

The Almanac

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Atherton residents demand town fight state housing mandate

Town officials warn that flouting the law would have 'dire' consequences

By Angela Swartz

Some Atherton residents are upset that officials aren't doing more to fight the wealthy town's increased state housing obligations. During a boisterous community meeting last week to discuss strategies for fulfilling the mandate, one resident even suggested the town evade it completely and pay monthly fines of up to \$100,000.

But officials, including Mayor Rick DeGolia, explained at the April 26 meeting that the town needs to satisfy its 2023-31 Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) numbers. Atherton, which had an average home price of \$7.9 million in March, according to Zillow, is required by the state to plan for the development of 348 new housing units — a big jump compared to just 93 units in the 2014-22 cycle.

"If we don't satisfy it, the consequences are dire, penalties that are just stupid that we

can't begin to bear," DeGolia said to residents at the meeting in Jennings Pavilion at Holbrook-Palmer Park. "This is a very sensitive issue to people. Nobody who lives in single-family communities wants to see them destroyed."

Local governments that fail to comply with state laws regarding their housing element — the document detailing plans for creating housing — or fail to implement programs identified in the housing element, could face significant exposure to liability, according to the state. Courts may remove the local government's land use and planning authority and they could be subject to judgments and fines of up to \$100,000 per month.

The state established a Housing Accountability and Enforcement Unit in 2021 to ensure all local jurisdictions meet their fair share of the state's housing needs at all income levels.

See **HOUSING MANDATE**, page 15



Magali Gauthier

Atherton residents examined maps showing areas that could be zoned for higher density housing at a community meeting in Jennings Pavilion at Holbrook-Palmer Park in Atherton on April 26.

Bay Area leaders gearing up to protect access to legal abortions in California

The report of a possible Roe v. Wade reversal sent shockwaves throughout the state

By Leah Worthington

Local politicians are grappling with the possibility of a reversal on federal abortion rights in light of a leaked Supreme Court draft opinion on the future of Roe v. Wade published Monday night, May 2, by Politico.

Written by Justice Samuel Alito in February, the opinion advocates for the overturn of the landmark abortion ruling that legalized abortion across the U.S. The Court has since verified the authenticity of the leaked document, adding that "it does not represent a decision by the Court or the final

position of any member on the issues in the case."

Statewide and across the Bay Area, politicians and local leaders, many of whom expressed shock and a renewed commitment to abortion rights, are gearing up to enact more stringent local protections and seek additional resources to support an anticipated influx of women seeking safe abortions in California.

Gov. Gavin Newsom released a statement saying, "This draft opinion is an appalling attack on the rights of women across this country and if it stands, it will destroy lives and put countless women in danger."

A constitutional amendment, introduced Monday night by Newsom and Sen. Toni Atkins, D-San Diego, would "enshrine the right to choose in our state constitution so that there is no doubt as to the right to abortion in this state," according to an official statement.

In an interview, State Sen. Josh Becker, D-Menlo Park, who represents California's 13th Senate District, called it "shocking and appalling that they're going to try to take away women's freedom."

According to the Politico article, five of the nine justices favor the revocation of federal abortion rights, leaving

regulation to the individual states. Becker emphasized the gravity of the situation, particularly for women living in less progressive states. Citing the possibility of a huge influx of women seeking legal abortion services in California, he said much has to be done at the state level to prepare. According to an October 2021 report from the Guttmacher Institute, a total abortion ban would increase the number of women of reproductive age whose nearest provider is in California from 46,000 to 1.4 million — a nearly 3,000% increase.

In addition to a package of 11 bills announced by the

California Legislative Women's Caucus in early April, Becker said he's hopeful that the constitutional amendment, which he's co-authoring with Atkins, will receive the two-thirds majority needed to make it onto the November ballot. He's also the co-author of the bill, AB1918, which would increase the workforce for reproductive health services.

"We expect that, if this happens, we're going to have tens of thousands, maybe hundreds of thousands of women coming to California for a safe legal abortion, and we don't have the

See **ROE V. WADE**, page 8

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Local News

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Magali Gauthier

The empty James Flood Magnet School at 321 Sheridan Drive is being eyed for a 90-unit apartment building prioritized for Ravenswood City School District staff.

Ravenswood district's plans for 90-unit apartment building faces pushback

Housing at former Flood School site would destroy quality of life, Suburban Park neighbors claim

By Lloyd Lee

A rare plot of vacant land, the former James Flood magnet school at 321 Sheridan Drive, is creating a divide in a Menlo Park community.

On Tuesday evening, more than 120 people, mostly former and current local residents, tuned into a virtual meeting about development

plans for the 2.6-acre parcel owned by the Ravenswood City School District that was recently marked as a potential "opportunity site" for housing as part of a citywide process to update Menlo Park's housing element for 2023-31.

The site has a long history of leases and failed leasing bids, before it was razed in 2018 and eyed for teacher housing that would support lower-income

staff and also bring steady revenue to the underfunded district.

In January, Ravenswood's governing board voted to enter into exclusive negotiating agreements with developer Alliant Strategic. The district is discussing a 90-year lease with Alliant to build a three- to four-story, 90-unit, affordable

See **APARTMENTS**, page 16

After 11 years gathering neighborhood news, Ladera Crier editors step down

By Angela Swartz

From stories of how couples first met to reporting on the food trucks at the community pool that brought residents together during the COVID-19 pandemic, Linda Fornaciari and Di Gow have enjoyed getting to know their neighbors better as co-editors of the Ladera Crier over the last 11 years. But the two recently passed the baton to new editors.

The pair, who both moved to Ladera in the early '90s, edited



Linda Fornaciari



Di Gow

their final issue in March. The motto of the Crier is "all the news that's fun to print."

"It's time for other people to share the fun," said Fornaciari. "It helps connect people. I've gotten to know a lot of

different neighbors doing this. ... It's been exciting, endearing and exhausting."

The two brought the publication established in the '50s as the Country Crier, from a four- to five- page newsletter to 16 pages monthly. It includes family recipes, birth announcements, book reviews, an events calendar, sports news, items about a newly completed treehouse or lemonade sale and more.

The newsletter is emailed, but

See **LADERA CRIER**, page 10

Voter Guide: Ravenswood's Measure I asks district residents to approve \$110 million school bond

By Angela Swartz

On summer and fall days when smoke from California wildfires cause poor air quality, Ravenswood City School District officials have no choice but to send elementary school students home. Unlike nearby districts, the schools lack ventilation systems that can filter and clean the air.

This is one of the reasons the district is seeking to pass a \$110 million bond on the June 7 ballot to bring classrooms into the 21st century.

The funds would also go toward replacing aging portables, upgrading classroom technology, school security and accessibility for disabled students, providing sports fields and recreation space for after school programs, creating preschool classrooms, and replacing aging water pipes and drinking fountains.

"We've seen districts around us update to the 21st century," said Trustee Jenny Varghese Bloom. "We want our buildings to be as great as our education. ... As a homeowner, of course I will invest in this; it's an investment into our future."

The district's 2015 facilities master plan identified \$300 million in facilities needs.

The district began construction earlier this year on a \$50 million project to bring its middle school facilities at Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School up to modern standards, with air conditioning and flexible working spaces for students. This project, paid for with past bond money, is set to be completed at the end of 2023.

The district's \$26 million Measure H bond measure, passed in 2016, is intended to "maintain warm, safe and dry" schools and essentially ensured roofs weren't caving in. It also upgraded school safety; improved technology, computer and science labs; increased energy efficiency; and retrofitted school facilities, mostly at the district's middle school.

District elementary schools still have uneven sidewalks and

classrooms that haven't been updated since the 1950s, with some 20 to 30 years past their useful lives, said Chief Business Official Will Eger. Last year, for example, the district had to remove a building that was condemned by the county health department, he said.

There are other structural issues on the district's elementary school campuses, according to a January district facilities update. At Los Robles-Ronald McNair Academy, the gym is too small to host a basketball game or school assembly, said Superintendent Gina Sudaria. Termites have destroyed door frames. Clay pipes at Belle Haven Elementary School have had to be replaced on campus. Some classroom walls are so weak they can't hold up a whiteboard.

Voters passed the \$70 million Measure S in 2018 to continue Measure H's work.

When asked if there could be voter fatigue from recently passing two other bond measures, Eger explained that these have been modest measures and the district hadn't gone out for a bond measure for decades prior to Measure H in 2016.

The district's financial outlook has also improved. In April, its credit rating upgraded from stable to positive, according to the credit rating agency Fitch Ratings.

The school board has yet to determine which elementary school it would begin upgrading if the measure passes.

Some 71% of respondents to a recent district survey say they will support a bond for the amount of \$110 million, Eger said.

The opposition argument to the ballot measure said that the district doesn't need more tax funding to construct classrooms with enrollment declining. Eger noted that even if enrollment is decreasing in its schools, it hosts charter schools on its campuses. The spaces, such as multipurpose rooms, are also used by the community at large, for events and after-school programs.

See **MEASURE I**, page 14

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS



Courtesy Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation

The Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation's 2017 fun run.

Schoolhouse Rocks Run & Festival returns May 22

The Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation's (MPAEF) annual Schoolhouse Rocks Run & Festival is expected to bring together 1,500 families, teachers, students, neighbors, runners and non-runners on Sunday, May 22, at 9 a.m. at Hillview Middle School.

"We are delighted to bring back this beloved community event, which was held virtually last year and canceled in 2020 due to the pandemic," said MPAEF Executive Director Carrie Chen in a statement. "It truly is a special day where we come together as a community and have fun, all while supporting our local schools."

After the race, families are invited to the free post-run festival at the middle school featuring bouncy houses, games, music, food trucks and more.

The run raises funds for Encinal, Laurel, Oak Knoll and Hillview schools. Nelson Capital is sponsoring this year's event.

The 5K racecourse will begin at Hillview Middle School, 1100 Elder Ave. in Menlo Park, and wind through the neighborhood along Hobart Street, Middle Avenue, Bay Laurel Drive, and then down Olive Street back to Hillview Middle School for the finish. The one-mile route will be a shorter loop down Hobart Street and back along Olive Street. The event will be held rain or shine.

To help with the race and festival, email volunteer@mpaef.org. Online registration is open through Wednesday, May 18. Go to mpaef.org/run for more information.

Portola Valley wildfire preparedness fair is May 14

Talk with firefighters, volunteers and leaders in the wildfire defense industry about how to prepare homes at Portola Valley's wildfire preparedness fair, hosted by the town's Wildfire Preparedness Committee.

The Woodside Fire Protection District and WPV-Ready will provide guidance on how to create a defensible space around houses. Other offerings include information on how to harden a home and companies that specialize in the latest technology for wildfire defense.

There will be an insurance agent at the fair to help answer questions about fire insurance and the changing insurance marketplace.

The event runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Town Center, 765 Portola Road in Portola Valley.

For more information, go to portolavalley.net/community/town-sponsored-events/wildfire-preparedness-fair.

Three local school districts selected for state awards

The state has selected the Menlo Park City, Portola Valley and Ravenswood City school districts for newly created 2022 California Pivotal Practice (CAPP) Award Program. The award program replaces the California Distinguished Schools (DS) Program, according to an April 26 press release.

The program celebrates schools and districts that implemented an innovative practice during the 2020-21 school year, when California required schools to offer distance learning due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

In a period when pandemic disruptions made it hard to collect data for statewide assessments, the CDE worked with education association partners to create the CAPP Award to honor the efforts of schools and districts who designed and implemented unique opportunities to support students during a challenging time. ■

—Angela Swartz

Menlo Park City Council member outraises fellow District 3 Supervisor candidates

Ray Mueller has raised more than \$236,000 since he began fundraising in early 2021

By Lloyd Lee

Ray Mueller, Menlo Park City Council member and former mayor, is outraising his three opponents for the District 3 seat on the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors, with Laura Parmer-Lohan, a San Carlos City Council member, not far behind.

Candidates Virginia Chang Kiraly and Steven Booker reported raising less than half as much for their campaigns.

Campaign finance disclosures from Jan. 1, 2021 to April 23, 2022 show that Mueller has raised about \$236,500, with significant support from realtors and real estate political action committees, developers, tech and business executives, and local small business owners.

Groups that have donated to Mueller's campaign include the California Apartment Association (\$1,000), which represents developers and owners of rental properties and has been an outspoken opponent of rent control, as well as the political action committee of the California Association of Realtors (\$1,500).

In addition, Mueller received support from the San Mateo County Firefighters union group (\$1,000) and the Northern California Carpenters Regional Council union (\$1,500).

Individual realtors, developers and brokers have also made thousand-dollar donations to Mueller. Several executives of

Tarlton Properties, including its founder John Tarlton, have backed his campaign. Tarlton Properties is a Menlo Park-based commercial property developer that recently submitted plans to develop a life sciences building in Menlo Park at 1350 Adams Court. The project is currently under review by the city planning commission.

Robert Webster, founder of Bohannon Development Company, donated \$1,000. The developer is behind the Menlo Gateway project, which includes a 230-room hotel near Meta headquarters.

Other notable contributions come from large and small business executives and owners.

Mark Flegel of Flegel's Home Furnishing (\$500), Richard and Mary Ann Draeger of Draeger's Market (\$2,500), and Andrew "Drew" Dunlevie, president of Peninsula Arts Guild (\$500) — all of whom have businesses based in Menlo Park — have donated to Mueller's campaign.

Gregory Penner, chairman of Walmart's board of directors and founder of Madrone Capital Partners, a Menlo Park-based investment management firm, donated \$2,000. His wife Carrie Penner, the granddaughter of Walmart founder Sam Walton, and a vocal supporter of charter schools, contributed \$2,000. The campaign finance report lists her as a board member of the Charter School Growth Fund, a venture capital firm that backs charter schools.

Local elected officials backing Mueller include San Mateo County Controller Juan Raigoza (\$100), District 4 county Supervisor Warren Slocum (\$1,000) and

District 5 Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian (\$250). Mueller previously served as Simitian's chief of staff.

Parmer-Lohan reported the second biggest campaign war chest, raising about \$203,800 since Dec. 2020.

Don Horsley, the current District 3 supervisor, endorsed Parmer-Lohan and donated \$1,000. Other notable donors include Amy Buckmaster, CEO of the San Mateo County Chamber of Commerce, and Don Cecil, the chamber's vice chairman.

Some of her other larger contributions come from those in the medical tech and healthcare industry, reflecting her marketing background in biotech. Currently, she's the chief of staff at Amgen, a biopharmaceutical company based in Thousand Oaks.

Supporters include Susan Stimson, president of Zenflow, a medical device company (\$1,000); Pamela Kirtzman, health-care CEO at Sequoia Healthcare District (about \$500); Marga Ortigas-Wedekind, chief commercial strategy officer for Fogarty Innovation (\$1,000); and Debbie Donovan, a market development director at Cala Health (\$1,000).

Parmer-Lohan also received a \$1,000 donation from the National Union of Healthcare Workers.

Virginia Chang Kiraly, an elected board member of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District and the president of the San Mateo County Harbor District, reported raising about \$132,000 for her campaign, including \$50,000 in loans.

Some of her notable contributions come from local officials including: county Sheriff Carlos Bolanos (\$500); county Under-sheriff Mark Robbins (\$250); and several city council members.

Maryann Derwain, former mayor and current city council member of Portola Valley (\$1,000); Carlos Romero, East Palo Alto City Council member (\$200); Donna Colson, Burlingame City Council member; and Marie Chuang, Hillsborough City Council member (\$200) have backed Chang Kiraly's campaign.

Steven Booker, a representative for the county's Democratic Central Committee of District 3, reported raising just over \$100,000 for his campaign since he began receiving donations in March 2021.

His campaign finance reports show overwhelming support from electricians, perhaps owing

to his background as a business representative for the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) union group. Several electricians across the Peninsula have donated \$2,000. Other contributors include members of IBEW.

Booker has also received donations from the Sheet Metal Workers union based in Livermore (\$2,000) and the San Francisco chapter of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (\$500).

The top two fundraisers are also the biggest spenders, investing heavily on campaign consultants and polling and survey research.

Mueller has spent about \$137,000 since he began

fundraising for his campaign in 2021. About \$26,500 went to EMC Research, a data analytics firm that specializes in polling and public opinion research, and another \$26,000 to Wheelhouse Strategies, which is listed under consulting services in Mueller's campaign finance reports.

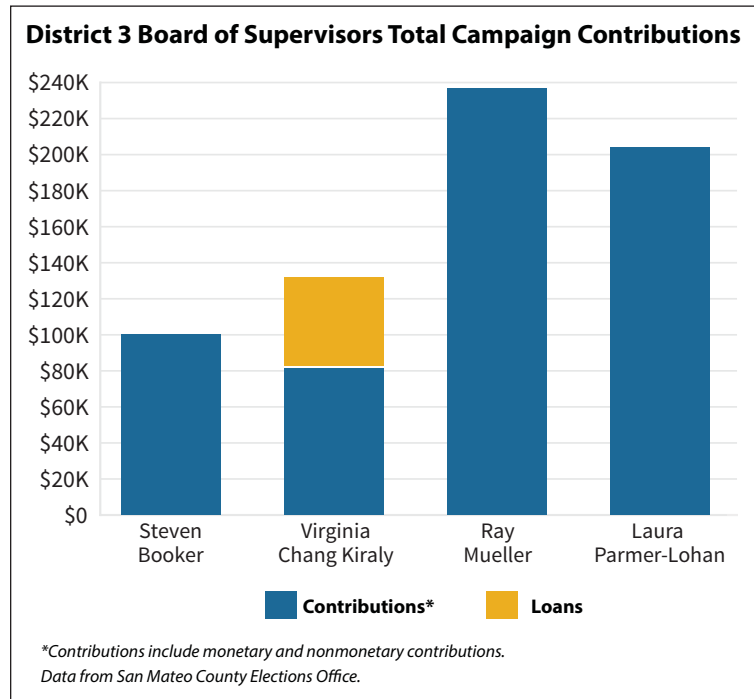
Since she began fundraising in late 2020, Parmer-Lohan has spent \$112,000 on her campaign. A large portion of her expenditures went to Godbe Corporation, a San Mateo-based public opinion research firm (\$33,575), and to Lew Edwards Group, an Oakland-based political consulting firm (\$26,000).

Booker and Chang Kiraly

See **FUNDRAISING**, page 16



Ray Mueller



Lloyd Lee

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ROE V. WADE

continued from page 1

workforce for that right now," he said.

For leaders at Planned Parenthood, the possibility of a Roe v. Wade reversal is significant in what it represents both symbolically and for the future of the organization.

Using descriptions like "very dehumanizing" and a "complete disregard for the rights of women," Andrew Adams, Chief of Staff and Head of Strategic Communications at Planned Parenthood Mar Monte, said that the draft opinion marks a complete and historic reversal on the part of the court.

"For a long time the Supreme Court has been really focused on protecting and expanding the rights of citizens of the United States," Adams said. "The draft opinion, if it becomes the decision, does exactly the opposite. It robs people of rights that they've held for over 50 years."

Describing today as a "somber day," Redwood City Mayor Giselle Hale said, "I'm feeling a way that women haven't felt for a generation. That level of uncertainty is very real." She added that she was also "feeling more emboldened to stand up and speak up for the rights

of women and pregnant people who need this care and deserve this care. I'm prepared to defend their rights."

Other politicians and women's rights advocates took to Twitter to voice their concerns and support for continued access to reproductive health care.

"My abortion saved my life. It allowed me to have another child, pursue a life of public service & realize my personal and professional dreams," wrote Congresswoman Jackie Speier who represents California's 14th congressional district. "Most importantly it was my decision. That shouldn't be a privilege."

Assembly member Marc Berman tweeted, "I stand with all of those who are fighting..."

"California has long defended a woman's fundamental right to choose to bear a child or choose to obtain an abortion, and has strongly supported the institutions that provided safe abortions for women," Berman said in a statement posted to Twitter. "No federal action or Supreme Court decision will shake our state's defense of the right to access legal and safe abortion services."

San Mateo County Supervisor David Canepa, who's vying for Speier's seat in Congress, also condemned the leaked opinion.

"For women across America who want to keep ownership over their health, this decision should not stand," he tweeted on May 2. "I will fight to protect and restore a woman's right to choose — always and take on the right-wing Republicans in Congress who oppose a woman's right to choose!"

Congresswoman Anna Eshoo, CA-18, who is running for reelection, also released a statement, describing the opinion as a historic attempt to "eviscerate a constitutional right by overturning Roe v. Wade."

With the possibility that 26 U.S. states could move to ban abortion, eliminating abortion access for some 36 million women, Eshoo reiterated her support for the Women's Health Protection Act.

She wrote: "The need for this legislation has never been more urgent, and the Senate must act immediately to preserve women's rights over their own bodies. Reproductive choice is personal, private, and serious. We should trust women to make the best decisions."

Local governments are already taking action to prepare for the possible fallout,

In Santa Clara County, the Board of Supervisors voted unanimously Tuesday morning

to commit \$3 million to fund Planned Parenthood Mar Monte "for the expansion of medical care and facilities for women in our region and out-of-state women coming here for abortions."

If Roe v. Wade is overturned,

San Jose's Mar Monte location — the largest in the state of California — expects an additional 200-500 out-of-state women a week seeking abortions, according to a county news release.

See **ROE V. WADE**, page 10

MENLO PARK BRIEFS

Update on Middle Avenue street improvements

The city's Complete Streets Commission will provide a summary of community feedback it has received so far on an expansive improvement project along Middle Avenue, between El Camino Real and Olive Street. The meeting will be held Wednesday, May 11, at 7 p.m.

This project will add bicycle lanes, parking safety, pedestrian crossings and other street improvements. The city anticipates Stanford University, which is responsible for design and construction of the project, will begin construction this fall.

To watch the meeting virtually, go to bit.ly/3kIe7cY.

Tour of potential Menlo Park housing sites

Peninsula for Everyone, a YIMBY housing advocate nonprofit, is hosting a bike tour of the sites Menlo Park has identified for potential housing development as part of its 2023-31 housing plans.

The tour will feature speakers from MidPen Housing, District 3 San Mateo County Supervisor Don Horsley and Menlo Park Vice Mayor Jen Wolosin.

Sites include venture capital offices on Sand Hill Road, downtown parking lots and Robinhood headquarters, the press release states.

The tour will begin at Stanford Hills Park at 2400 Branner Drive at 11:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 7. To RSVP, go to bit.ly/3ydY8eN. ■

—Lloyd Lee

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ROE V. WADE

continued from page 8

Last week, the Redwood City City Council voted to send a letter to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors requesting a protective buffer zone around a local Planned Parenthood. The recommendation, introduced by Hale and approved unanimously by the council members, would establish a perimeter around the entrance to the clinic that protestors are not allowed to enter.

“It’s about having every tool

in our toolbox to defend access to this essential right,” she said. Hale added that the North Fair Oaks Community Council, under the leadership of President Brooks Esser, is considering writing a similar recommendation supporting the Planned Parenthood buffer zone on behalf of the council.

Though the city’s letter has yet to be submitted, San Mateo County Supervisor Warren Slocum, said he would likely support the implementation of a buffer zone. He said he was also in favor of a move, like that taken by the Santa Clara

County Board of Supervisors, to direct additional funding to local reproductive health care facilities.

Asked about the role of local government on this issue he said he’d like to see the board take “some concrete steps, not just symbolic.”

“I do think we have a responsibility,” Slocum said. “And that goes beyond just adopting a resolution condemning the court for its decision.”

Pointing to recently passed bills, such as Florida’s parental consent law, and Texas’s Senate Bill 8 or “Heartbeat Act,”

which bans abortions after detection of the fetal heartbeat, Adams said that reproductive rights “have been under attack for a long time.”

The impact of these state bills has already rippled into states like California, Adams said.

From July 1, 2021, to April 15, 2022, California’s Planned Parenthood facilities served more than double the number of out-of-state patients compared to the same time period from the previous year, which Adams attributed to growing restrictions in states like Texas.

If Roe v. Wade is overturned, control of abortion policies and laws will return to the states. Thirteen “trigger law” states already have anti-abortion laws that would go into effect immediately, including: Arkansas, Idaho, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, Missouri, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah and Wyoming.

California is an abortion-rights state. ■

*Email Staff Writer
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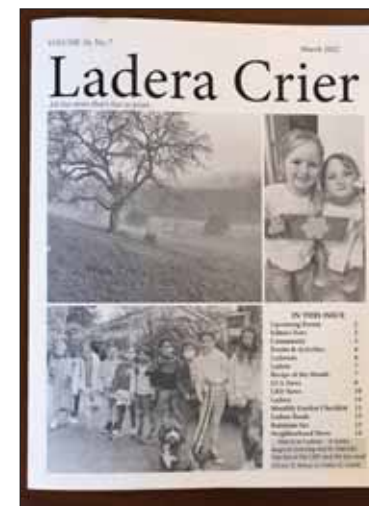
LADERA CRIER

continued from page 5

some 300 of the 535 homes in Ladera still receive a print copy, according to Fornaciari and Gow.

“In my first editor’s note, I said part of the fun of starting was the historical files of the Crier,” Fornaciari wrote to readers. “Reading through them reveals that the more things change, the more Ladera remains the same close-knit community. It’s full of people who participate, who jump in to help run things, who lend a hand or a ladder (or an opinion on the listserv). A Menlo Park friend claims, ‘You Laderans are more like a cult than a neighborhood!’ and I take that as a compliment. That’s still true.”

Gow estimates she knows about 85 to 90% of her neighbors, in part thanks to her involvement in the newsletter. Ladera also hosts twice weekly barbecues from May to September, which started in the 1950s.



Magali Gauthier

The March issue of the Ladera Crier marks the last one with Di Gow and Linda Fornaciari as editors. The two say they knew their community was special, but working on its newsletter for 11 years confirmed it.

knew what an amazing neighborhood is, but the newsletter validated it. Gow will also retire from her role managing the Ladera Recreation District this month. She plans to continue to manage the newsletter’s calendar.

To anyone interested in launching their own community newsletter, Fornaciari advises to not be afraid to start.

Residents Dorothy Pavloff, Laura Hamilton, Linda Schuck, and Mia Clark have committed to keep publishing the Crier through the end of the year. Each editor will be in charge of specific beats such as school news and features, according to Gow and Fornaciari. ■

‘A Menlo Park friend claims, “You Laderans are more like a cult than a neighborhood!” and I take that as a compliment.

LINDA FORNACIARI

Ladera, which is now home to about 1,600 people, was founded in 1946 as a cooperative housing experiment.

“There exists here, for many, a feeling of cohesiveness and neighborhood that does not exist in many unincorporated communities or towns,” according to Ladera Lore, a 1974 book by Hallis Friend and Nancy Lund. “Perhaps this is because of the dreams and early leadership of the town. Perhaps it is because homes aren’t too far apart or too close together. Or it may be the result of the need for group action on the various issues which have arisen over the years.”

Gow said the editors already

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include **Erin Lynn Bentham**, 62, a former Woodside resident, on April 10; and **Lola Marie Mathews Stephens**, 91, a longtime Menlo Park resident, on April 16.

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



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Lola Marie Stephens

April 21, 1930 – April 16, 2022

Lola Marie (Mathews) Stephens passed away peacefully surrounded by family in her home in Menlo Park on Saturday, April 16, 2022 after a long struggle with Alzheimer's disease.



Born on April 21, 1930 in Huntington Park, California she was the first child of Eustis B and Joanna Ruth (Hess) Mathews. She is survived by her husband of 64 years, Robert James Stephens; her children Robert L Stephens, Susan L Stephens, and James W Stephens; her grandchildren Alison de Geus, Aimee (de Geus) Thomas, James Stephens, Jr. and Valerie Stephens; and her great grandchildren Josephine and Sebastian Thomas; her siblings Martha R (Mathews) Barclay, Mary E (Mathews) Crandell, and David P Mathews. She was preceded in death by her brother Benjamin H Mathews and a 2-day old daughter.

Lola graduated from Huntington Park High School in 1948. She attended Pepperdine College and the University of Oklahoma. She held an undergraduate and Master's degree in Music and a Master's degree in Library Science. She held several positions in both academic and public libraries during her career. An "at-home gourmet", Lola and her husband Robert opened Pear Williams in Menlo Park where she wore many hats including that of Vice President. Later on in her career, she would join her son, James, as the Chief Financial Officer of Tech-Star Industries in 1993, where she was integral to the day-to-day operations of the company.

Lola was a great supporter of social causes and was politically active. She was a member of the Menlo-Atherton AAUW and the League of Women Voters of South San Mateo County; serving as their Land Use Committee Chairperson in 1973. She was active in local political organizations as a campaign organizer and she supported civic and social causes such as the SF Symphony and Opera, KQED, KDFC, the ASPCA, ChildFund, and Emily's List.

Music played a major role in Lola's life; she played piano from a young age. She met the man who would eventually become her husband, Robert, performing in the Mikado at Pepperdine. She enjoyed attending the symphony and opera, and sang in the University Women's Chorus. She chaired the Menlo Summer Concert Series and often played piano for her children's and grandchildren's school programs. Lola was also an avid reader and crossword puzzle solver. She enjoyed Agatha Christie and P. D. James mysteries, Jane Austen novels, and was fond of the annual San Francisco Chronicle "Christmas Quiz". In the later decades of her life, Lola enjoyed annual summers in Oxford, England with her husband.

She was a devoted mother and grandmother who taught her children and then her grandchildren the value of the arts. Through museum visits and extracurricular activities, Lola shared her passion for music, dance, and other forms of artistic expression. Lola also instilled in her children and grandchildren the importance of kindness and had an enviable temperament. Lola will be missed greatly by her family, who take comfort in the legacy she left behind.

There was a graveside service on Thursday, May 5, 2022. In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made in Lola's name to KDFC listener supported classical radio online at kdfc.com.

PAID OBITUARY

Nearly \$7K spent in campaign for Measure I school bond

The campaign in support of the Ravenswood City School District's June Measure I \$110 million bond measure raised \$4,259 from March 11 to April 23, according to campaign disclosure statements filed on April 28.

Eight donors from Atherton, East Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Palo Alto gave to the campaign committee, Yes on Ravenswood City School District Measure I, statements show. Measure I, which requires 55% approval to pass, is on the June 7 ballot and is aimed at replacing aging

portables, upgrading classroom technology and more.

The campaign spent \$6,707 during this period.

Expenditures included \$450 for inclusion of campaign literature in a Democratic party mailer, \$5,255 for printing services (for mail hangers, yard signers, flyers, etc.) and \$765 for graphic design.

The next round of campaign disclosure statements are due Thursday, May 26, for the period ending May 21.

Ballots go out to voters this week. ■

—Angela Swartz



Magali Gauthier

Parents watch their children have breakfast on the first day of kindergarten at Los Robles-Ronald McNair Academy in East Palo Alto on Aug. 25, 2021.

MEASURE I

continued from page 5

The authors of the opposition argument for Measure I could not be reached for an interview.

Outdoor spaces

The district is also working with philanthropists and is seeking state funding for other projects at its schools, like outdoor play spaces, Sudaria said. Measure I would focus on indoor spaces.

The district is hoping to bring in tens of millions of dollars to improve its outdoor spaces, Eger said.

The district is partnering with Palo Alto's Magical Bridge Foundation to build a playground at the middle school site. The nonprofit creates and develops playgrounds for people of all abilities.

The district will share updates on other partnerships as they are finalized.

For more information on the district's facilities, go to ravenswoodschools.org/About-Ravenswood/Facilities/index.htm.

For more information on the ballot measure, go to smcacre.org. ■

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April 1, 2022 - April 30, 2022

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9. \$4,300,000 1130 Deanna Drive	10. \$4,280,000 752 Gilbert Ave		

 ACTIVE LISTING Apr: 43 Mar: 30 ↑ 43%	 Apr: \$3,131,009 Mar: \$3,484,887 ↓ -10% AVERAGE SALES PRICE
 PENDING LISTING Apr: 36 Mar: 44 ↓ -18%	 Apr: 11 Mar: 11 ↔ 0% AVERAGE SOLD DAYS ON MARKET
 SOLD LISTING Apr: 44 Mar: 37 ↑ 19%	 Apr: 107.40% Mar: 110.00% ↓ -2% SALE/LIST PRICE

 Apr: \$1,594 Mar: \$1,640 ↓ -3% AVERAGE SALES PRICE/SQ Ft
 Apr: 1.00 Mar: 0.80 ↑ 25% MONTHS OF INVENTORY <small>If no further homes/condos were to come to market, the area would be SOLD OUT of residential real estate in the number of MONTHS shown.</small>
 Apr: 5.42% Mar: 4.49% ↑ 21% 30 YEAR MORTGAGE RATE <small>3/25/2022: 4.49% 4/29/2022: 5.42% Source: Bankrate</small>

*April 2022 compared to March 2022 *Source: MLS Listings for Single Family Properties | Townhomes | Condos

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HOUSING MANDATE

continued from page 1

Additionally, local governments could be subject to lawsuits by the state, interest groups, property owners and developers.

“How can we kind of fight this thing?” asked one resident during the meeting, noting that she would prefer to pay the state fines and not complete the housing element. It would be about \$1.2 million a year if the town was charged \$100,000 per month, she noted. The town didn’t require residents to state their names during public comment, so people didn’t identify themselves.

In early April, the San Francisco Chronicle reported that the state has rejected 97% of Southern California cities’ housing elements. Southern California has earlier RHNA deadlines than Northern California.

DeGolia reiterated this week that the town won’t fight its RHNA numbers, despite the increase in units. He said he was surprised how aggressive a couple of people at the meeting were who wanted the town to totally oppose the RHNA requirements.

The process to plan for new housing has been more difficult than anticipated and it’s an emotional issue, DeGolia said.

“Woodside’s experience, where they tried to fight SB 9 with the mountain lion law; it received a severe reaction,” he said, referring to its short-lived attempt to exempt itself by declaring the whole town is a mountain lion habitat. “That kind of showed us the last thing you want is to be completely out of line with this issue and we’re not going to be.”

Sometimes known as the duplex law, Senate Bill 9, which took effect this year, requires jurisdictions to permit the splitting of single family lots into two parcels and allow the construction of up to two primary dwelling units on each parcel.

Strategies for building more housing

The Atherton City Council held study sessions to consider possible strategies for meeting the town’s RHNA assignment last April, and this year in January and February, according to a town newsletter.

Town officials came up with the following strategies:

- Building accessory dwelling units (ADUs) of up to 1,200 square feet and junior ADUs of up to 500 square feet per single family property. The town estimates approximately 35 new units will be developed each year during the next housing element cycle, for a total of 280 new units.

- Allow multifamily housing at schools, adjacent to schools and at the Cal Water Bear Gulch



Magali Gauthier

Ralph Robinson, an assistant planner in Atherton’s Planning Department, speaks with residents about the town’s state housing requirement at a community meeting in Holbrook-Palmer Park on April 26.

Reservoir Site Public. Private schools in Atherton located within the Public Facilities and Schools zone currently allows teacher housing with a conditional use permit. The town could amend the zoning to allow multifamily housing at the schools by right. The town could also consider allowing the schools to acquire and construct multifamily housing on adjacent properties. There are currently caretaker housing units for employees of Cal Water at the Bear Gulch Reservoir site. The town could allow additional housing units at the site for Cal Water employees.

DeGolia noted that the town previously authorized schools to build housing and none of them have done so, so the state might not be very open to this as a solution. Menlo School has expressed interest in providing housing to its staff, he said.

- A new overlay zone could allow up to 10-20 dwelling units per acre on select parcels. Council members reviewed several maps with optional areas to apply the zone and provided direction to limit the overlay to the following areas: 23 Oakwood at 20 units per acre; properties facing Marsh Road at 10 units per acre; and properties facing Bay Road at 10 units per acre. Single family homes would remain a permitted use and property owners would have the option to construct multifamily housing units up to the permitted density. The town considered homes closer to El Camino Real, but most were on lots too small to split, DeGolia noted.

- Based on recent interest from property owners, the town estimates a total of 80 new housing units from SB 9 projects over the next 8 years.

Pushback on housing requirements

At the town’s housing element community meeting, residents were vocal in their disdain for the

increased RHNA numbers.

Others came with specific criticism of how Atherton’s planning department has decided to add housing, specifically the proposal to add an overlay for townhouses in the Lindenwood neighborhood.

One Lindenwood resident said the state’s housing requirements are “absolutely detestable.”

“I would say shame on you and I hope you reconsider,” the resident said in regard to the decisions that affect his neighborhood. “Because Lindenwood is being carved out as the one neighborhood that will bear all of the brunt of this 10 lots split tomfoolery. ... Can you imagine owning a home, a nice home, that you’ve paid a lot of money for on one of those streets? The developer comes and knocks on your door and says, ‘Gee, I want to let you know that I bought the house next door. I’m going to tear it down and I’m going to build 10 townhomes.’”

DeGolia didn’t anticipate the town would likely need to authorize townhouses to get a plan the state might approve.

“It’s a big issue for Atherton,” he said. “There is going to be some requirement that we provide multifamily opportunities — townhouses. That’s never been done before (in Atherton).”

Next steps

The council expects to send its draft housing element to the state in June, said DeGolia. Residents will have 30 days to comment on the town’s draft element before it’s sent to the state. The housing element must be certified by the state in January 2023.

With so many other cities seeing their plans rejected, DeGolia said he expects as much for Atherton’s. The town would then work with the state to refine the plan to make it acceptable.

For more information on the town’s housing element planning, go to ci.atherton.ca.us/627/Housing-Element-Update. ■

Exemption from School Parcel Tax

An exemption from the Portola Valley School District \$471 parcel tax is available to eligible seniors (age 65 or older by June 30), or persons receiving Supplemental Security Income (SSI) or Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). Applicants must occupy the property they own, located within the boundary of the School District. The exemption application is available at www.pvsd.net or by calling (650) 851-1777. Application and supporting documents must be submitted by June 15.

Public Notices

995 Fictitious Name Statement

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)

DISTILLÉ
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 290778
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Distillé, located at 25 Tagus Ct., Portola Valley, CA 94028, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
FACADE SHOE DESIGN, LLC
25 Tagus Ct.
Portola Valley, CA 94028
Delaware
This business is conducted by: A Limited Liability Company.
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 April 14, 2022.
(ALM Apr. 29; May 6, 13, 20, 2022)

AMERICA'S ICE CREAM
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 290811
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
America's Ice Cream, located at 451 Dumbarton Ave., Redwood, CA 94063, San Mateo County; Mailing address: 1344 Windetmere Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025.
Registered owner(s):
ANA LAURA CORONADO HERNANDEZ
1344 Windermere Ave.
Menlo Park, CA 94025
This business is conducted by: An Individual.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 04/19/2022.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on April 19, 2022.
(ALM Apr. 29; May 6, 13, 20, 2022)

ROSEY SKYE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 290730
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
Rosey Skye, located at 836 Park Avenue, Moss Beach, CA 94038, San Mateo County; Mailing address: 446 Old County Road, Ste 100, Box 350, Pacifica, CA 94044.
Registered owner(s):
ROSEY SKYE LLC

446 Old County Road, Ste. 100 #350
Pacifica, CA 94044
California
This business is conducted by: A Limited Liability Company.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on May 14, 2018.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on April 11, 2022.
(ALM May 6, 13, 20, 27, 2022)

FIESTA LIGHTING DESIGNS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 290925
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Fiesta Lighting Designs, located at 1269 Carlton Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County; Mailing address: 220 Red Lion Way, Newman, CA 95360.
Registered owner(s):
SILVIA RUELAS
220 Red Lion Way
Newman, CA 95360
MIGUEL SANTA ANA
220 Red Lion Way
Newman, CA 95360
This business is conducted by: Copartners.
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 April 27, 2022.
(ALM May 6, 13, 20, 27, 2022)

CareKinesis
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 290853
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
CareKinesis, located at 401 South Canal Street, South San Francisco, CA 94080, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
TABULA RASA HEALTHCARE GROUP, INC.
228 Strawbridge Drive, Suite 100
Moorestown NJ 08057
Delaware
This business is conducted by: A Corporation.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 01/01/2020.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on April 21, 2022.
(ALM May 6, 13, 20, 27, 2022)

CRYSTAL SPRINGS BIOELECTRIC THERAPY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: 290961
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
Crystal Springs Bioelectric Therapy, located at 119 De Anza Blvd., San Mateo, CA 94402, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
LIPING YAO
1395 Saratoga Ave #63
San Jose, CA 95129
This business is conducted by: An Individual.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on N/A.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on May 2, 2022.
(ALM May 6, 13, 20, 27, 2022)

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APARTMENTS

continued from page 5

rental housing development with first preference to district teachers and staff.

But on Tuesday, May 3, Suburban Park residents fiercely opposed to the project expressed fears that life in the small neighborhood would be permanently destroyed by higher density and traffic congestion.

“I can assure you that I’m very much in favor of affordable housing, but not to the detriment of our neighborhoods that we have come to love,” said Curtis Evans, a longtime Suburban Park resident.

It was the common refrain of the night from many of the neighborhood’s residents. They stressed their support for affordable housing, some citing their experience serving lower-income families, but decried the idea of putting a three-to-four story apartment building in their neighborhood.

Evans recalled the “charm” that first reeled him into Suburban Park more than 30 years ago, when children safely played outside and families walked through the streets — a trait that has returned ever since Flood School moved out of Menlo Park, he said.

Ruth Schechter, a 25-year Suburban Park resident, described the neighborhood as “quiet.” Kevin Chien, another neighborhood resident, painted it as “one of the last ‘Leave it to Beaver’ neighborhoods,” referencing a 1950s sitcom.

All of that, they argue, would be irrevocably stripped away by the potential development.

“There is a need for affordable housing, but just not here,” Chien said.

A major focal point of many of the residents’ arguments was

around traffic, one of the impact areas that will be studied.

The neighborhood has two access points on Hedge Road and Greenwood Drive, and the site itself sits on a road that ends at a cul-de-sac.

By building apartments, some of the neighborhood residents fear that traffic will quickly plague Suburban Park. Schechter said traffic clogged the streets when Flood School was opened, even when parents dropped off their kids closer to Flood Park, the county park that’s adjacent to the site.

The school enrolled around 275 students with 16 teachers before it closed in 2012, according to publicschoolreview.com, which cites data from the National Center for Education Statistics and the California Department of Education. Carolyn Bowsher, board chair of the Ravenswood Education Foundation (REF) who also attended Tuesday’s community meeting, said the school had around 50 staff members at the time.

Some of the residents said they would support an affordable housing project at a much reduced density and height, and if the plans come with alternative entry points.

Part of the backlash stemmed from the assumption that the land is poised to be developed not for 90 units but up to 260 units. The latter figure came from the city’s rules on Housing Overlay Zones, which gives developers a “density bonus” or the right to build additional units per acre, if the project is 100% affordable housing. With this planning tool, a developer could have the option to build up to 100 units per acre — in this case, 260 total units.

No other type of development besides housing is being considered, the district wrote in its

explanation of the plans, and the contract that is still under negotiation “explicitly caps the number of units at 90 units and four floors.” To do so, the city must rezone the site, currently designated for multi-family housing.

It also added that “due to the type of construction planned and the number of parking spots on the site, it is not economically feasible to have more than 90 units or four floors for the site.”

Read more about the district’s plan at bit.ly/3kI4efo.

Arguments in favor

Proponents of the development plan argued that the location provides much needed affordable housing for lower-income Ravenswood district staff and additional funding for a district that has less than half as much per-pupil spending than the neighboring Menlo Park City School District, according to a district analysis.

“It is time for the Ravenswood City School District to be able to use their public lands to be able to better serve the community,” said Ronda White, teacher and president of Ravenswood Teachers Association.

In its explanation of the plans, the district wrote that it would ensure teachers and staff, who qualify for affordable housing based on local income eligibility thresholds, will have the first opportunity to apply. According to White, the district has about 115 teachers and 20 classified staff members, which includes janitors and campus relations employees.

Bowsher, who is also a 24-year Menlo Park resident, added that the housing development would help with staff retention and argued that it would ultimately benefit the students through the revenue that the site could

generate for the district.

“This is a really strategic use of that land,” she said.

Members of the REF board that attended the meeting were also receptive to neighbors’ concerns around traffic mitigation and tried to mollify community members, saying that it was an issue with solutions.

John Pimentel, Menlo Park housing commissioner and a former state deputy secretary of transportation who serves on the foundation board, said he expects residential use of the land “would generate less traffic than a school ever would.”

He also expressed confidence that the district would end up with a proposal to provide egress through Flood Park and Van Buren Road.

The two alternative entryways being explored would go through Flood Park and LifeMoves’ Haven Family House transitional housing.

“Both entrances are being actively discussed with the County of San Mateo, which controls much of the surrounding land,” the district wrote.

Adina Levin, an executive director of Friends of Caltrain and past member of the Complete Streets Commission, acknowledged that there are some “circulation issues” in the neighborhood but that it shouldn’t be an excuse to rule out the site entirely.

“I think those are things that we should look at addressing them, rather than to use as a rationale to not have much-needed homes on this site,” she said at the meeting.

Others threw in general support for Ravenswood and frustration about the opposition that has formed at the very outset of the district’s plans.

“I’ve had the absolute joy of working with the Ravenswood School District for many years, and I’m struggling to understand how one can assume that all these horrible things are going to happen to the neighborhood when the Ravenswood district hasn’t even had a full opportunity to plan out this entire project,” said Kathleen Daly, owner of Cafe Zoë.

Like any large project proposals, the developer will need to submit plans that will be subject to several stages of review and city approval, including an Environmental Impact Report that outlines a development’s impact to air pollution, noise, traffic and city resources such as nearby schools.

Opposition groups form

Recently, a group of local residents have begun to organize campaigns that could stop Ravenswood’s plans in its tracks.

One group called Stop Goliath, describing itself as a “network of concerned Menlo Park residents,” has characterized the potential deal between Alliant developer and the Ravenswood district as a bid driven by the pursuit of “hyper-profits” and an educational mission “corrupted by greed.”

Two residents of Suburban Park, Timothy Yaeger and Nicole Chessari, have also submitted a ballot initiative they’ve billed as the “Menlo Park Neighborhood Protection and General Plan Consistency Initiative.”

The language of the ballot measure would essentially bring any proposal to rezone single family-home parcels, such as Ravenswood’s Flood School site, to a citywide vote.

In a brief interview, Yaeger said that the measure came out of community concerns around some of the stances a majority of the City Council — specifically members Betsy Nash, Cecilia Taylor and Jen Wolosin — appeared to have taken on development throughout the city. He referred to a decision in September when the three council members voted against a proposal to ban housing development in city parks.

When asked, Yaeger said that the ballot initiative was not meant to specifically target the Flood School site and that it is a citywide initiative to stop commercial development.

To find more information on the city’s housing element process and provide feedback to city staff, go to beta.menlopark.org/housingelement. ■

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FUNDRAISING

continued from page 7

reported smaller expenditures. Booker has spent about \$74,200 for his campaign, largely going toward consulting and other services from CleanSweep Campaigns.

Chang Kiraly had the least amount of reported expenses, spending about \$53,900. She lists a few sources for consulting: Storefront Political Media (\$23,700); NGP VAN, a DC-based

voter database and web hosting service provider often used in Democrat campaigns (\$10,080); and a person named Casey Serafina (\$5,700), a former Menlo-Atherton High School student and Girl Scout who advocated for the county to use PulsePoint, a smart-phone app, as an alert system for people trained in cardiopulmonary resuscitation.

The next campaign finance report deadline is May 26 and covers the period from April 24 to May 22. ■

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Viewpoint

IDEAS, THOUGHTS AND OPINIONS ABOUT LOCAL ISSUES

Yes on Ravenswood's Measure I school bond

Ballot initiative would fund \$110 million in badly needed upgrades to school facilities

Next month, voters in the Ravenswood City School District will be asked to tax themselves and entrust the district with \$110 million to pay for school upgrades. We believe the dire need for new facilities, coupled with the district's strong track record of managing bond money

over the last six years, is enough to warrant a "Yes" vote.

Ravenswood has arguably been too leery of asking for money in the past, with a long lapse in bond measures until the modest \$26 million Measure H in 2016, followed shortly thereafter with the \$70 million Measure S bond in 2018. Voters overwhelmingly approved both these measures, which helped finance school construction that are mission critical to give children a safe, healthy learning environment.

This money hasn't gone toward luxuries — it paid for structural upgrades to keep roofs from collapsing, making sure the locks worked, and replacing failing pipes.

Now the school district is returning to voters, this time asking for an even larger \$110 million bond measure to keep up the good work. The focus for this bond includes modernization of school classrooms that date back to the 1950s and portable classrooms that are well past their useful life. The problems stretch beyond classrooms, with Belle Haven Elementary's cramped multipurpose room so outdated and small that they cannot support full assemblies or spectators for events.

Studies show that school districts serving low-income students disproportionately spend more per student on maintenance and operations, which includes high-cost repair work that must be done to keep shabby old buildings in working order. Ravenswood should not have to keep spending money scrambling to fix flooding issues and inking contract after contract with termite control companies.

And if the last few years have

taught us anything, even the less flashy upgrades like improving HVAC systems will be an important investment. During the coronavirus pandemic, many school districts faced the urgent task of upgrading

ventilation so that children and teachers alike could safely go to school with less risk of catching COVID-19. The proposed bond would give Ravenswood a financial path to making those upgrades.

These improvements will come at a cost to taxpayers, and voters should be clear-eyed about the addition to annual property tax bills. The measure would cost \$30 per \$100,000 of assessed value, and over the life of the bond is estimated to require a repayment of \$195 million. But evidence shows that Ravenswood has been diligent with its Measure H and Measure S money, with publicly available audit reports showing district leaders have been good stewards of taxpayer dollars.

The opposition argument, written by tax-averse residents living outside the district, are scattered and disingenuous. They conflate annual per-pupil spending with the capital improvement budget and rally against technology upgrades on the bizarre grounds that it will eventually age and one day be outdated. They also cite an enrollment decline — a problem experienced by school districts across the state since COVID-19 struck in 2020 — as a reason not to fix and replace existing aging classrooms. These arguments are not compelling.

The benefits of Measure S are already in the works, as the district embarks on extensive \$50 million upgrades to Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School. It's time to extend those improvements to the elementary schools as well. The students deserve the same 21st-century school facilities as their wealthier neighbors, and the only way for that to happen is with the community's support. The Almanac recommends you vote "Yes" on Measure I. ■

EDITORIAL

The opinion of The Almanac

Fear is obscuring the benefits to more housing in Woodside

By Tovis Page

On April 25, my spouse and I attended a special meeting of the Woodside Planning Commission about the Housing Element of the General Plan. The property on which we live is subject to a change in zoning to help meet the new state mandate for increased housing. At the meeting, we learned that the town has been working hard on proposals to meet the state requirements and that a lot of Woodside residents are very afraid and upset.

I do not know the solution to the challenge before us as a town, but here is what I do know: Fear of change is rapidly setting the tone of the debate, and it's obscuring both basic truths and moral clarity. I am concerned that this type of fear will do more damage to our community than any of the proposed zoning and building changes will.

Most of us find change difficult, especially when it feels sudden, and we focus on what we might lose rather than what we might gain. A lot of residents passionately desire to preserve the town. But Woodside is not a relic to be preserved. It is a cluster of life in a much larger web. Woodside, like everywhere else, is always changing. It's just that some changes are welcomed and some are not, and this calculus may be different for each one of us.

My parents bought the property on which my own family

now lives in 1974. Contrary to what many residents are saying about the supposedly timeless nature of Woodside, the town has changed quite a bit in my lifetime. One of the changes I struggle with most is the reduction in economic diversity.

Sure, there were wealthy families who lived in town when I was growing up, but there were also middle- and working-class families as well. And not a day goes by when I don't miss the economic diversity we once had. Focusing on that change, I can wholeheartedly say yes, I welcome the state mandate to build affordable housing! I don't want to be among the small number of families who are only here because we have parents who were able to purchase homes long ago and hold on to them. I want people who work locally to be able to live locally, no matter the kind of work they do or income they make.

Fear is also distorting how we think about community. When we talk about the Woodside community, who is included? Only those who own homes here? Some homeowners spend less time here than those who work here do. Are the hard-working people employed inside many Woodside homes not part of our community? Teachers and school staff? Frontline workers? Aren't they part of our community? Why should they have to commute long distances — sometimes over 100 miles — to

GUEST OPINION

find an affordable place to live?

Fear of change is also distorting our notion of community by fueling a narrow insularity and privileged exceptionalism. The fact is that California, and the Bay Area in particular, has a massive housing shortage. This problem is our problem. It is not someone else's problem or some other municipality's problem. It is a problem shared by every one of us because we all depend on the labor, health and wellbeing of people desperately in need of affordable housing.

So can we expand our sense of community so we understand ourselves as part of the entire Peninsula or the whole Bay Area? Can we shift our attention away from the idea of an unwanted state mandate and toward the truth that there is a real problem that impacts us all and that we must solve together?

The problem before us is not the state mandate; it's the lack of affordable housing for people in our community. As we grapple with how best to meet our share of new housing provisions, I hope we will choose to focus not only on what we fear we're going to lose, but on all that we have to gain in creating a more inclusive, compassionate, diverse and connected community. Isn't that change worth embracing? ■

Dr. Tovis Page grew up in Woodside, moving back to her childhood home in 2016 with her spouse and two children who currently attend Woodside Elementary School.

LETTERS

Our readers write

Support Laura Parmer-Lohan for District 3

As a Pacifica resident who is always looking for thoughtful, committed candidates, I believe Laura Parmer-Lohan is the best candidate for San Mateo County District 3.

I saw her speak at a recent forum. She was the most thoughtful candidate on the issues of climate change, fire prevention and sea level rise.

She is committed to protecting

our beaches, open spaces and forests for future generations. She is also a proponent of using recycled/reclaimed water for irrigation, farming and landscaping to address severe drought and will tackle climate-induced flooding and sea level rise.

In fact, she has been endorsed by local firefighters for her vision to fund year-round investment in wildfire prevention.

*Toni Boykin
Pacifica*

What's on your mind?

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

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

Letters should be no longer than 300 words.

Questions? Email editor@AlmanacNews.com, or call 650-223-6537.



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- Left Bank
- Lulu's At Town & Country Village
- Lulu's On Laurel
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AM OFF-THE-CUFF EVENING

Fashion designer Isaac Mizrahi brings his cabaret show, 'Moderate to Severe,' to Palo Alto

By Heather Zimmerman

The fashion world has always had an element of showmanship, but Isaac Mizrahi is an actual showman. Though most widely known for his work in fashion, Mizrahi has a wide-ranging career on stage, TV and film, as well as behind the scenes as a producer and director.

He has appeared in numerous TV shows and movies, including "Ugly Betty" and as a judge on all seven seasons of "Project Runway All-Stars."

Before Mizrahi became a big name on the runway, he planned on a career as a performer and attended a performing arts high school.

Mizrahi was both a subject and a co-creator of "Unzipped," a documentary that chronicled the creation of his fall 1994 collection and he hosted talk show, "The Isaac Mizrahi Show," for seven years. He also has a production company, through which he's developing several projects for TV, stage and literature.

And for about 20 years, Mizrahi has performed in cabaret-style shows that bring together singing and dancing, accompanied by a live band, with storytelling and humor. The shows' home base is Mizrahi's hometown, New York City, where he has a longstanding residency at the Carlyle Hotel.

Local audiences will have a chance to check out Mizrahi's theatrical chops when his latest show, "Moderate to Severe," comes to the Oshman Family JCC in Palo Alto on May 15. (The show has been delayed several times by the pandemic.)

The Almanac spoke with Mizrahi about "Moderate to Severe," his best shows ever and the secret to performing that he learned from Liza Minnelli. This conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

The Almanac: Your background is in performing arts. What drew you to the cabaret format?

Isaac Mizrahi: "Cabaret" is just the idea that lends itself to what I like to do the best, which

is not necessarily only done in a cabaret ... It just means that all the preparation I do, a lot of it is from the hip, a lot of it takes place extemporaneously. And that's the thing that makes it different from other shows that people do.

I had a show off-Broadway for about two years called "Les MIZrahi" — it was a great show. It was all written. I had it memorized. It was workshopped and it had a bunch of lines and cues and it was really good. But then I realized that I was better at just showing up. So I ended up doing this hybrid thing, whereby I prepared a lot of music, and I prepared a shape for the show — the show needs to have a shape, it needs to be about something. But once you do that, for me anyway, I like it better when I can just present it very, very fresh. ...

I have notes with me on stage and that's how I work. It's so much more interesting, I think, for an audience to watch.

But you know, my best shows, I think in my entire life, were in front of about 1000 people at I think it was called the McCarter Center in Princeton. I did a couple of shows there which were divine.

The Almanac: What made those the best shows?

Mizrahi: I always say it has mostly to do with the audience and how they listen and how they respond — how they make you feel somehow pre-accepted or loved or something like that, so that you feel like you can open up even further.

It's so funny. I had this old friend of mine come to see my show at the Carlyle, and this friend of mine said, "Oh, I didn't realize your show was so louche. It's so risqué." And I said "Darling, do we know each other?" The show is always slightly revealing and a little bit louche — it just is because I say what's on my mind, and a lot of times my mind, you know, is in the gutter.

The Almanac: What inspired the title "Moderate to Severe"?

Mizrahi: I kept thinking about

the past few years that I was going through. And it's on the packages of medicine, or the conditions that you hear about on TV: The remedies are for "moderate to severe arthritis," or "moderate to severe depression" or "moderate or severe insanity" or something, and I feel like what's happened to me, which I imagine (also) happened to a lot of people over the past two years, is that it went from this kind of moderate craziness (and) life just became completely, severely nuts. So that's really why I chose that title. And, honestly, I'm not really going to talk that much about COVID except how you manage not to — it's really very, very good-humored — and I talk about this idea of happiness a lot ...

The overarching idea of the show is this idea of how we go from this moderate to severe illness and how we kind of struggle along with this idea about happiness.

The Almanac: You seem like you're always having so much fun on stage. What's your secret?

Mizrahi: If you're going to go on stage, you have to understand before anything else, that is the assignment. You don't take the job unless you plan to have a really great time. I'm not kidding. That's all it's about. ...

When I was in fashion, I made clothes for Liza (Minnelli) and I became good friends with her. And she had this way, when you watch Liza perform, boy, she is in it and that is what she is born to do, more than almost any other performer I've ever seen. With Liza, darling, she is there for that show. She shows up. And I say that only because it's a lesson. It's a real lesson in this idea of giving them what they want, and when you consider that they want to have a great time, and when you consider that the only way they're going to have a great time is if you have a great time — you see where I'm going with that.

I've learned a lot of that from my close association with Liza. Just watching her from the wings, walk on stage as if she was literally walking into her living room receiving guests. ... She had that show at Radio City



Courtesy David Andrako

Isaac Mizrahi is seen performing his show "Moderate to Severe" during a residency at New York's Carlyle Hotel. Mizrahi's show is coming to the Oshman Family JCC in Palo Alto on May 15.

Music Hall for which I did the costumes, and I went a number of times. She would have these almost like "salons" between acts. She had this red kimono, like a Halston robe that she put on, and she would come into the green room with a thousand votive candles and catering, and all these people would show up in the middle of the whole show — they would just come backstage and it was almost like a party that was just so fun. And then they would go back to their seats and she would do the second act. So you see where

you learn from that, you see what that's about. That's about somebody having the greatest night of her life every single night.

Isaac Mizrahi's "Moderate to Severe" takes place Sunday, May 15, 7:30 p.m. at Schultz Cultural Arts Hall, Oshman Family JCC, 3921 Fabian Way, Palo Alto. Tickets are \$90. For more information, visit paloaltojcc.org. ■

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

Food & Drink

Bevri's quest to spread Georgian cuisine is only beginning

Amid Restaurant Week celebration, Palo Alto eatery plans for Los Altos expansion

By Anthony Shu

In order to preview Peninsula Restaurant Week, which is back for its second year May 13-21, we're speaking to the restaurateurs behind your favorite local eateries. If you missed last week's interview about how Jettywave Distillery is brewing moonshine on the Coastsides, read it at tinyurl.com/jettywave.

For more information about Peninsula Restaurant Week, go to peninsularestaurantweek.com.

In 2018, we covered the opening of owner Pavel Sirotoin's Bevri in Palo Alto, which claimed to be the Bay Area's only Georgian restaurant at the time (Tamaris has opened in San Carlos since then). After a positive review from the San Francisco Chronicle and an appearance on KQED's "Check, Please!," guests are showing up seeking Bevri's signature khachapuri, bread filled with gooey cheese and topped with a runny egg yolk, and juicy khinkali, dumplings holding beef and pork or lamb.

But even with the press, Sirotoin says there's still plenty of work to do in spreading Georgian cuisine across the Bay Area, an effort he's personally undertaking as Bevri plans to open a second location on Los Altos' Main Street soon.

This conversation has been edited for clarity and brevity.

Peninsula Foodist: How did you decide to open Bevri?

Pavel Sirotoin: My wife and I like having guests. Both of us worked in a hotel. That's where we met actually. So we were always passionate about hospitality, restaurants and food. We're huge foodies.

When this opportunity came up, we just jumped on it. And the reason we chose Georgian cuisine came from my wife's side. My wife's family had a lot of Georgian friends. So she was very familiar with the culture.

When we moved to California, we noticed that there were no Georgian restaurants. And that was a huge opportunity for us to introduce the culture and cuisine here in the Bay Area.

Peninsula Foodist: So you and your wife are both Russian, not Georgian. It's a big undertaking to open one of the only restaurants serving a cuisine that's not even your own heritage.

Pavel Sirotoin: We're familiar with the country and culture. Georgians have this concept of supra, a large table full of food



Courtesy Elena Garbuzenko

A selection of dishes from Bevri including khinkali (bottom left), dumplings filled with beef and pork or lamb.

and wine and celebration. So all of that, so we just wanted to bring it here. Actually, the name Bevri means "a lot." As in a lot of food, a lot of friends, a lot of drinks, a lot of songs. Everything is in abundance.

It took a while to educate locals, and it still does. Our team has to explain a lot about what Georgia is. Georgia has the same name as a U.S. state. So we have to explain the difference.

All the dishes are very foreign (to most diners). It's not a burger, you don't need to explain that.

It's a really interesting journey, and it's fulfilling to see how

curious people are, especially with the wine. People here like drinking wine, but they're used to very specific grapes and tastes. It's interesting to see people learn something new about not only Georgian culture, but also tastes and textures.

Peninsula Foodist: Can you tell me a little bit more about Georgian wine?

Pavel Sirotoin: Georgia is the birthplace of wine. UNESCO found that Georgia produced wine 8,000 years ago. They found evidence of the clay pots. They bury the clay pots underground and ferment the wine

there for a few months. And the grapes that they grow, they're very unique to that area.

The color and the texture of the wine is so different. They even call (one variety) amber wine because it's very dark and rich. And it's particularly interesting because the country is so small, yet they managed to cultivate many different grapes.

Peninsula Foodist: And I saw you put a fundraiser link for Nova Ukraine at the top of your website — has your business been affected in any way by the war in Ukraine?

Pavel Sirotoin: Definitely, we saw our guests were very concerned. When the war started, we were also very concerned because we have friends and family who are affected. We are very sad, so we're doing everything we can to show support. We're friends.

Bevri, 530 Bryant St., Palo Alto; 650-384-6500, bevri.com. Instagram: @bevrifood. ■

Email Associate Digital Editor Anthony Shu at peninsulafoodist@embarcaderopublishing.com.

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Courtesy Elena Garbuzenko

Bevri offers guests a large selection of Georgian wines.

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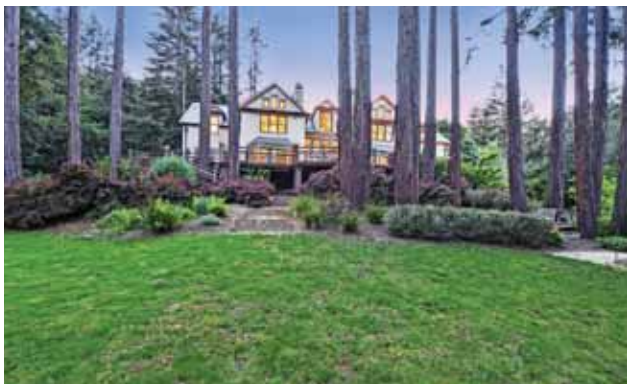


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