nature and gentle way of sharing it, her generous, kind, open-hearted approach to the world and everyone in it, her commitment to fairness, her never-ending curiosity and her zest for life are just a few of the qualities that I and many others will miss."

Jean Rusmore was born in Sept. 13, 1920, in Anaheim to Mary Grim Heying and Oscar

Heying, the oldest of four children, according to her family. Growing up, she helped out at her father's drugstore, and learned to swim and body surf in nearby Seal Beach.

In 1938 she enrolled at the University of California at Berkeley, where she majored in physical education and minored in French.

She met her husband, Ted Ruschhaupt, in 1938, at the International House, where they both lived. They married in 1942 and changed their last name to Rusmore.

In 1948, the couple was one of the first families to buy into Ladera. Jean Rusmore was a member of the Peninsula Housing Association, the cooperative that founded Ladera, according to a 2020 Almanac story. The couple built an Eichler-style home and raised six children there, according to a biographical page from a book compiled by the Walkie Talkies, a female hiking group Jean founded in the 1980s.

"My parents were very

committed to it being a welcoming, diverse, family-friendly and engaged community," Kaki said, noting she was glad to see that covenants excluding Black, Indigenous and people of color were finally removed in Ladera. "I know my parents were both very committed to the diversity that was expected to be part of Ladera, and were heartbroken when banks would not loan without that restriction. ... She had a wonderful ability to build authentic friendships, and continued to make friends in Ladera even after many of the original residents had moved on."

Wanting to make cycling and walking safer for children, Jean Rusmore and Artemis Ginston advocated for bike paths along busy Alpine Road, and she was dubbed the "mother of bikeways," for her role in making bike paths more common.

Kaki told The Almanac in 2020 that her father got her mother into hiking, and once she started, "there was no stopping her."

As a young mother, Jean



Courtesy Teri Coppedge

Longtime Ladera resident and author Jean Rusmore on a hike at age 95.

Rusmore became friends with Ladera neighbor Frances Spangle, who introduced her to the League of Women Voters, according to a 2002 Almanac article. They took their children hiking and backpacking to county and state parks, and Rusmore joined the San Mateo County Trails Advisory Committee.

She was an early member of the Committee for Green Foothills and as part of the Sempervirens Fund and a founding member of the Ladera Recreation District, according to her family.

Conservationist Lennie Roberts became fast friends with Rusmore and her husband when she moved to Ladera in 1965.

"Jean was an early member of Committee for Green Foothills, and became the San Mateo County advocate for open space protection in the 1970s," Roberts said in an email. "When she decided to pursue a new career as an author, I took over the advocate job. Jean was a hard act to follow, as her enthusiasm, warm smile and laughter were tremendous assets in convincing decision makers to protect the Skyline and coastal areas of San Mateo County."

When Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District was formed in the '70s and began to buy new areas of open space, hiking opportunities grew significantly, but they weren't well-advertised, Rusmore told The Almanac in 2002.

Rusmore and Spangle wrote "Peninsula Trails: Outdoor Adventures on the San Francisco Peninsula," first published in 1982. Then came "South Bay Trails: Outdoor Adventures In & Around Santa Clara Valley" in 1984, followed by "Bay Area Ridge Trail: Ridgetop Adventures above San Francisco Bay."

She lived in Ladera until 2005, when she moved to the Vi at Palo Alto senior living facility before relocating to Aptos in 2017, according to The Almanac's archives.

Rusmore was preceded in death by her husband Ted in 2004. She is survived by their children, Mary Lyn Rusmore Villaume, Teri Rusmore Coppedge, Barbara Rusmore, John Rusmore, Kaki Rusmore and Margi Rusmore; 13 grandchildren and 10 great-grandchildren.

To honor her memory, the family suggests hiking a trail, contributing to a park or environmental organization or sharing some vanilla ice cream with friends.

A celebration of her life is being planned for June. More information is at jean-rusmore.forevermissed.com. ■

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



MENLO PARK BRIEFS

Menlo Park to issue \$14.3M from Measure T bonds

Menlo Park City Council voted 4-1 on Tuesday to issue the remaining \$14.3 million in Measure T bonds, which voters approved in 2001 to improve parks and recreation facilities throughout the city.

Property tax for Menlo Park residents will fluctuate, but the rate is expected to go up by about \$4.50 per \$100,000 of assessed property value for a total of \$12.50 per \$100,000.

"I just think with inflation and gas prices, it's not an appropriate time to be raising taxes right now," said Councilman Ray Mueller, explaining his vote.

"I couldn't be more unhappy about having my taxes raised, except that, when I look at the parks and recreation master plan, and I see that the Willow Oaks Park has had the least amount of renovation and services after the Belle Haven multigenerational campus," said Pamela Jones, a Menlo Park resident. "So with that in mind, I think it is important for us to take care of our open space."

SLAC names new Stanford vice president

Menlo Park-based SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory named a new vice president on Tuesday, according to a press release from Stanford University.

Stephen Streiffer, a Stanford alum and a deputy laboratory director for science and technology at Argonne National Laboratory in Illinois, will step into the role in June.

"This is really a homecoming for me," Streiffer said in the news release. "SLAC is at the forefront of so many areas that are extremely important to the nation and world in research. I look forward to working with the laboratory management team to continue to advance SLAC's mission and to create even greater scientific ties between the university and SLAC."

Streiffer will lead the "development and implementation of Stanford's oversight and governance role and advises SLAC management on strategy and operations," the release stated. Streiffer will report to Stanford's president Marc Tessier-Lavigne and chair the lab's Board of Overseers.

SLAC is operated by Stanford for the U.S. Department of Energy. ■

—Lloyd Lee



NOTICE INVITING BIDS TOWN OF ATHERTON, CA

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

2022 SLURRY SEAL PROJECT

Performing of Type II micro-surfacing per Town specifications on the listed streets, which includes notifications, traffic control, prep work, oil and chip installation, compaction, sweeping, and re-stripping/pavement markings (as needed) with a 1-year guarantee.

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

SEALED BIDS will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 80 Fair Oaks Lane, Atherton, California 94027, until 1:30 p.m. Pacific Standard Time on Tuesday, April 26, 2022, at which time bids will be publicly opened and read aloud.

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

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TRIBAL HOME

continued from page 1

Tribal Chairwoman Charlene Nijmeh said the government's criteria for what constitutes a tribal social and political community is based on the Plains Indians, who survived in greater numbers. The Muwekma lived during the mission period in California, and many died as a result. Those who didn't had to pretend to assimilate and live among another race of people.

"It's kind of hard to be visible when they are chasing you," Arellano said.

And to say they didn't have leaders is false, Nijmeh added. They always had tribal members who stepped up.

"My great-grandmothers died young. My grandmother went to an orphanage," Nijmeh said. "Families had to take care of families."

Evidence of their ancestry

The presence of the Muwekma in the Bay Area dates back at least 2,000 years, according to research published on March 21 in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences article "Ancient and modern genomics of the Ohlone Indigenous population of California."

Prior archaeological publications examining linguistic patterns and artifacts had already dated the presence of the Ohlone in the Bay Area from 1,000 to 1,500 years ago.

But what's even more significant for the Muwekma, the new genomic research shows a continuity of their presence from that 2,000 years ago to today, which could make spurious past Bureau of Indian Affairs arguments and qualify the Muwekma for recognition.

The genomic research found the Muwekma comprise all of the lineages who trace their ancestry through the Bay Area missions of San Francisco, Santa Clara and San Jose.

Further, they are genetically linked to members of the historic, previously federally recognized Verona Band, who resided in Alameda County from 1834 to the early 1900s, according to the research paper.

A genetic linkage to the Verona Band is particularly significant. A federal judge in the 2006 U.S. Federal District Court, District of Columbia stated: "The following facts are not in dispute. Muwekma is a group of American Indians indigenous to the San Francisco Bay Area, the members of which are direct descendants of the historical Mission San Jose Tribe, also known as the Pleasanton or Verona Band of Alameda County (the 'Verona

Band"). From 1914 to 1927, the Verona Band was recognized by the federal government as an Indian tribe. Neither the United States Congress nor any executive agency ever formally withdrew federal recognition of the Verona Band."

The genomic study was conducted by the Far Western Anthropological Research Group, the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign and Stanford University with assistance from the tribe. The research examined two historic settlement sites located near the Water Temple in Sunol, where the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission had proposed creating an educational facility. Because it was likely the site would uncover burial sites, SFPUC contacted the Muwekma, which, with their archaeologists, oversees the exhumations and reburials.

One site, Sii Túupentak (Place of the Water Round House) dates between the years 1345-1850. Seventy-six people were buried there, according to the genetic study. The second site, Rummey Ta Kučuwish Tiprectak (Place of the Stream of the Lagoon Site), dates back

'I believe it is important to recognize the ancestral lands of the Muwekma Ohlone that we currently occupy.'

STATE SEN. DAVE CORTESE

490 BC-1775 and contains the remains of 29 people.

The DNA analysis used samples from four people at the Rummey site and eight people from the Sii Túupentak and compared them with saliva taken from eight modern tribal members.

"The genetic connections between the two archaeological sites and between the sites and the present-day Muwekma Ohlone individuals suggest that the present-day Muwekma Ohlone share continuity with peoples who have inhabited the San Francisco Bay Area for at least two millennia," and perhaps back as far as 2,500 years ago or further, the researchers wrote.

California Legislature — the first step toward recognition?

Some members of the state legislature say it's finally time the Muwekma Ohlone are recognized.

State Sen. Dave Cortese introduced California Senate Joint Resolution 13 on March 7. If it passes in both houses, the



Magali Gauthier

Muwekma Ohlone Tribe Chair Charlene Nijmeh, left, and Vice Chair Monica Arellano, right, look through an exhibit at the de Saisset Museum at Santa Clara University in Santa Clara on April 4.

California Legislature would formally support the Muwekma Ohlone in their status as a recognized tribe.

The legislature's resolution would urge the United States Congress and the Department of the Interior's Bureau of Indian Affairs to reaffirm and restore the Muwekma Ohlone as a federally recognized tribe to be included in the Federal Register. Gov. Gavin Newsom's signature would not be required.

The bill was co-authored by Sen. Bob Wieckowski and Assemblymen Ash Kalra, Alex Lee and Robert Rivas. It was referred to the California Senate Governmental Organization Committee on March 17.

Cortese noted in an email on Wednesday that much of Santa Clara County, which he represents, and surrounding areas sit on the Muwekma's aboriginal homeland.

"For decades, Muwekma Ohlone have sought to restore their status as a federally recognized tribe by congressional legislation. Our strength is in our diversity, and, by this principle, we must recognize and not erase our history in order to right our historical wrongs," he said.

"I believe it is important to recognize the ancestral lands of the Muwekma Ohlone that we currently occupy. Several California counties as well as state and federal elected officials have passed similar resolutions urging the federal status of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe be restored, and Stanford University as well as UC Berkeley have distributed letters of validation; I believe it is time for California, as a state, to do the same. Let's be on the right side of history."

State Sen. Josh Becker and Assemblyman Marc Berman said in emails they would also support the bill.

"Research indicates that Muwekma Ohlone people with ties to their ancient ancestors are

very much alive. I look forward to supporting this legislation," Becker said.

Berman added, "I look forward to supporting SJR 13 when it reaches the Assembly and to urging the federal government to reaffirm the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe's vitally important status."

Will politics interfere?

In the eyes of the Muwekma's supporters, righting a historic wrong might be a simple, noble and overdue act, but politics and economic interests could get in the way.

Other tribes have been privately lobbying against recognition for the Muwekma Ohlone, claiming that once they receive their tribal status they will build a casino in the Bay Area, Nijmeh said. Politically, that would be a hot-button issue, but it would also cut deeply into the lucrative gaming industry of those same tribes.

Nijmeh said the pressure has already extended to the state Governmental Organization Committee, which was scheduled to hold a hearing on the proposed Senate bill. It would take nine out of 15 votes to then pass the resolution to the full Senate for consideration.

But after tribal gaming interests began to privately oppose the resolution, "the office of this committee explained to Cortese's office that they won't even hear the resolution because they have an informal policy to stay out of tribal issues," she said.

The senator is trying to get the committee to hold the hearing.

"The resolution is about recognizing the historical and societal contributions of those that were stewards of this land before us — those that were displaced," Cortese said. "If we want to talk about our gambling industry, and the restrictions we place on that industry, then

that is an entirely separate conversation."

Nijmeh called the gaming issue a scare tactic. The Muwekma don't want to build a casino, she said. Instead, they want to create a land trust that would be self-governing and have a community where they can grow and thrive together.

The first people, who have maintained their presence in their ancestral land for so many years, say they are at risk of being priced out of their homeland due to the Bay Area's sky-high housing costs and are once again getting scattered in other communities.

"It's expensive to live in the Bay Area. Our goal is to have a village in the Bay Area, to have a community" with housing, schools and other amenities, Tribal Vice Chairwoman Arellano said.

Nijmeh said that without tribal recognition the Muwekma Ohlone don't have any of the benefits that recognized tribes receive — opportunities for funding schools, college and university scholarships, jobs development, land and medical services.

"We had to create our own COVID fund. Other tribes got \$8 billion in money from the Cares Act," Nijmeh said. Tribal members raised \$30,000 among themselves to help families facing displacement due to job loss and other critical needs caused by the pandemic.

But perhaps the most important part of tribal recognition is that it would be a first step to making the Muwekma Ohlone begin to feel whole again, they said. After so many centuries of having their history erased and their people nearly annihilated, if the state petitions the federal government through the Senate joint resolution, it would mean the state is recognizing and supporting the tribe for the first time.

"It says the state stands with us. It's a big message to say the state apologizes" for what was done to the Muwekma people, Nijmeh said.

The DNA analysis also offers a chance "for the public to see our descendency," Arellano said.

Commissioning the genomic study was a big step for the tribal council to take, not knowing what the results might be.

But now the evidence has solidified their legitimacy, ties to the land and their deep roots as a people, Arellano said, so that healing can perhaps begin.

"It helps us visually to have that," she said. ■

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

Cordell: Ketanji Brown Jackson has 'made the U.S. Supreme Court look more and more like America'

Retired judge, Bay Area legislators celebrate the historic confirmation

By Gennady Sheyner

Retired Judge LaDoris Cordell said she was overjoyed when the U.S. Senate votes were tallied on Thursday, April 7, and Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson officially secured her elevation to the U.S. Supreme Court.

"I'm thrilled because she has made the U.S. Supreme Court look more and more like America," Cordell told this news organization in an interview.

Cordell, a Palo Alto resident and former city council member, knows more than most people about breaking barriers. In 1982, she became the first Black woman to serve on a Superior Court in northern California. Cordell was on the Santa Clara County Superior Court bench for the next two decades, retiring from the bench in 2001. She is keenly aware of both the positive and negative pressures that Jackson will experience as she begins her tenure on the highest court in the land.

The bad pressure, she said, will come from those who have bought into the negative stereotypes about people of color and expect her to fail. These people include many in the Republican Party who opposed her confirmation and who tried to characterize her during Senate Judiciary Committee hearings as soft on crime because of her experience as a public defender.

Cordell said that Jackson demonstrated during the lengthy hearings that she can withstand and effectively respond to these attacks, which Cordell said she found appalling.

"She demonstrated that she is strong, that she can always be respectful and always, as best she could at these hearings, state the way that she'd viewed the law," Cordell said.

Jackson, now the first Black

female Supreme Court justice, will also experience "good pressure" from communities of color and from women who expect her to succeed. This pressure always goes hand-in-hand with being the first person to reach a particular achievement. Cordell said she believes Jackson will be able to handle the good pressure well and serve as a strong and independent justice.

"I know that she will bring a realistic perspective to the U.S. Supreme Court when they're discussing cases, that she will not be timid about expressing her views," Cordell said.

Early in her career, Jackson had served as a clerk for Justice Stephen Breyer, whom she will replace on the court after he retires following the Supreme Court's summer recess. Jackson also worked as an attorney in private practice and as a public defender before she was appointed by former President Barack Obama to serve as vice chair of the U.S. Sentencing Commission. She went on to become a federal judge in 2012, winning bipartisan support for a seat on the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia. Last year, President Joe Biden nominated her to serve as judge on the U.S. Court of Appeals for the D.C. Circuit, an appointment that also advanced with bipartisan backing.

Her elevation to the Supreme Court proved more tumultuous, with several Republican members of the Senate Judiciary Committee citing her record as a public defender as evidence of her being soft on crime. But even though the committee deadlocked along party lines, she cleared her final legislative hurdle last week when the full Senate voted 53-47 to advance her confirmation. Three Republican senators — Susan Collins, Lisa Murkowski and Mitt Romney — joined

every Democrat to confirm her to the court.

Cordell compared Jackson's elevation to the Supreme Court to other historic firsts, including the nominations of Thurgood Marshall in 1967 and Sandra Day O'Connor in 1981. Marshall, the first Black justice in the history of the Supreme Court, was appointed with 69 votes of support, while O'Connor, the first female justice, received 99 votes.

"The U.S. Supreme Court, which sets the law of the land, has been a segregated institution for more than 200 years. All that time it's only been open to white men," Cordell said. "We have an institution that has slowly but surely become desegregated and I think there will be more."

Cordell said she looks forward to the day when the Supreme Court sees its first Asian American and Native American justices. But while the court still has a long way to go, she called Jackson's

confirmation a huge step. And the fact that her vote count was much closer than it was for Marshall in no way diminishes her achievement, Cordell said.

"Clearly this was a political vote and I was pleased to see three Republicans vote for her," she said.

The Bay Area's legislative leaders also lauded Jackson and celebrated her elevation to the Supreme Court. Rep. Jackie Speier said in a tweet that Jackson's confirmation is a "testament to her integrity, legal prowess and temperament, and grace in the face of 13 hours of baseless GOP attacks."

"The respect she commands is SUPREME!" Speier wrote.

Rep. Anna Eshoo called Jackson "one of the most qualified judges to ever be confirmed to the Supreme Court."

"She served as a federal public defender; a federal appellate judge; a federal district court judge; a member of the U.S. Sentencing Commission; and an attorney in private practice,"

Eshoo said in a statement. "Four words are engraved above the doors of the Supreme Court: Equal Justice Under Law. I'm confident Judge Jackson will make these words walk into the lives of the American people." ■

Email Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner at gsheyner@paweekly.com

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include **Betty Jean Lucke**, 95, former owner of Bonasue, a dressmaking and alterations shop in Menlo Park, on April 1; and **Jean E. Rusmore**, 101, author, co-founder of the Ladera Recreation District and Laera resident of 55 years, on April 10.

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

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PLANNING COMMISSION
APRIL 20, 2022 6:00 PM

PURSUANT TO WOODSIDE TOWN RESOLUTION NO. 2022-7476, PLANNING COMMISSION MEETINGS WILL BE HELD AS HYBRID MEETINGS WITH THE OPTION TO ATTEND BY TELECONFERENCE/VIDEO CONFERENCE OR IN PERSON. MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC THAT WISH TO ATTEND AND/OR PARTICIPATE IN A MEETING MAY DO SO IN PERSON OR BY JOINING THE ZOOM MEETING [HTTPS://US02WEB.ZOOM.US/J/86068472736](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86068472736) PUBLIC COMMENTS WILL BE ACCEPTED BOTH IN PERSON AND VIA ZOOM MEETING. ANY EMAILS SENT TO SHARPER@WOODSIDETOWN.ORG WILL BE PROVIDED TO THE PLANNING COMMISSION PRIOR TO THE MEETING. IN THE EVENT THAT ANY MEMBER OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION PARTICIPATES IN A MEETING BY TELECONFERENCE OR VIDEO CONFERENCE, PURSUANT TO THE RALPH M. BROWN ACT, GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 54953, ALL VOTES OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION SHALL BE BY ROLL CALL.

Join Zoom Meeting:

One tap mobile
+16699009128,86068472736
+12532158782,86068472736

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 9128
+1 253 215 8782
+1 346 248 7799
+1 301 715 8592
+1 312 626 6799
+1 646 558 8656

Meeting ID: 860 6847 2736

Weblink: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86068472736>

Remote Public Comments:

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

Email: sharper@woodsidetown.org

PUBLIC HEARING

3. Town-wide

GPAM2022-0001

Housing Element, Cycle 6 (2023-2031)

Jackie Young, Planning Director

Review of Draft Chapter 3 of the Cycle 6 (2023-2031) Housing Element Update (including Sections on the Cycle 6 RHNA Allocation, Public Outreach and Engagement, Housing Sites Inventory & Assessment, Strategies for Meeting the Cycle 6 RHNA Allocation (ADUs, single-family dwellings, SB 9 projects, land divisions, pipeline projects and multi-family projects), Affirmatively Furthering Fair Housing, the Cycle 6 Housing Program & Action Plan, Consistency with State law, and General Plan consistency).

THE ALMANAC OPEN HOMES

ATHERTON

303 Atherton Ave \$19,988,000
Sunday 1:30-4:30 7BD/8.5BA
DeLeon Realty 650-900-7000

LOS ALTOS

686 Spargur Drive \$6,950,000
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30 6BD/6BA
JLee Realty 650-857-1000

MOUNTAIN VIEW

49 Showers Drive (T) \$1,415,000
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30 3BD/2.5BA
JLee Realty 650-857-1000

PALO ALTO

118 Churchill Avenue \$4,488,000
Sat 1:30-4:30 5BD/5BA
DeLeon Realty 650-900-7000

2252 Louis Road \$3,500,000
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30 5BD/2.5BA
JLee Realty 650-857-1000

1420 University Ave \$8,988,000
Sun 1:30-4:30 6BD/6.5BA
DeLeon Realty 650-900-7000

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

Agents: submit open homes at
AlmanacNews.com/real_estate



NOTICE REQUESTING BIDS

WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT PROJECT

BAYFRONT PARK SANITARY SEWER IMPROVEMENT

Sealed proposals for the BAYFRONT PARK SANITARY SEWER IMPROVEMENT PROJECT will be received at the West Bay Sanitary District, 500 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, California 94025 until **2:00 PM on Wednesday, May 11, 2022** at which time they will be publicly opened and read. Bids shall be labeled "West Bay Sanitary District, Proposal for "BAYFRONT PARK SANITARY SEWER IMPROVEMENT."

The Work will include the furnishing of all labor, materials and equipment, and other appurtenances for new installation and replacement of sanitary sewer mains by Open Trench Construction, installation of a telecommunication main by Open Trench Construction, and installation of a recycled water main by Horizontal Directional Drilling Construction and open cut method, as indicated on the project plans.

The contract documents may be inspected at the office of the West Bay Sanitary District, 500 Laurel St, Menlo Park, California 94025; San Francisco Builders Exchange, Attn: Deanna Johnson, 850 So. Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, California 94110; Peninsula Builders Exchange, Attn: Andrea Nettles, 282 Harbor Blvd, Belmont, California 94002; Santa Clara Builders Exchange, Attn: Kanani Fonseca, 400 Reed Street, Santa Clara, California 95050; Bay Area Builders Exchange Attn: Jeannie Kwan, 3055 Alvarado Street, San Leandro, California 94577; Construction Bidboard Incorporated, Attn: Plan Room, 11622 El Camino Real, Suite 100, San Diego, CA 92130.

Copies of the Contract Documents may be obtained at the office of the West Bay Sanitary District upon payment of a check or money order in the amount of \$60.00 for each set. The check or money order must be issued to the West Bay Sanitary District. All payments are nonrefundable.

A pre-bid meeting will be held at **10:00 am on Wednesday, April 27, 2022** via Zoom.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87868575187?pwd=b2dRMUtWYWxRdW9zOTNXN09mTHNpQT09>

Meeting ID: 878 6857 5187

Passcode: 051489

One tap mobile

+16699006833,,87868575187#,,,051489# US (San Jose)

+13462487799,,87868575187#,,,051489# US (Houston)

Dial by your location

+1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

+1 346 248 7799 US (Houston)

+1 253 215 8782 US (Tacoma)

+1 929 205 6099 US (New York)

+1 301 715 8592 US (Washington DC)

+1 312 626 6799 US (Chicago)

Meeting ID: 878 6857 5187

Passcode: 051489

Each bid proposal shall be accompanied by a certified or cashier's check or a proposal guaranty bond payable to the order of the West Bay Sanitary District in an amount not less than ten percent (10%) of the amount of the bid as a guaranty that the bidder will execute the contract if it be awarded to him in conformity with the proposal. The successful bidder will be required to furnish a performance bond in an amount not less than one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price and a labor and material bond in an amount equal to one hundred percent (100%) of the contract price.

The District ("Owner") reserves the right to reject any or all bids and to determine which proposal is, in the judgment of the District, the lowest responsible bid of a responsible bidder or group of bidders and which proposal should be accepted in the best interest of the District. The District also reserves the right to waive any informalities in any proposal or bid.

Bid proposals received after the time announced for the opening will not be considered. No bidder may withdraw his proposal after the time announced for the opening, or before award and execution of the contract, unless the award is delayed for a period exceeding forty-five (45) days.

Pursuant to the provisions of Public Contract Code Section 22300, and upon the request and at the expense of the Contractor, securities equivalent to the amount withheld by the District to ensure performance under the Contract may be deposited with the District, or with a state or federally chartered bank as escrow agent who shall deliver such securities to the Contractor upon satisfactory completion of the contract. Only those securities listed in Government Code Section 16430 or other securities approved by the District are eligible for deposit. The deposit of securities with an escrow agent or the District shall be made in the form and on such terms and conditions as the District may require to protect the interest of the District in the event of the Contractor's default. The Contractor shall be the beneficial owner of any securities that are deposited and shall receive any interest thereon.

Pertaining to Sections 1770, 1773, and 1773.1 of the California Labor Code the successful bidder shall pay not less than the prevailing rate of per diem wages as determined by the Director of the California Department of Industrial Relations. Copies of such prevailing rates are on file at the District office of the West Bay Sanitary District and which copies shall be made available to any interested party on request. The successful bidder shall post a copy of such determinations at each job site.

In accordance with the provisions of California Public Contract Code Section 3300, the District has determined that the Contractor shall possess a valid Class A License or a combination of Class C-12 "Earthwork and Paving", C-34 "Pipeline" and C-42 "Sanitation System" licenses at the time this contract is awarded. Failure to possess the specified license(s) shall render the bid as non-responsive and shall act as a bar to award of the contract to any bidder not possessing said license(s) at the time of award.

West Bay Sanitary District

Board of Directors

San Mateo County, California

/s/ Sergio Ramirez

District Manager

Dated: April 4, 2022

WILLOW VILLAGE

continued from page 1

avoid penetrating its boundaries, preserving the site in place.

If disturbance to the site can't be avoided, then the developer proposes that to seek sensitivity training, in which "Native American tribal representatives shall conduct tribal cultural sensitivity training for workers and construction superintendents."

"There is a high likelihood that the project will result in the disturbance of burials and the destruction of cultural resources. We hope that (Meta) will consult and work closely with the tribe as this project unfolds," Monica Arellano, vice chair of the Muwekma Ohlone Tribe of the San Francisco Bay Area, previously said in a written statement. She serves as the point person of contact whenever excavation work uncovers potential Native American human remains.

As part of the state-mandated CEQA process, Meta and Willow Village's developer, Signature Development Group, must pay for consultants hired by the city to prepare an extensive study called an environmental impact report (EIR) that details the scope of the project, timeline and the potential environmental impacts as well as any plans to mitigate them, if possible, all of which will be reviewed and must be approved by Menlo Park's planning commission in order to move plans forward.

On April 8, the city released the nearly 1,000-page draft EIR, which is now open to public review and comments for at least 45 days, with a public hearing expected in the next planning commission meeting on April 25.

Some environmental impacts will be unavoidable — several of which have previously been recognized by the planning commission.

"The elephant in the room is, for this project, the elephant in the room for all of our Bayfront

projects, which is transportation," Commissioner Henry Riggs said in 2019.

The report recognizes that it will have "potentially significant" impacts to traffic without any mitigation, with more than 20,000 daily net new trips generated on the roadways.

But there are other significant impacts that a development of this scope could bring.

One that the report lists as unavoidable, even with mitigation measures, is the cumulative negative impact on air quality.

There's also the potential to significantly impact surrounding wildlife, state-protected wetlands and other natural habitats.

Some of the possible mitigation measures include avoiding or reducing the amount of wetland vegetation removed near the project's site. But if that can't be avoided, the report proposes to either restore the impacted habitats or provide a new one in an appropriate location or through purchasing "mitigation credits" that can compensate for unavoidable wetland losses.

The developer also proposes to remove 760 existing trees, 266 of which are heritage trees, which will require tree removal permits, and plant 822 new trees.

The developer anticipates Willow Village will be completed in two phases by late 2026, with demolition to begin as soon as mid-2022.

An online version of the draft EIR can be reviewed at bit.ly/3E8vhcR.

Copies of the report are available at Menlo Park Library, at 800 Alma Street, and the Belle Haven Branch Library at 413 Ivy Drive.

Written comments can be addressed to Kyle Perata, acting planning manager of City of Menlo Park, at 701 Laurel Street. Comments can also be emailed, which is preferred, to ktperata@menlopark.org. ■

Email Staff Writer Lloyd Lee at llee@almanacnews.com



Courtesy Meta/Signature Development

A rendering of what Meta's new offices could look like at Willow Village. The developer plans to use a timber-based construction method to reduce carbon emissions.

DA's Office to charge former community colleges chancellor with fraud

By Angela Swartz

The San Mateo County District Attorney's Office plans to bring 21 fraud charges against disgraced former San Mateo County Community College District chancellor Ron Galatolo. The DA's Office arrested Galatolo without incident on Tuesday, April 12, at San Francisco International Airport as Galatolo returned from a trip abroad, according to DA Steve Wagstaffe.

Among the allegations leveled against Galatolo are awarding construction contracts to vendors in exchange for valuable gifts like international travel and writing off a donation made with district funds to Tubbs Fire relief efforts on his personal tax return, the DA announced April 7.

Galatolo, who the district's board of trustees fired last year, is the second district official to be charged with fraud. In December 2021, the DA brought felony charges against Jose Nuñez, former Vice Chancellor of Facilities. He pled guilty to two felony charges for using school funds for political purposes in January, according to the DA.

Following a nearly three-year investigation, the DA in a statement on April 7 that Galatolo:

- Reported a \$10,000 charitable donation to the Santa Rosa Junior College Foundation Fire Relief Fund, intended to aid students, staff and faculty in recovering from the October 2017 Tubbs Fire, on his 2017 state income tax return when it was actually a donation made by the San Mateo County Community College District Foundation

- With the assistance of Nuñez, directed that construction projects be awarded to vendors from whom he had received valuable gifts, including concert and sporting events tickets and high-end travel

- Didn't report gifts from contractors on a Form 700 as required by law

- Purchased high-end and classic cars and purposefully underreported the purchase price to the DMV (outside of his district role)

In the summer of 2019, the district announced that Galatolo would leave his chancellor post to become chancellor emeritus and work on a feasibility study to bring a California State University campus to the Peninsula.

The district's governing board voted to end Galatolo's \$467,700 annual chancellor emeritus

contract during a closed session in February 2021.

The board said Galatolo failed to complete any work over the 18 months he served as chancellor emeritus. He also "refused" to answer any of the board's questions about his work for the district, trustees said.

The district's board of trustees, through their outside counsel, Pillsbury, Winthrop, Shaw, Pittman, LLP., has been supportive of the DA's efforts in obtaining records and conducting interviews of district personnel, assisting the investigation that has resulted in the filing of these felony charges, the Thursday press release states.

"The college district severed its relationship with Mr. Galatolo more than a year ago and has cooperated with the District

Attorney's Office throughout its investigation and will continue to do so pending the upcoming criminal proceedings," said district spokeswoman Ana Maria Pulido in a statement. "The college district remains focused on providing access to a world-class education to the people of San Mateo County."

Galatolo was arrested without incident and posted a cash bail of \$150,000 three hours after being taken into custody. He is due to be arraigned on April 27 at 9 a.m. at the San Mateo County Hall of Justice in Redwood City. The DA's Office had previously planned to arraign him on Friday, April 15. ■

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

Betty Jean Lucke

July 6, 1926 – April 1, 2022

Betty Jean Lucke was born in Pittsburgh, PA on July 6, 1926. As a young girl, she moved with her parents to East Orange, New Jersey. Upon graduation from East Orange High School during World War II, she attended nursing school at St. Luke's Hospital in New York City. Upon completion of the nursing program, she married Winston Lucke and moved with him to Boston where he completed his graduate degree



and she worked for Massachusetts General Hospital. In 1949, they moved to California as part of the second wave of 49'ers and took up residence in Palo Alto. Before having children, she worked at the original Palo Alto Medical Clinic. She had three children: Nancy, Robert, and Susan, who she raised in Portola Valley. After her divorce in 1960, she opened a custom clothes and alterations business, originally operating the business out of her home and then in a small shop in Menlo Park. While raising her children, she was active in the 4-H organization as a parent leader. In 1976, she met Sam Renteria at a dance in Menlo Park and shared a relationship with him until his death in 1997. She retired and closed her business in 2005 at the age of 79. In retirement, she enthusiastically volunteered as an usher at the Mountain View Center for Performing Arts, where she received recognition in 2015 for 2137 hours of service. Her children were her pride and joy, each obtaining a graduate degree. A dedicated Democrat, she was not afraid to share her opinions. She was a voracious reader and enjoyed the theater, the ballet, cats and dogs and her bourbon and water. She leaves behind daughter Nancy Ludgus and son-in-law Lawrence Ludgus of Wilmington, DE; son Robert Lucke and daughter-in-law Teresa Hannah of Hinton, Alberta, Canada, and daughter Susan Lucke of Goleta, CA. The family would like to thank the caregivers at Sunny View Manor Care Center and Heartland Hospice Care. The family would like to extend a special thanks to long time family friend Jon Silver for the care and companionship he provided in her final years. Although she did not live quite as long as her father (who lived to be a month shy of his 105th birthday), she always said she had a good run and had no regrets. Services are private. Donations in Betty's memory may be made to the Palo Alto Medical Foundation.

PAID OBITUARY

John H. Sylvester

April 15, 1936 – December 4, 2021

On December 4, 2021, John H. Sylvester, loving father, brother, uncle, and friend passed away at the age of 85.

John was born on April 15, 1936, in San Francisco, CA to Peter and Catherine (Hoesch) Sylvester. He grew up in King City, CA, and maintained a lifelong connection with his childhood friends and community. He carried his nickname Johnny, bestowed upon him growing up, with him throughout his life. He graduated in 1958 from the University of the Pacific with a bachelor's degree in business administration, and a music minor. Following college, he attended the US Navy Officer Candidate School and served as an officer in the US Navy. Serving aboard supply ships, his tours included assignments in Japan and the Belgian Congo.



John married Barbara Lynn Olerich, and they had two children together, Jennifer and Pete. Despite divorcing, they remained close throughout their lives, and were pioneers of co-parenting, raising their children together in partnership with the love and support of their families. John's dedication to his family was genuine and unparalleled. He was always there with a quick joke to lighten the mood in a pinch or sage advice and a shoulder to cry on when the chips were down.

John enjoyed a lifelong career as an insurance broker, and was a founding partner of Sylvester, Schwartz, and Tugaw Insurance Brokers, later to be known as SS&T Insurance Brokers, Inc. for which he served as President. His convertible Pontiac Soltice, which he zipped around town in for many years, still bears the vanity plate with his initials and that of his company: SST JHS

John was a man of great passion – passion for life, his family and friends, cars – especially convertibles, sports, literature, and music. He was a huge San Francisco Giants and Forty-Niner fan, as well as the Stanford Cardinal and his beloved Cardinal Women's Basketball team. He was rarely at a loss for words and could be counted on to express his opinion on how plays were made or offer insight into calls made by the umpires. He was a lifelong musician, fluent in multiple instruments, in particular the piano and saxophone, the latter which he returned to playing at the urging of his close friend Stan Getz. He had a wonderful singing voice and gift for delivery, and while adept at many genres, loved jazz and standards. For 20+ years, John played saxophone and provided vocals for the Jazz ConneXion, a band he played in with dear friends Vince Gomez, Dale Nesbitt, and other talented musicians. He loved nothing more than playing gigs with his bandmates, and among his favorite venues were playing at the restaurants owned by friends. Poker nights and weekly dinner with his best buddies were other favorite pastimes.

John was a generous and charitable man and took his civic responsibility seriously. He was active in many organizations, including the Rotary Club of Los Altos (past president); Peninsula Executives Association (member emeritus); the Los Altos Stage Company, formerly the Bus Barn Stage Company (board member and performer); Music for Minors; the SF Giants Community Fund; Stanford Cardinal Women's Basketball Boosters to name a few.

John was preceded in death by his father Peter, his mother Catherine, and his brother Pete, and is survived by his children Jennifer McNally (Sylvester) and Pete Sylvester, sister Anne Strickling, niece Carey Strickling Gorgolinski, and her sons Matthew and Jack Dean, as well as extended family members from the Olerich's and Gorgolinski's.

A celebration of life was held on December 15, 2021, at the Unity Palo Alto Spiritual Center, attended by his loving family and hundreds of friends. Musical memories were provided by Vicki Reeder, musical performance by Vince Gomez, Dale Nesbitt, and fellow musicians, and readings by Carey Gorgolinski, Dale Nesbitt, and Mike Wallau. The service was presided by Rev. John Riley.

Donations can be made in John's memory to the Los Altos Stage Company John Sylvester Memorial Fund (<https://losaltosstage.org/in-memoriam-john-sylvester/>) and the John Sylvester's Memorial Fund, providing scholarships to High School Musicians via the Los Altos Rotary Endowment Fund. (P.O. Box 794, Los Altos, CA 94023-0794)

PAID OBITUARY

Woodside council votes to become a five-member body, but a ballot initiative might block it

By Angela Swartz

Woodside Town Council will gradually move from a seven- to five-member body, as it transitions to a “by-district” system for electing council members. But a resident, feeling the council has ignored public input, is considering creating a ballot initiative to keep it as a larger body.

By a vote of 4-1 on Tuesday, April 12, with Councilman Ned Fluet opposed and council members Jenn Wall and Sean Scott absent, the council chose to shrink its membership over the next two election cycles.

Fluet told The Almanac Wednesday in an email that he voted no because last week, the Town Council reviewed a different five-district map that

kept the neighborhood north of Jefferson Avenue in one voting district. “I thought that map was more equitable and was strongly supported by the residents in that community,” he said. “I believe the map that was approved last night by the town council unnecessarily divided a neighborhood and lacked strong community support.”

During the council’s April 7 meeting, resident Kevin Greenwood expressed his frustration with the council for not listening with the majority of constituents who supported sticking to a seven-member council. He said if the council adopted the new five-member district map, he would launch a ballot initiative asking voters to require the town to have seven council members. For a citizens’ initiative measure to be

placed on a ballot, proponents must gather the signatures of 10% of registered voters.

“If you can’t listen to constituents then maybe you should refuse yourself from the votes or you should resign,” Greenwood told the council. “If you don’t want to work for us, get out.”

The majority of council members supported moving to five members, as the town attorney indicated Woodside could open itself up to litigation if it broke up Census blocks, potentially costing the town hundreds of thousands of dollars, according to March 29 council meeting minutes.

Town staff warned officials during an April 5 meeting that if the council missed the April 17 deadline for submitting a new map, it could face a \$30,000

fine, according to the meeting minutes.

The council began the process in March 2021 to transition from a so-called from-district system, in which candidates must live in a given district but are elected by all the town’s voters, to a “by-district” system, in which only voters residing in a district elect a representative to its council seat. The change is necessary because the old system is a form of at-large elections that is not allowed under the California Voting Rights Act.

The transition to the five-member by-district council would happen over the next two election cycles. The proposed ordinance provides that elections for new council districts 2 and 3 will be held every four years starting in 2022 and elections for new council districts 1, 3 and 5 will be held in 2024 and every four years afterward, according to the town website. Each district will elect one town council member, according to a town presentation.

Current council members will complete the term of office that they have been elected to fill. Mayor Dick Brown and councilmen Sean Scott and Brian Dombkowski are up for reelection this fall. The four other council members’ terms expire in 2024.

Current districts are not balanced by population and do not line up with 2020 Census geography, according to the staff presentation.

The council selected its preferred redistricting map on March 15.

Opposition to shrinking the council

The town received a number of letters from residents who are inclined to support sticking to a seven-member Town Council.

During a March 29 council meeting, Councilman Fluet said he took issue with the idea that somehow the vast majority of people the council has heard from who are in support of seven-member districts got it wrong. He supported one of the five-member maps the public crafted.

“There is just as much risk with breaking up communities of interest as there is with breaking up census blocks,” he said during the meeting. “We have heard the public loud and clear that this is a map they support.”

Councilman Brian Dombkowski explained that he and other town officials couldn’t find a seven-member map that met the federal and state mandates, and made any sense for Woodside.

Councilwoman Jenn Wall said that with seven members, the council has a “healthy debate.” She was concerned about having two fewer voices on the council, especially at meetings where a council member is inevitably going to be absent.

Mayor Dick Brown said at the same meeting that the core communities of interest remain intact on a five-district map: he didn’t see the Glens, Woodside Hills, Woodside Heights or Old La Honda Road split.

For more information on the redistricting process visit mapwoodside.org. ■

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

Public Notices

995 Fictitious Name Statement

GRACE DENTAL
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 290592
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Grace Dental, located at 90 Middlefield Rd., Ste. 2, Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
ERIC SON KWON, DDS. INC.
90 Middlefield Rd., Ste. 2
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 3/23/22.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on March 23, 2022.
(ALM Apr. 1, 8, 15, 22, 2022)

PLATA'S GARDEN MAINTENANCE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 290587
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Plata's Garden Maintenance, located at 24 Clinton St. #1, Redwood City, CA 94062, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
ELIZABETH BUENDIA MENDEZ
24 Clinton St. Apt. #1
Redwood City, CA 94062
This business is conducted by: An Individual.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on March 22-2022.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on March 22, 2022.
(ALM Apr. 1, 8, 15, 22, 2022)

BUBBLES HOUSE CLEANING
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 290669
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Bubbles House Cleaning, located at 6500 Pescadero Creek Rd., Pescadero, CA 94060, San Mateo County; Mailing address: P.O. Box 3143 Half Moon Bay, CA 94019.
Registered owner(s):
ALMA DELIA MARTINEZ MORALES
6500 Pescadero Creek Rd.
Pescadero, CA 94060
This business is conducted by:
An Individual.
The registrant commenced to transact

business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 01/01/2022.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on April 4, 2022.
(ALM Apr. 8, 15, 22, 29, 2022)

4-GOOD FOUNDATION
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 290602
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
4-Good Foundation, located at 217 Camino Al Lago, Atherton, CA 94027, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
THE DAVID AND HEIDI WELCH FOUNDATION
217 Camino Al Lago
Atherton, CA 94027
CA
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 March 23, 2022.
(ALM Apr. 15, 22, 29; May 6, 2022)

997 All Other Legals

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF:
GORDON ROBERT ARMSTRONG AKA GORDON R. ARMSTRONG AKA GORDON ARMSTRONG
CASE NO. 22-PRO-00279
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the WILL or estate, or both of GORDON ROBERT ARMSTRONG AKA GORDON R. ARMSTRONG AKA GORDON ARMSTRONG. A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by GAYLA ARMSTRONG in the Superior Court of California, County of SAN MATEO. THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that GAYLA ARMSTRONG be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.
THE PETITION requests the decedent's WILL and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The WILL and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court.
THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested

persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.
A HEARING on the petition will be held in this court as follows: 06/21/22 at 9:00AM in Dept. PROBATE/DEPT 11 located at 400 COUNTY CENTER, REDWOOD CITY, CA 94063
IF YOU OBJECT to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.
IF YOU ARE A CREDITOR or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58(b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code.
Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law. YOU MAY EXAMINE the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.
Attorney for Petitioner
TIMOTHY C. BRUGH - SBN 169609,
PILLSBURY WINTHROP SHAW PITTMAN LLP
2550 HANOVER ST
PALO ALTO CA 94304
4/1, 4/8, 4/15/22
CNS-3570552#
THE ALMANAC

Call Alicia Santillan at 650-223-6578 or email asantillan@pawekly.com for assistance with your legal advertising needs. The deadline is Monday at noon.

Employment

Sr Research Associate & Sr SW Engineer

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COMMITTEE MEMBER

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ways to reduce wildfire danger and increase resident resiliency in an emergency.

Town officials declined to state why they removed Pfau, who is the chair of the town's Emergency Preparedness Committee, from the wildfire committee. Pfau, who was one of the founding members of the wildfire committee, could not be reached for comment.

Hughes, who is also a member of the committee, noted it's not common to remove a committee member from their position.

Portola Valley Neighbors United, which was founded in January 2020 to "respond to several difficult town issues and preserve the town's rural nature," said Pfau "has been a candid and thoughtful" vice chair of the committee.

"He is a strong proponent of wildfire prevention and safety for our community," they said in a statement. "He has spoken up clearly for prioritization of wildfire safety as a necessary precondition for future development of fire-prone hazardous areas of town. For that reason, he has also pressed forcefully for the need to revise and update our safety element as an essential precursor to compliance with RHNA (regional housing needs allocation — the town is tasked with cycle) mandates or amendment of our housing element. Our town has benefited greatly from his outspoken candor and his sound guidance will be sorely missed."

Tensions between residents and town officials have intensified, with some hiring attorneys in recent weeks to investigate actions by town committees and council members, including one "massive" Public Records Act request filed by attorney and former San Jose mayor Chuck Reed related to the Ad Hoc Housing Element Committee and its consideration of changing the zoning of the Nathhorst Triangle neighborhood for denser housing development.

Vice Mayor Sarah Wernikoff (on March 21), Megan Koch, Jennifer Youstra, Karen Vahtra and Marianne Plunder have all resigned from the committee in the last half year. Those who have resigned have cited the large time commitment of the committee. The town designates an hour and a half for committee meetings, but the last two meetings have each run three hours long.

On April 5, the wildfire committee was set to discuss alleged Brown Act violations by a committee member on March 1. Two law firms representing residents Rusty and Kristen Day, Ron Eastman, Bruce and Shirley Roberts, James Rooney and Jim and Ellen Vernazza, brought forward the allegations.

They accused Wernikoff of violating the Brown Act by sending text messages to the town manager and other committee members about committee business during the March 1 meeting. Someone took screenshots of Wernikoff's text messages, which appeared during the meeting when she shared her screen with audience members.

Town Attorney Cara Silver said texting during a meeting is permitted, provided a member does not send text messages to a quorum, which Wernikoff didn't do.

Wernikoff resigned from the committee before the Brown Act accusations came about, citing the time-consuming nature of the committee and the fact she's also on another time-intensive committee, the Ad Hoc Housing Element Committee.

Also on the April 5 meeting's agenda was a presentation by committee member Robert Younge on the National Institute of Standards and Technology's guidance on fire hazard mitigation strategies.

Process to remove a committee member

To remove a member of a town committee, the mayor, the committee's council liaison and commission or committee chairperson — for the wildfire committee, it's Michael Tomars — must all concur that a member is not fulfilling his or her duties. Examples given include repeated failure to attend meetings, violation of ethical standards, disruptive behavior and repeated failure to abide by commission/committee handbook rules. In those circumstances, the mayor may revoke the appointment of a commission/committee member, according to the town's committee handbook. If the mayor is the council liaison, as Mayor Craig Hughes is for the wildfire committee, then the vice mayor, Wernikoff, acts in place of the mayor.

Fire prevention has been a lightning rod issue in town, with some members of the community calling for the town government to do more.

This winter, residents started an online petition urging council members and staff to cede some of their control over development to the Woodside Fire Protection District, in light of new state housing laws that encourage building. The residents, who have voiced an ongoing lack of trust in town officials, said the district is the most equipped to make the best decisions to protect them against wildfires.

The petition also asked the town to require that all future buildings in Portola Valley be spaced at least 30 feet apart until the Woodside Fire Protection District fire marshal comes out with the new fire code later this year. The committee did not make a recommendation to the council to institute a building setback in November.

The committee, which originally formed in 2019 under the name Ad Hoc Wildfire Preparation Committee, needs five members to reach a quorum; only four were at the April 5 meeting. The four present were: Jennifer Hammer, MJ Lee, Robert Younge and Nona Chiariello. Absent were Tomars and Youstra.

Committee members could not be reached for comment.

Five committee resignations

Six members have left the committee since last November.

Youstra resigned in an email on April 6, saying she'd planned to announce it at the April 5 meeting. She said she had to step away to care for a family member and because she's taken a new job.

Vahtra resigned on Nov. 2, 2021, according to meeting minutes.

Koch's name last appears on the board agenda for the Dec. 7, 2021 meeting. Koch said she was resigning from the wildfire committee because "she does not have the extra time she had when she took this on," according to Dec. 13, 2021, meeting minutes from the Architectural and Site Control Commission, which she sits on.

Koch said that she's been yelled at in public about the committee not adopting more strict rules for building in town to prevent fire, but also has received hugs

from residents for her work.

"The meetings are longer and more frequent than she was prepared for with her other commitments and conflicts to deal with," according to the meeting minutes.

Marianne Plunder resigned from the committee sometime before the Conservation Committee's Jan. 25 meeting where she announced it. Chiariello replaced her, according to meeting minutes.

Complaints about misinformation, lack of civility

Tensions have been rising between some residents and town officials over housing development and wildfire prevention efforts.

Rebecca Flynn, who runs the town's online social network PVForum, posted on the site that a few people in town are on a moderated status "because they have shown themselves to be unable to post respectful messages."

"They have been rude or vicious to others on the PVForum, to people in town, or to me personally," she wrote. "This means that I have to waste my time (frequently) approving all their new postings before they are allowed to reach the PVForum. Unfortunately, several of them CONTINUE to attempt to post offensive messages that either spuriously attack people in town or in government without providing facts or legitimate sources or they send messages full of misinformation, conspiracy theories, gross inaccurate generalizations, or disrespect. I do not allow those types of messages through."

She goes on to write, "frankly, if you are going to dish out crazy mud, you can't expect not to get a little dirty. ... I'm glad that most people in Portola Valley are respectful and prefer a lively debate about the issues based on facts and legitimate information."

Wernikoff said that over the last four months, town staff and council members have "spent an inordinate amount of time debunking misinformation."

"It's super frustrating," she said. "It takes an enormous amount of time but it doesn't help the community."

For example, a flyer circulating in the Nathhorst Triangle neighborhood last month stated that the "actual density" of new units in the neighborhood would be three- to four-stories high, even though the town has not yet specified how tall the buildings would be if the area were to be rezoned.

Next wildfire committee meeting

The canceled April 5 meeting hasn't been rescheduled yet. The committee is scheduled to meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 4 p.m.

Hughes said that the town will see if there are any time-sensitive issues which can't be handled outside a meeting, and may just wait for the next regularly scheduled meeting if there's nothing pressing — "which is how we normally do it when a committee can't gather a quorum," he said.

The Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Committee, for example, had a meeting on April 6, but had missed its previous two due to lack of quorum, he noted. ■



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Despite no mask mandates and spring break travel, COVID-19 case counts remain low in schools

By Angela Swartz

Local teachers had expressed fears that COVID-19 case counts might increase after students returned from traveling and socializing during spring break, but so far, it appears that coronavirus transmission remains relatively low on school campuses.

Local districts, except for the Ravenswood City School District, opted to drop their mask mandates last month.

In the 10,000-student Sequoia Union High School District, there were 39 cases reported the week of April 4. Students were out of school the week of March 28. Although this is a higher number than preceding weeks, it is still far from the surge of cases — 710 in one week — that followed winter break in January.

The Menlo Park City School District, which also let out its 2,716 students on spring break the week of March 28, reported 19 cases last week. In weeks prior, case counts were in the single digits. At the height of the outbreak in January, the district reported 88 cases per week.

The 1,500-student Ravenswood district reported just one case since students returned from spring break on April 4. The district's Board of Trustees



Magali Gauthier

Cesar Chavez Ravenswood seventh grader Zoea Bradshaw works on her robot during a robotics club meeting in East Palo Alto on March 22.

was set to reevaluate its mask mandate on Thursday, April 14, after The Almanac's Wednesday press deadline.

There have been eight cases in the about 477-student Portola Valley School District since students returned from spring break on April 4.

The Las Lomas Elementary School District's spring break doesn't start until the week of April 18. The district has reported just five cases since March 29.

Woodside Elementary School

District students are on spring break this week. The district reported no cases last week. The roughly 365-student district sent a rapid test home with each student, according to an April 11 district newsletter. The district is asking each student to test on either Sunday, April 17, or before the school day begins on Monday, April 18, before returning to class. ■

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

PET PARADE

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tries to run away a lot, stayed home.

Parent Po Szeto said she felt disconnected from her kids' daily lives from not coming on campus, so it was "uplifting" to be back, she said. Her family's shih tzu Rosy walked in the parade.

Kids without pets, or who couldn't bring their pets to campus, were encouraged to bring photos of animals or their stuffies.

The event came out of a brainstorming session for items in the 2021 annual school auction. Dr. Amy Voedisch put in the winning bid to be the event's grand marshal.

"We haven't been able to be together," she said.

She said it was also nice for students to be able to share a part of their lives with their classmates. ■

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



Magali Gauthier

Top: Paul Collins, right, and his son Nathan, a fifth grader, sit with their dog Shasta at the pet parade at Trinity School in Menlo Park on April 6. Bottom: Draco, a bearded dragon, watches the pet parade from his aquarium as he is wheeled around in a cart.



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Coming back to Earth

Where to mark Earth Day with in-person events on the Peninsula

By Heather Zimmerman

Earth Day comes this year as more relaxed public health guidelines have brought an increase in in-person public events. The shift offers the chance for the community to gather for the first time in two years to raise awareness about climate change and promote sustainability measures.

The goal of Earth Day couldn't be more serious, but in addition to information and inspiration for those looking to help mitigate climate change, many events offer fun ways to learn about tools that make less of an impact on the environment, from electric leaf blower bowling at Atherton's Earth Day festival to electric vehicle and electric bike test drives at several different events.

Here's our guide to Earth Day festivals, rallies, tours and more. Unless otherwise noted, events are free.

Festivals and events

We Love Earth Festival Visitors can learn about creating a climate-friendly home, sustainable eating, electric transportation, and local and state climate advocacy. The festival also features art projects and live animal encounters. Hosted by the city of Menlo Park.

When: April 16, 10 a.m.-2 p.m.

Where: Flood Park, 215 Bay Road, Menlo Park

Info: 350siliconvalley.org

Project Green Home Tour To celebrate ProjectGreenHome.org's curbside charger having given away 200,000 miles of free electric vehicle (EV) charging, the owners of Project Green Home host a party with a chance to talk with EV owners, test drive EVs and try cooking on an induction stove. The event also includes tours of the all-electric, passive, low-water-use, net-zero, LEED platinum home.

When: April 16, noon-3 p.m.

Where: Project Green Home, 314 Stanford Ave., Palo Alto

Info: projectgreenhome.org

Recycling Center Tours Rethink-Waste holds in-person tours of the Shoreway Environmental Center to celebrate Earth Month. Hour-long tours provide an inside look at the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) and Transfer Station. Tour guides will also answer questions about hard-to-recycle items.

When: April 16, tours at 10 a.m. and noon (10 a.m. tour fully booked).

Where: 333 Shoreway Road, San Carlos

Info: rethinkwaste.org

Seeds and Seedlings Swap The Friends of the Redwood City Public Library host this outdoor event where visitors can share, take and start seedlings for summer vegetable crops and also find supplies and tips for starting a variety of seeds from the library's Seed Library.

When: April 16, 10 a.m.-noon

Where: Downtown Redwood City Library, 1044 Middlefield Road, Redwood City.

Info: redwoodcity.org.

Virtual Film Screening and Panel Rethink Waste hosts a virtual viewing party of the short film "The Story of Stuff," followed by a discussion and Q&A with a panel of experts who will share ideas on how to collectively work toward a more sustainable and equitable world.

When: April 21, 5 p.m.

Where: Online

Info: rethinkwaste.org.

March and Rally for Our Earth Bay Area students will lead a bike caravan to a rally with speakers Rep. Anna Eshoo, Assemblymember Marc Berman, Palo Alto Mayor Pat Burt and other environmental leaders and musicians, including the Raging Grannies. Following the rally, students will lead a march around and back to King Plaza, where environmental organizations will have information tables and participants can hang their Earth Day pledges on a "pledge tree."

When: April 22, 4-6 p.m.

Where: King Plaza, 250 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto

Info: rally4ourearth.weebly.com

Palo Alto Earth Day Fair Palo Alto Youth Council hosts an event with information about electrification, climate anxiety and more. Activities include painting pots, planting succulents, and writing climate pledges to add to a community tree.

When: April 23, 10 a.m.-1 p.m.

Where: Mitchell Park Bowl, 600 E. Meadow Drive, Palo Alto

Info: cityofpaloalto.org

Atherton Earth Day Festival The Atherton Environmental Programs Committee hosts an event with electric leaf blower bowling; an environmental vendor fair; an art exhibit by climate artist Sukey Bryan, local artists and students; kids' activities, an electric vehicle showcase; e-bike test drives, food, music and speakers that include Rep. Anna Eshoo and SFO Director of Sustainability Erin Cooke.

When: April 23, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Where: Holbrook Palmer Park, 150



Veronica Weber

Native plant seedlings which will be used to restore habitat grow in one of the "clean houses" at the Grassroots Ecology native plant nursery. The environmental nonprofit offers volunteer opportunities to help remove invasive species on April 16 in Los Altos Hills and a cleanup April 23 in East Palo Alto.

Watkins Ave., Atherton

Info: ci.atherton.ca.us

Mountain View Earth Day The city of Mountain View hosts an event with presentations from groups such as Re ecology and Silicon Valley Clean Energy, plus a variety of sustainability booths and the opportunity to test drive an electric vehicle (EV) and speak with EV experts. Food trucks will serve a free vegetarian/vegan lunch for the first 215 people who check in.

When: April 23, 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

Where: Mountain View Senior Center, 266 Escuela Ave., Mountain View

Info: evevent.org

Earth Day on the Bay The Marine Science Institute's Earth Day celebration includes exploring the Bay aboard a marine science vessel, activities along the shoreline and live music. Registration required; admission varies by activity.

When: April 23, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Where: Marine Science Institute, 500 Discovery Parkway, Redwood City.

Cost: Bay exploration \$30 per person; shoreside activities \$20 per family.

Info: sfbaymsi.org.

Earth Day Feast and Faire Valley Presbyterian Church's Earth Care Team hosts a food-focused event with a tasting menu of plant-forward dishes. Plus, information about sustainable appliances, such as induction cooktops, photovoltaic systems and heat pumps. Almanac blogger Sherry Listgarten speaks at 10:45 a.m. during the service preceding the fair.

When: April 24, noon-2 p.m.

Where: Valley Presbyterian Church, 945 Portola Road, Portola Valley

Info: valleypreschurch.org.

Volunteer opportunities

Bair Island Volunteer Work Day Peninsula Open Space Trust and San Francisco Bay Bird Observatory host a work day where volunteers will help weed out invasive plants and plant native species that will support Bair Island's ecosystem. Spots are limited.

When: April 16, 9 a.m.-noon

Where: Bair Island Trail Parking Lot, Bair Island Road, Redwood City

Info: openspacetrust.org

Grassroots Ecology The environmental nonprofit offers volunteer opportunities to help remove invasive species and learn about habitat restoration at Redwood Grove Nature Preserve in Los Altos Hills and to help clean up trash at Cooley Landing Education Center in East Palo Alto.

When: April 16, 9 a.m.-noon at Redwood Grove and April 23, 9 a.m.-noon at Cooley Landing.

Where: Redwood Grove Nature Preserve is located at 482 University Ave., Los Altos Hills; Cooley Landing Education Center is located at 2100 Bay Road, East Palo Alto.

Info: grassrootsecology.org. ■

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

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Food & Drink

Branching out

Menlo Park woman brings flower and cheese board business to Salvaje, Manresa Bread expands and Ettan chef opens eatery in Los Altos

By Julia Brown and Anthony Shu

Three Peninsula business owners are starting new local endeavors. Manresa Bread's latest location in Palo Alto is set to open this Friday, while Srijith Gopinathan and Ayesha Thapar of Ettan in Palo Alto have opened a more relaxed establishment named Little Blue Door at Los Altos' gourmet food hall, State Street Market. And Feast and Floral, a Palo Alto-based catering business focused on flowers and cheese boards, is opening at the downtown wine bar Salvaje this summer.

Michelin-starred Ettan chef opens casual eatery

Los Altos' gourmet food hall State Street Market has another addition to its star chef-filled lineup that includes Traci Des Jardins' el Alto and Meichih and Michael Kim's Bao Bèi. On April 6, Srijith Gopinathan and Ayesha Thapar of Ettan opened a more relaxed establishment named Little Blue Door. "We are excited to be at State Street Market with some of the best chefs in town," says Gopinathan, who also helms San Francisco's Michelin-starred Campton Place.

Little Blue Door's cuisine is inspired by Gopinathan's native state of Kerala but presents dishes that draw from street foods throughout the country of India. These chaat-inspired starters include interpretations of Kerala's egg puffs, which envelop hard-boiled eggs and seasoned onions in flaky pastry, and vada pav, fried vegetable patties made here with fava beans sandwiched in buttery bread. Gopinathan is especially enthusiastic about recreating Kerala fried chicken, traditionally fried in wide cast iron pans

filled with bubbling oil, which will be served with an aioli flavored with garlic, ginger and fresh herbs.

As a main course, diners can enjoy roasted chicken marinated in kashundi, the fermented paste of mustard seeds and green mango, and cauliflower coated in a crunchy layer of puffed rice, both slowly cooked on the rotisserie. While Little Blue Door at State Street Market is the first casual restaurant from the team of Gopinathan and Thapar, they are looking to open more locations of this more informal concept.

Little Blue Door is now open with limited hours and will eventually match the opening hours of State Street Market, which are 11 a.m. to 8 p.m. Sundays and Wednesdays and 11 a.m. to 9 p.m. Thursday through Saturday.

Little Blue Door, 170 State St., Los Altos; Instagram: @littlebluedoorrestaurant.

Manresa Bread brings its flaky pastries to Palo Alto

Slotting in next to recently opened vegan restaurant Wildseed, the Palo Alto location of Manresa Bread opens Friday, April 15, in Town & Country Village. The bakery's sourdough loaves made with flour milled in-house, precisely laminated croissants flaked with toasted almonds, and caramelized kouign amann have helped it grow from farmers market stalls to four retail locations in the Bay Area that ship nationwide.

Born out of Los Gatos' three Michelin-starred Manresa and led by head baker Avery Ruzicka, Manresa Bread Palo Alto will

take over a sizable 1,700-square-foot space. Back in January, Ruzicka spoke in an interview with the Peninsula Foodist about the location's open kitchen, which showcases the team of busy bakers and allows staff to see customers purchase their food.

In addition to breads, pastries, cakes and coffee, the bakery offers a small selection of sandwiches and a rotating seasonal salad. The team is looking to expand their menu in this new location, and a retail section stocks bags of granolas and Manresa Bread's house-milled flours for passionate home bakers.

Manresa Bread, 855 El Camino Real, Suite 138, Palo Alto; 650-384-6462, manresabread.com. Instagram: @manresabread. Open 8 a.m.-6 p.m. every day.

Cheese board and flower business coming to Salvaje

Feast and Floral, a Palo Alto-based catering business that supplies flowers along with cheese and charcuterie boards for events, is opening a brick-and-mortar shop at downtown Palo Alto wine bar Salvaje this summer.

Menlo Park resident Ashley Higashi started Feast and Floral with her sister in 2019. Inspired by Pinterest pictures of "grazing tables" — artfully crafted cheese and charcuterie boards complemented by fruits and vegetables, nuts, dips and crackers and breads — Higashi recreated one at a party she hosted. After rave reviews, Higashi was encouraged to start selling the boards and approached Kasim Syed, a friend of her sister's and the owner of Salvaje, Palo Alto's first dedicated natural wine bar,



Courtesy Ashley Higashi

Feast and Floral's "grazing tables" include cheese and charcuterie, nuts, dips and other accompaniments. The catering business is setting up shop at Palo Alto wine bar Salvaje.

about the idea.

Syed supported the endeavor, offering his bar for Feast and Floral's launch party and later his commercial kitchen for the business' use. Feast and Floral started off catering private and corporate events, but the pandemic changed its course.

"We had to completely pivot the business and turn it into small boards, and the boards kept getting smaller as the pandemic went on," Higashi says. "It went as small as a tiny snack box so everyone could eat individually."

With demand growing again for larger cheese boards, Higashi recognized that the business was outgrowing its current commercial kitchen space in Palo Alto and told Syed she was looking for a space to open a shop.

"It's a perfect match: cheese and charcuterie and wine," Higashi says. "We're hoping to create a really unique gathering spot for dining."

Salvaje will retain indoor and outdoor patio seating and pivot its menu toward smaller bites that work well with Feast and Floral's boards, which will range from individually sized to 4-foot-long grazing tables that serve 20. In addition to serving the boards

alongside Salvaje's natural wines for in-person dining, Higashi also plans to sell grab-and-go cheese and charcuterie boxes, floral arrangements and cheese board accessories. She hopes to turn the outdoor dining areas into "garden patios," with houseplants and succulents for sale as well.

"I want to make it a really beautiful place to come and hang out, but also leave with something pretty," Higashi says.

The new storefront, which is slated to open at the end of June, and the catering business are being run by Higashi and her son. She grew up in Palo Alto and attended Palo Alto High School, as did her children and her mother.

"It's a privilege to be able to be a part of my hometown and give back in this way," she says. "It's a really exciting new family business for us."

Feast and Floral coming to Salvaje, 369 Lytton Ave., Palo Alto; 650-433-1897, feastandfloral.com. Instagram: @feastandfloral. ■

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Courtesy Angelina Hong

Chef Srijith Gopinathan demonstrates how to prepare a dish at Little Blue Door in Los Altos.



Courtesy Liz Celeste Photography

Manresa Bread Palo Alto is taking over a sizeable space at Town & Country Village.

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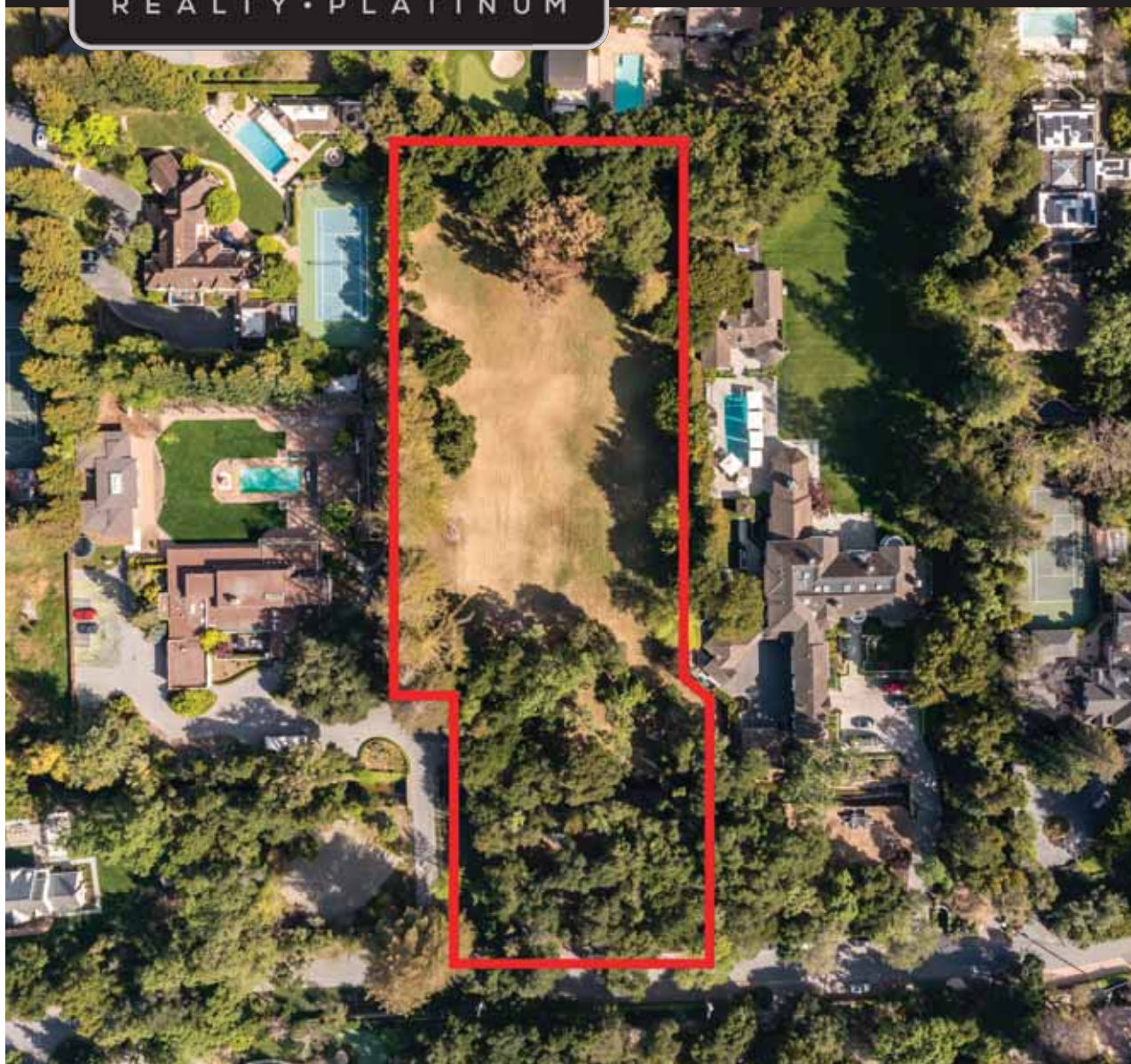
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