

The Almanac

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

DECEMBER 16, 2022 | VOL. 58 NO. 15



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Hundreds of mourners gather to celebrate the lives of Midpeninsula couple killed in car crash

Community remembers Grace Spiridon and Greg Ammen, parents of twins who were killed in Nov. 4 car collision

By Leah Worthington

Rain fell gently as mourners streamed through the Palo Alto High gymnasium's doors, greeting each other with tight hugs and quiet words of comfort.

Inside, people mingled around tables arranged with flickering candles, cheerful bouquets and cards to share a handwritten message or favorite memory. Dozens of pictures adorned the walls memorializing high school graduations, family hiking trips, posed Christmas portraits and candid embraces.

"Incredible photos," one man said softly to himself, leaning in close.

Everywhere the smiling faces of Grace Spiridon and Greg Ammen could be seen, beaming out from frames, photo garlands and a wall-sized slideshow. Spiridon and Ammen, who were killed in a Redwood City car collision on Nov. 4, were remembered as loyal friends, beloved children and adoring parents.

"I know I share a sense with

others here that the loss is so great I'll never be the same, and I don't want to be," said Maura McCarthy, a longtime friend of Spiridon's. McCarthy, who flew in from Washington, D.C., addressed the crowd from a stage overflowing with red poinsettias.

"I want to pull from Grace's quiet resolve and Greg and Grace's kindness and joy for each other, their children, their family, their life — and try to live mine in a way that would make them proud," McCarthy said.

The memorial, which took place Saturday afternoon, Dec. 3, was an outpouring of love and grief, the pain still fresh a month after the couple's tragic death. Spiridon and Ammen, 42 and 44, were Palo Alto natives and residents of San Carlos at the time of their death and left behind 7-year-old twin daughters, Madison and Olivia, who miraculously survived the collision.



Leah Worthington

Community members gathered at a memorial service in remembrance of Grace Spiridon and Greg Ammen, who were killed in a Redwood City car collision last month.

See **MEMORIAL**, page 10

Portola Valley Planning Commissioner continues to recuse herself from housing element discussion

Incoming council member Judith Hasko is awaiting guidance from state political practices body

By Angela Swartz

Portola Valley Planning Commissioner Judith Hasko expressed frustration on Dec. 7 with having to recuse herself from a discussion about the town's housing element — which the town is racing to complete by Jan. 31 — because of a potential conflict of interest. Residents have urged Hasko not to step back

from the topic.

Hasko, who is set to join the Town Council next week, said she consulted with her counsel and Town Attorney Cara Silver at the start of a four-hour Dec. 7 meeting. Ultimately, she decided to wait on a response



Judith Hasko

back from the California Fair Political Practices Commission (FPCC) on if she is not allowed to take part in decisions regarding the state mandated plans for housing.

She expects a letter from the commission in early 2023. Meanwhile, the town is trying to move quickly to modify its housing element, which covers planning for new homes for 2023 through 2031, so it

can maintain local control and evade the so-called "builder's remedy."

Hasko lives on Applewood Lane within 1,000 feet of two Nathhorst Triangle properties, 4370 and the 4394 Alpine Road, that the town plans to upzone as part of its housing plans. The two sites could produce up to 23 new housing units.

"Unfortunately today it remains unclear to me if I can

participate or not," Hasko said, noting that she appreciates the sentiments of residents encouraging her to not recuse herself. "It is important I figure this out. ... As you can imagine, I am frustrated with the situation as I want to participate in all these important discussions as much as possible. ... I would far prefer to participate."

See **HASKO**, page 8

INSIDE

Help local families in need 12

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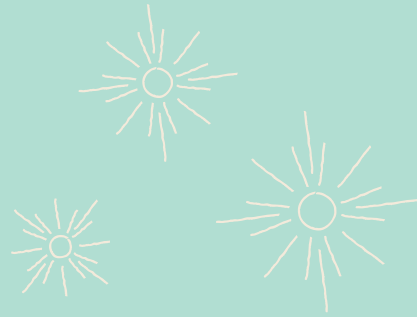


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Magali Gauthier

Ravenswood City School District officials are weighing whether to build housing on this field at Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School along Bay Road.

Ravenswood school district considers housing on East Palo Alto school site

By Angela Swartz

As the Ravenswood City School District plans to soon lease its district office at 2120 Euclid Ave. to bring a steady stream of funds, district officials are wondering if building workforce housing on open space at its middle school could help fund a smaller, \$10 million replacement office.

Some school board members expressed concern during a

Dec. 8 meeting about adding housing to an already congested area of East Palo Alto and putting housing so close to classrooms.

At the school board meeting, district staff presented the idea of developing three- to four-story affordable housing on the field along Bay Road at Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School, located at 2450 Ralmar Ave., to close a \$4 million funding gap for the new office, which the district

plans to build at the school site. Teachers, staff, municipal workers and nonprofit employees would get preference for the housing, according to a district staff report. The school board gave the go ahead to prepare a request for proposals to gauge interest in developing the site, said Chief Business Officer Will Eger at the meeting.

The city of East Palo Alto may be interested in rezoning a

See **RAVENSWOOD**, page 15

Health officials warn of a 'tridemic' of respiratory viruses

Residents advised to get vaccinated against the flu, COVID-19 now

By Sue Dremann

Local health officials are once again urging the public to stay up to date with their COVID-19 vaccinations and to get this year's flu shot.

COVID-19 cases are soaring in the Bay Area and influenza is at "very high" levels, according to recent data. Increasing COVID activity is being seen in reported cases, wastewater surveillance and hospitalization levels, Louise Rogers, San Mateo County health chief, said in a written statement.

With a "tridemic" of COVID-19, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) and influenza at high levels, residents are encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as possible. Vaccines are available against omicron COVID-19 variants and the currently circulating influenza strains. There is no vaccine against RSV.

"This year's flu shot appears to be a good match for the influenza strains circulating and is available to everyone 6 months and older. The updated bivalent COVID booster, which has been available since September, includes a component of the original virus strain to provide broad protection against

COVID-19 and a component for the omicron variant that would be particularly protective during these next winter months," she said.

Yet, as of Nov. 30, 25% of all San Mateo County residents have received the updated COVID-19 bivalent booster. For those ages 50 and older, this percentage increases to 35%, according to Rogers.

"We now recommend both vaccines as soon as possible," she said. "Getting the vaccines to protect against COVID and influenza and taking extra precautions can make a difference. It is especially important for older adults, people with disabilities and those with underlying medical conditions who remain at higher risk."

Pharmacies and health care providers can provide the shots with appointment availability ranging from a few days to a couple of weeks, she said. County Health is also offering vaccination clinics at rotating locations to reach the communities that have been hardest hit by COVID.

The county is also prioritizing clinics in historically underserved communities, which are

See **VIRUSES**, page 7

M-A community asks district 'what's next?' after recent gun incidents on campus

By Angela Swartz

After students reportedly brought guns to campus twice during November, Menlo-Atherton High School teachers and other community members are asking the school district to take steps to try to keep students and staff safe.

During a Dec. 7 Sequoia Union High School District governing board meeting, several community members, including teachers at the Atherton high school, asked the board

to begin collecting data on gun ownership and safety, along with loss and trauma related to gun violence in the community. The Atherton Police Department arrested students on Nov. 10 and Nov. 29 for allegedly bringing firearms to campus.

Menlo Park City Council member Cecilia Taylor told the board it's important to find out why students are coming to school with guns, "not just expel them and think that the situation is over." She encouraged

the district to dig into data and explore the mental health state of the community.

M-A social studies teacher Mallory Bryne said that many members of her community are extremely concerned about the incidents and that it's a cause of anxiety in the community. She said she wanted to see increased training for staff on gun de-escalation techniques.

Jeremy Arey, a paraprofessional at M-A, said although the incidents were handled well by school administrators, he

wants to see the district collecting gun-related data from the community.

"The school is one of the biggest in the county and needs more support from the district to be proactive," he said.

Sequoia Union High School District Trustee Sathvik Nori, a former M-A student and Stanford University student, expressed concern about the recent incidents on Twitter before he was sworn in as a board member last week.

"I am extremely concerned to

hear that another gun has been found on a student at M-A," he said. "This is the second one in the span of less than two weeks. Every student deserves to come to school feeling safe and guns have no place on a school campus."

The M-A Parent Teacher Association hosted a forum on the gun-related incidents on Tuesday, Dec. 13. ■

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The Almanac is published every Friday at
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Menlo Park, CA 94025**

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The Almanac (ISSN 1097-3095 and USPS 459370) is published every Friday by Embarcadero Media, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558. Periodicals Postage Paid at Menlo Park, CA and at additional mailing offices. Adjudicated a newspaper of general circulation for San Mateo County. The Almanac is delivered to homes in Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside. However, in order to continue delivering you the news you depend on, we encourage you to become a paid subscribing member. Go to AlmanacNews.com/subscribe to start supporting The Almanac today.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to the Almanac, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558.

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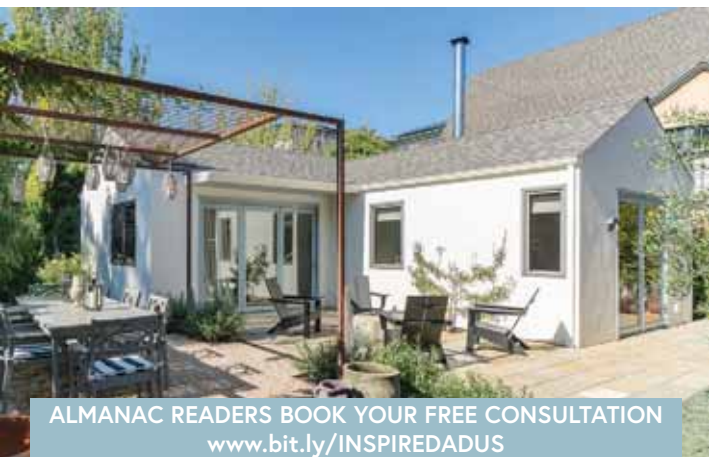
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COMMUNITY BRIEFS



Courtesy Joanne Kelbe

Firefighters helped deliver bikes for charity built during the Alpine Chain Gang Bike Build in Portola Valley on Dec. 4.

2022 Alpine Chain Gang Bike Build

Portola Valley residents Mario and Dona Wijtman hosted their annual charity bike build, known as the Alpine Chain Gang Bike Build, on Dec. 4, assembling 18 bikes along with other community members for the San Mateo County Police and Fire Department Toy and Book Drive.

Participants either ordered bikes and had them shipped to the Wijtmans home or they donated to the “bike purchase fund” for the bulk bike purchases.

Jim Gardener of Good Karma Bikes provided technical support and Bianchini’s Market provided deli sandwiches.

Firefighters from Woodside Fire District Stations 8 and 9 loaded bikes in a trailer and delivered them to the toy and book drive.

Alpine Little League spring registration

Registration is now open for the Spring 2023 season of Alpine Little League for families in Menlo Park, Woodside and Portola Valley.

The league offers baseball from tee ball (4-5 years old) to juniors (13-14 years old). They also offer softball for players age 5-12 years old of all skill levels and abilities.

Visit alpinelittleleague.com to register and for more information.

The Village Hub Holiday Party & Gift Faire

The Village Hub in Woodside will host a holiday party and gift faire from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Wednesday, Dec. 21, at 3154 Woodside Road in Woodside.

There will be live music and gifts from local artists, designers, craft-makers, bakers and the Hair Fairy Salon.

There will also be complimentary champagne, a bounce house for kids, photos with Santa and arts & crafts.

The fair is free, but purchase lunch and activity tickets in advance online at thevillagehub.org/events.

—Angela Swartz

Menlo Park seeks applications for council seat

The city of Menlo Park is still receiving applications for the District 5 seat on the City Council in preparation to replace Ray Mueller, who stepped down from the council to join the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors. The city will not be releasing the names of the applicants until the agenda is released, according to City Clerk Judi Heron.

The deadline for applications is Dec. 20 at 5 p.m. and the applicants will be announced by Dec. 20 by 6 p.m., according to the city. The City Council is expected to appoint a resident to District 5 seat at a special Dec. 21 meeting.

—Cameron Rebosio

Residents voice strong support for Sequoia district superintendent

As school board evaluates Darnise Williams' performance, some worried she might be fired

By Michelle Iracheta

After dozens of teachers, community members and board trustees from districts around the region spoke out against the possible firing of Superintendent Darnise Williams on Monday, Dec. 12, Sequoia Union High School District board members took no action on Williams' evaluation.

The district called a special meeting for Monday to discuss Williams' evaluation, the second one since August when she received positive feedback.

Community members at the meeting railed against the new school board's decision to reconsider Williams' employment, calling them everything from racist and unethical to immoral and illegal. Some worried whether new board members who campaigned on transparency would keep their promises after not having disclosed information related to recent meetings. It was unclear before the meeting whether the school board intended to fire Williams.

"Why are these your first few actions? This feels as though the new board has decided without taking input from the community to reverse the direction of the previous board," said Abigail Korman, a teacher at Menlo-Atherton High School.

Sequoia District Teachers Association President Edith Salvatore said she was

disappointed and believed the district had chosen "secrecy over inclusion over voice."

Former SUHSD board member Alan Sarver, who retired at the Wednesday, Dec. 7, meeting, called into question the "unprecedented multiple special meetings" and accused board President Carrie DuBois of orchestrating recent events, including the possibility of firing Williams. DuBois did not respond to a request for comment on the reason for the closed session meetings and mutterings about Williams' possible firing.

"However, it is deeply disturbing that you have chosen to do this to the detriment of Dr. Williams and the students, staff and reputation of the Sequoia Union High School District," Sarver said.

Sarver's colleague Chris Thomsen, who also retired from the board last week, told trustees that he was "deeply saddened for the district by your handling of the first meetings of this board and the distrust you are sowing in the community at this point." He said he could "only reasonably conclude, as so many others have concluded, that it was the aim of the president (DuBois) and the vice president (Rich Ginn) to remove the district superintendent."

He described the way the board has handled this as "reckless," "damaging to the district" and "possibly illegal." He

specifically called out the board for hiring new counsel, Eugene Whitlock, a former San Mateo Community College District employee known for being the whistleblower in the corruption case against former Chancellor Ron Galatolo, during closed session.

Thomsen said this was an action that should have been taken in public so that community members had a chance to comment on the hiring. Whitlock was also a diversity consultant for the Las Lomas Elementary School District after parents called for the district to recruit more diverse teachers to their staff.

Jenny Varghese Bloom, a Ravenswood City School District governing board member, said Williams was hired to continue the work of equity and inclusivity. "My question is, if she's removed, what's going to happen to that work?" Bloom asked.

Monday's special meeting was the second one since Friday, Dec. 9, when Amy Koo and Sathvik Nori were ushered in as SUHSD board members before a closed session meeting.

On Friday, Dec. 9, trustees including Koo and Nori met with an attorney for roughly four hours during a closed session at a special meeting. The district revealed the vote count for Friday's hiring of legal counsel (a 4-1 vote) but did not state who voted for or against.



Leah Worthington

Sequoia Union High School District Superintendent Darnise Williams.

In August, the board extended Williams' contract for another year after positive comments from all board members, except board president Carrie DuBois. At the Aug. 3 board meeting, DuBois prefaced her comments by telling Williams she had received a "very positive evaluation from the board," but ultimately said she was a no-vote on approving the addendum to her extended contract.

"My reason for the no vote is ... I was troubled by this addendum, because I believe it's confusing," DuBois said, adding that she believed the "salary needs to be easy to understand."

Williams joined the district in July 2021 from the Los Angeles Unified School District after signing a \$265,000 three-year contract with an annual salary. Williams, who is the district's first Black female superintendent, is the lowest-paid superintendent in the region, Sarver said during the Aug. 3 board meeting.

Williams could not be reached for comment before the Monday night meeting. Trustee Shawnee Stevens declined to comment.

The new board is made up primarily of people of color.

Upcoming reorganization

Thomsen noted that as the board elects officers on Wednesday, Dec. 14, it might consider breaking from its ordinary rotation, which would install Ginn as president. The meeting takes place after the Almanac's press deadline.

"I would suggest to you that this is not ordinary time for the district and that you may want to consider who best can restore trust in the district when you choose that president," he said.

Staff Writers Angela Swartz and Leah Worthington contributed to this report.

Email Redwood City Pulse editor Michelle Iracheta at miracheta@rwcpcpulse.com.

VIRUSES

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disproportionately impacted by COVID, such as Black, Latinx and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander residents.

"Racial and ethnic disparities have decreased over the course of the pandemic, but they persist," Rogers said.

"This month we have six scheduled clinics in partnership with schools and faith-based organizations in Redwood City, Menlo Park, and East Palo Alto, particularly in communities where pharmacies are not easily accessible. These are listed on our vaccine clinic calendar website and updated regularly.

"We encourage community partners to continue requesting targeted pop-up vaccine events through the request form found on our vaccine clinic calendar website," Rogers said.

The county plans to schedule

rotating clinics through the end of January.

County health authorities are also continuing their partnership with schools, particularly those with a higher percentage of children who qualify for free and reduced-price meals, to offer both COVID and flu vaccines at school sites through the end of March. These clinics will also serve residents from the surrounding community, Rogers said.

Besides vaccinations, transmission of the current strains of influenza and COVID can be prevented by limiting exposure to respiratory droplets. Large droplets from the nose and mouth (carrying influenza, RSV) can settle onto surfaces and objects and spread by close contact. Very small droplets (carrying COVID virus) are exhaled into the air farther than six feet, Rogers said.

Health officials recommend

the following to help prevent contracting or spreading the viruses: Wash hands, avoid touching one's face, cover coughs and clean surfaces. Airborne transmission can also be reduced by limiting the number of people indoors, improving ventilation by opening doors and windows, and wearing a mask (specifically a N95 respirator) to protect oneself.

People who develop symptoms of a respiratory virus are advised to take three steps to care for themselves and protect others:

- Stay home until symptoms are mild and improving. Wait 24 hours until a fever has resolved before venturing out. On average people are contagious with COVID for about 8 days after symptoms begin. People with flu are most contagious in the first 3-4 days of illness. People with RSV are usually contagious for 3-8 days.

- Test for COVID. Rapid antigen self-tests for COVID are

available over-the-counter at retail stores, pharmacies, and many schools. Anyone with worrisome symptoms or a high risk for severe disease should contact a health care provider who can assess for other illnesses.

- Wear a mask while contagious. Protect family, friends, classmates, and community by covering an infectious runny nose or cough with a mask.

Mpox, previously called monkeypox, has thus far been largely controlled in the county, Rogers said. The county used similar strategies to those used during early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic to control mpox outbreak, including case investigation, contact tracing, vaccinations, and community health education. As a result the number of mpox cases dropped from a peak of 40 cases in August to one case in November, Rogers said.

"We're grateful for all the

healthcare, business, governmental, and non-profit organizations who are preventing disease and promoting overall community health. By collaborating on these collective public health goals, we can enjoy the holidays with health and good tidings," she said. ■

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

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Nonprofit foundation gives Ravenswood \$30 million to build 'community hub' at middle school

By Angela Swartz

The SHP Foundation is giving the Ravenswood City School District \$30 million to develop a "community hub" at the field off Bay Road at Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School, the district announced on Dec. 8. This is the single largest donation in Ravenswood's history, according to Board President Mele K. Latu.

Funds from the Palo Alto-based nonprofit, which is the philanthropic arm of the Sand Hill Property Company, will help the district build a basketball gym, community meeting space (built to hold Ravenswood school board meetings), health clinic spaces and other uses

at the East Palo Alto school. District officials say it would be a welcome addition to the campus, which they had already been eyeing for improvements.

"Through the engagement we did in partnership with the Magical Bridge Foundation last year, it was clear to us that our students needed excellent spaces to go after school," said Superintendent Gina Sudaria in a district press release. The district has since identified a spot on the campus that could be best "re-oriented" to support students.

"We're so grateful that the SHP Foundation gave us the opportunity to make that dream a reality," she said.

The district and the SHP Foundation will work with the

community to finalize the proposal for the space over the next several months before presenting the final design.

Sand Hill Property Company, which was founded by Peter and Susanna Pau, is a major real estate investment firm with properties in East Palo Alto through its affiliate, Woodland Park Communities, according to the district. The SHP Foundation also works closely with the local faith community.

This newly proposed community hub is part of a broader site plan for the middle school, and would be in addition to \$50 million renovation plans using voter-approved bond funds. The project is set to be completed in December 2023.

The district partnered with the Magical Bridge Foundation for an estimated \$10 million in campus upgrades, including a new athletic field, six new tennis courts, a cluster of classrooms and a play park. So far, the Magical Bridge Foundation has raised an initial \$3 million through the Peery, Sobrato and Acton family foundations, Emerson Collective, Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, San Mateo County Supervisor Slocum and Ravenswood Education Foundation.

Donation details

SHP will build and maintain the community hub, which means the district will have no responsibilities for maintaining

the site, according to a district staff report.

The district would have sole access to the gym during the school day, while SHP would coordinate activities for the site during after hours. A contract with SHP notes that the Ravenswood community would be given preference for after-school activities.

SHP will occupy the space for 30 years, with the option for three 10-year renewals if the project meets criteria, according to the district.

The district came up with the idea of creating a community hub last year. ■

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

HASKO

continued from page 1

Two residents urged Hasko not to recuse herself during the public comment period of the meeting. Several other residents at the Nov. 30 Planning Commission meeting also implored Hasko to participate.

"I encourage Judith to participate," said resident Marcin Pawlowski, noting that she was the top vote-getter in November's council race. "The town overwhelmingly trusts her voice, but at the end of the day it's her decision."

Resident Sandra Patterson said Hasko was elected to the Town Council because of her talent on the Planning Commission and that residents need her to participate in housing discussions.

"Everyone believes in Judith's integrity," said Patterson. "Nathhorst is not the only neighborhood affected (by the housing element)."

Some residents again urged the town to slow down its housing element process, with former Town Council candidate and Emergency Preparedness Committee Chair Dale Pfau



Magali Gauthier

The exterior of 4394 Alpine Road in Portola Valley, which the town is looking to rezone to add additional housing.

calling the builder's remedy fears a "red herring." The state did institute the builder's remedy in Santa Monica after it failed to submit a compliant housing element.

With builder's remedy, cities and towns could be required to approve any project that has 20% of its units designated for affordable or low income households or 100% moderate income households even if the project exceeds the zoning and general plan density requirements, according to a Nov. 10 staff presentation to Portola Valley's Ad Hoc Housing Element Committee.

Feedback on Nathhorst sites

Town staff presented three possibilities for developing 4370 Alpine Road during the meeting after receiving a petition opposing three-story development of the site, along with other requests to decrease development. Staff met with neighborhood residents and developed

conceptual approaches based on public comments.

The first plan would allow for up to nine units, each averaging 1,200 square feet with ground-floor parking, along with 12,800 square feet of commercial space and public space. The second plan calls for reducing density to four units per acre, or 10 units total, limiting building heights to two-stories, and increasing setbacks to limit development at the rear of the property.

The third plan would establish setbacks of 30 feet on the Nathhorst Avenue side, and 25 feet on the other two sides of the property.

The commission opted for a modified version of the second option: four units per acre, with preference for limiting housing at the back of the property that borders the neighborhood. Town staff plan to work with the property owner to come up with a plan that works.

The owner of 4370 Alpine Road, Rich Thesing, said he found out about the town potentially designating nine

units of housing for his property through an article in The Almanac a couple of months ago.

Thesing said he thinks townhomes — three-bedroom, 2.5-baths for about \$2.5 million to \$3 million — would fit into the neighborhood well. He believes potential buyers would include longtime Portola Valley residents who own larger properties and are looking to downsize as they retire, as well as young families who grew up in the area and cannot afford to live in town at a price point in excess of \$6 million. Residents would be a quick walk to Robert's Market next door, which would be of interest to a lot more than nine people, he noted.

"You have to tell me what you want and I'll decide whether it makes sense for us to pursue it," he said. "I understand neighbors complain all the time, but it makes it sound like we're trying to build something in the middle of the neighborhood. This isn't the middle of the neighborhood. You come up on Alpine, you pass an office building that's adjacent to a commercial strip. You would transition to townhouses, then you would enter the neighborhood."

The 4394 Alpine Road site could be up to three stories, an average 1,280 square feet per unit, with 1.5 spaces per unit, plus nine guest spots. Parking would be tucked underneath the housing.

Fire maps

Some residents have asked the town to hold off on completing its housing element until

the Woodside Fire Protection District has finalized its fire hazard maps, which will outline fire risk in Portola Valley and update the fire code.

"We all wish the maps were already done," said Planning and Building Director Laura Russell.

Since fire maps of the town are outdated, Fire Marshal Don Bullard said on Dec. 1 that he worked with the district's mapping consultant, Flame Mapper, to assess the five housing inventory sites on Alpine Road, according to a staff report.

Flame Mapper shows that all of the parcels except the Stanford University site (known as the Stanford Wedge) would fall under moderate fire danger. The sites are not in the "very high" or "high" fire danger areas. Once the sites are built, then the moderate rating would be reduced to low. The Stanford site is considered high fire risk today, but would be reduced to moderate once built out, staff said.

Next steps

The Planning Commission had planned to make a formal recommendation to the council on the housing element on Dec. 13, but staff moved the next meeting to Jan. 4 to give people more time to review the plans.

The Town Council will review the housing element package for adoption over the course of two or three meetings in January before resubmitting the document to the state. ■

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

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include **Sherman Rogers Hall, III**, 84, a former Atherton resident, on Dec. 10; and **Robert Hugh Francis Lloyd**, 88, a Menlo Park resident, on Nov. 21.

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

Stanford hires Sacramento State's Troy Taylor as new football coach

The former Cal Bear led Sac State to FCS Quarterfinals for the first time in school history

By Palo Alto Weekly Staff

Stanford has hired Sacramento State coach Troy Taylor as its next head football coach, the university announced on Dec. 10.

Taylor, a former Cal Bears star quarterback, guided Sacramento State to a 30-8 mark in four seasons and a berth in the 2022 Football Championship Subdivision Quarterfinals for the first time in school history. The team's season came to a close on Friday with a 66-63 defeat in the FCS Quarterfinals.

"Taylor is a proven winner who has experienced success at many levels of football," Bernard Muir, Stanford director of athletics, said in the university's announcement. "Throughout

our visits together he demonstrated an understanding of what makes Stanford special and a deep desire to capitalize on our unique strengths. He possesses an incredible football mind and has a long history of caring deeply for the student-athletes he leads. I am excited for the next chapter of Cardinal football and eager for our student-athletes to experience Troy's passion, wisdom and leadership."

Taylor, 54, takes over for David Shaw, who stepped down on Nov. 28 after 12 seasons as the winningest football coach in Stanford history with an overall record of 96-54. Shaw won two Rose Bowls, three conference championships and was named Pac-12 coach of the year four times.

"I am thrilled to be the new head football coach at Stanford University," Taylor said. "The opportunity to lead the finest student-athletes in the country is truly a dream come true, and I would like to thank President Tessier-Lavigne, Provost Drell and Bernard Muir. I believe that Stanford Football is perfectly positioned to become champions on the football field while maintaining our world-class reputation for academic excellence."

Taylor was hired as head coach at Sacramento State in December 2018, inheriting a program that had compiled three two-win seasons in the prior four-year stretch. Taylor immediately turned the Hornets into nine-game winners in his first season, guiding

the program to its first three Big Sky championships (the program opted out of the 2021 spring season) and its first FCS Playoff appearances in school history, despite competing at the FCS level since 1994 and in the Big Sky Conference since 1996.

Under Taylor, the Hornets set the school record for victories in a season in 2022. For those efforts, he was named the conference Coach of the Year and was the recipient of the Eddie Robinson Award (FCS national coach of the year).

Taylor served as offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach at the University of Utah for two seasons (2017-18), helping the Utes to their first Pac-12 South Division title in program history in 2018.

Prior to joining the Football Bowl Subdivision, Taylor was the co-offensive coordinator and quarterbacks coach at Eastern Washington in 2016. That season, he directed the top passing offense in the FCS and set numerous national and school records.

Taylor takes over a Stanford program that has won 108 games since the start of the 2010 season — a total that ranks among the nation's top 20. Since 2010, Stanford has appeared in nine bowl games, including three Rose Bowl Games, an Orange Bowl and a Fiesta Bowl.

Taylor played as quarterback for Cal from 1986 to 1989 and left as the all-time leading passer. He was introduced at a press conference on Monday, Dec. 12, according to Stanford. ■

2023 Woodside Town Council takes shape

Chris Shaw selected mayor, Jenn Wall picked as mayor pro tem

By Angela Swartz

The Woodside Town Council ushered in Chris Shaw as Woodside's mayor for 2023, while it said goodbye to Sean Scott, whose council seat will not be on the ballot until 2024 due to redistricting.

The Town Council voted in Shaw, who was next in line for mayor, to the role during a Tuesday, Dec. 13, meeting. The council chose Jenn Wall for the mayor pro tem position at the same meeting.

"While we're shuffling here I would like to speak on behalf of all of the patience from my wife over the last 12 months," said outgoing Mayor Dick Brown. "Who's put up with an awful lot of sleepless nights on my part that I'm sure kept her awake. And a lot of talking about issues that she had no idea what I was talking about, but I talked about them because it had to do with the town."

The Town Council, which is currently a seven-member body,



Chris Shaw



Jenn Wall

is making the move to five members when it switches from the old "from-district" to a "by-district" elections system which began on Nov. 8.

The council now stands at six members after Paul Goeld was sworn into a two-year term on Dec. 13 to replace the vacancy in District 4 left by John Carvell, who resigned on July 1. Goeld previously served on the council from 1999 to 2007.

The council swore in Dick Brown (District 3) and Dombkowski (District 2), who ran for office this fall. Brown ran uncontested, while Dombkowski faced off against two other candidates.

Scott, who now lives in District

1 and joined the council in 2018, which will be on the ballot in 2024. He could choose to run then, but he wasn't eligible for any of the seats on the ballot this November, according to Town Manager Kevin Bryant.

Shaw, a lifelong equestrian who has founded several health care startups, has been a Woodside resident since 1994, according to his bio on town website. He was first elected to the council in 2015, and this will be his second time as mayor after serving the same role in 2018.

Wall, an attorney who moved to Woodside in 2012, joined the council during an uncontested election in 2020, according to her town bio. Before joining the council, she was a Planning Commissioner, and has also served as a member of the Circulation Committee, according to The Almanac's archives. ■

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

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Menlo Park picks Jen Wolosin to serve as Mayor

By Cameron Rebosio

Jen Wolosin, elected to the Menlo Park City Council in 2020, will take over the role of mayor in 2023 following a unanimous vote from by the council on Tuesday, Dec. 13. Councilmember Cecilia Taylor will serve as vice mayor.

Wolosin represents District 3, which covers Vintage Oaks, Linfield Oaks and Felton Gables. She got her start in politics as a bike and pedestrian safety

advocate, with a focus on students getting to school. Wolosin started the community group Parents for Safe Routes and served on the Transportation Master Plan Oversight and Outreach Committee and Menlo Park's Safe Routes Task Force.

Wolosin gave credit to her fellow council members who had



Jen Wolosin

recently served as mayors in prior terms, saying that navigating the COVID-19 pandemic has been a gargantuan task that others have had to take on.

"There also seems to be a collective, at times hesitant and quiet, emergence out of the darkest days and into the light," Wolosin said. "As we move towards 2023, I am cautiously optimistic that this year 2023 will be the year we've all been working so hard towards."

She acknowledged that the city is coming out of the isolation of

the pandemic, noting the refilling of City Council chambers and the reopening of the Arrillaga Family Gymnastics Center as steps toward reopening the city after the COVID-19 pandemic.

In Wolosin's tenure as mayor, the City Council will handle the finalization of the housing element update and continue efforts on major pipeline projects such as SRI Parkline and the U.S. Geological Survey's Menlo Park campus. Looking forward, Wolosin said that she would

continue in her efforts to serve the people of Menlo Park.

"I vow to continue to be accessible, seek broad community input, apply my values and work hard to make Menlo Park a welcoming, diverse, and sustainable community for all," Wolosin said. "I'll keep at it, and I encourage you to reach out any time to let me know what you think." ■

Email Staff Writer Cameron Rebosio at crebosio@almanacnews.com.

MEMORIAL

continued from page 1

Some 300 relatives, childhood friends, former teachers and fellow parents from around the Bay Area and as far away as Italy, attended the service, which was both an emotional reunion and a reflection of what they described as Ammen and Spiridon's gift for bringing people together.

"It's kind of incredible how many people turned up," Mike Ammen, Greg's younger brother, told this news organization after the memorial. "Each era of their life was

well-represented ... which was a testament to who they were."

For an hour and a half, friends and family took to the stage and recounted stories of shared childhood dreams, lifelong friendships and parenthood trials and joys. From the chairs on the gym floor to the bleachers on either side, people listened intently, many huddled close together, holding hands, squeezing shoulders and wiping away tears.

Paul Rosenbloom, whose friendship with Ammen dated back to youth soccer, said Ammen was a central figure in their group of friends,

which they called the "Redhead Posse" — or, he joked, the "Redhead Posse (and Greg)." He described Ammen as a "true collaborator" and "discerning connoisseur" who became a role model for living a healthy, balanced life.

"He brought us along, showed us new ways in food, music, sporting activities, you name it," he said. Rosenbloom remembered running the Bay to Breakers race several times under the careful guidance of Ammen.

"I was 31. I needed to kick the pesky cigarette habit ... I looked at Greg for inspiration with his

running practice," he said. "He was a super patient teacher, and he took me under his wing to get ready ... And on race day he was right there alongside me, every step of the way."

McCarthy, who met Spiridon when they were only 8 or 9 years old, painted a picture of a lifelong confidante, a fashion counselor, the consummate host and a sensitive and attentive friend. McCarthy described Spiridon's sage advice and unconditional generosity for her friends, which she said was often accompanied by her characteristic giggle and a twinkle of mischievousness in her eye.

From curating lists of eighth-grade crushes to sharing Thanksgivings and Christmases with their growing families, McCarthy said she and Spiridon became inextricable parts of each others' lives.

"An entry from our 1996 yearbook, written on these grounds, ends with, 'Promise me you will never die or move because what happens to you will happen to me,'" she said. "Grace, with all of the teenage flair for the dramatic, in a small way was right. What happens to her figuratively feels like it's happening to me."

"I feel less like myself without her," McCarthy added, emotion catching in her throat.

Arne Lim, one of the math teachers from Palo Alto High School, told this news organization that he was particularly fond of Spiridon's class because of the "spectacular friendships" that he watched form.

"I could see they would be friends for life. And they're here," he said, gesturing around the room. "That's how tightly knit this group of friends was — if someone's injured, everyone's injured."

Messages of love and admiration filled the pages of albums dedicated to Ammen and Spiridon, who were described as "indelible gifts" and "lights" within their communities.

Mourners wrote tributes expressing disbelief and devastation about the "immeasurable loss," a reality that many said they were still struggling to comprehend.

Several speakers voiced a desire to carry on the couple's legacy of positivity and selfless leadership. Other attendees said they came to show support for the family and the daughters, whom they described as the center of Ammen and Spiridon's life. Another friend, Sean Tabor, sang a heartfelt rendition of Garth Brooks' "If Tomorrow Never Comes."

"We are so grateful that the Spiridon and Ammen families would be so generous as to open their hearts during this time and allow us to all come together in remembrance, for a collective hug and a reunion of a community in honor of Grace and Greg," said Mike Stone, a longtime friend of the couple. "To the families, we thank you for this."

For him, Mike Ammen called the memorial "a celebration." He encouraged people to laugh, to cry, to smile, to greet old friends and make new ones.

"We were all friends of Greg and Grace. This is the party they would have attended, I think. They're looking down from above, and they're smiling on all of us," he said.

"We have the ability to rectify this universal tragedy," he continued. "Greg and Grace were love and light incarnate. I believe that each and every one of you carry their positivity and love forward into the world. Be kinder to everyone around you. For at the end of the day, there is only love."

The couple is survived by Ammen's parents, Chris and Adrienne Ammen; brother, Michael Ammen; Spiridon's mother, Nana Spiridon; sister, Liza Spiridon; and many other friends and family members. ■

Email Staff Writer Leah Worthington at lworthington@rwcpulse.com.

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ACTIVE LISTING

Nov: 41
Oct: 54
↓ -24%

PENDING LISTING

Nov: 24
Oct: 25
↓ -4%

SOLD LISTING

Nov: 22
Oct: 24
↓ -8%

AVERAGE SALES PRICE

Nov: \$2,967,886
Oct: \$3,440,875
↓ -14%

AVERAGE SALES PRICE/SQ FT

Nov: \$1,323
Oct: \$1,557
↓ -15%

AVERAGE SOLD DAYS ON MARKET

Nov: 29
Oct: 18
↑ 61%

MONTHS OF INVENTORY

Nov: 1.90
Oct: 2.30
↓ -17%

SALE/LIST PRICE

Nov: 97.30%
Oct: 100.60%
↓ -3%

30 YEAR MORTGAGE RATE

Nov: 6.78%
Oct: 7.20%
↓ -6%

*November 2022 compared to October 2022

*Source: RLS Listings for Single Family Properties | Townhomes | Condos

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St. Francis Center champions social safety net services for families in need

By Pam Kelly/
Special to The Almanac



For 35 years, St. Francis Center, in partnership with the community, has helped provide thousands of very low-income families in Redwood City with the essential services they need to live with dignity and become self-sufficient members of the community.

Located in the heart of the Fair Oaks neighborhood, St. Francis Center, led by Sister Christina Heltsley, has been instrumental in transforming this once crime-ridden, gang-infested area into a safe neighborhood where families raise their children with everything they need to survive and thrive.

This fall, St. Francis Center welcomed 5-year-old Volodymyr

Karpenko and his mother Yulia to Holy Family School. On March 4, the Karpenkos made the difficult decision to leave behind their friends, family, and beloved Ukraine after the first attack on the nuclear power plant in their hometown of Zaporizhzhia. The attack happened at 3:00 a.m., and by 6 a.m. — with only the necessary documents, medicines, and clothing in hand — they left their home with the hope of finding safety in the United States.

After traveling first to Poland and then to Mexico, where they

legally crossed the border into California through the Uniting for Ukraine program, they finally settled in Redwood City. Shortly after settling in, Yulia knew it was time to find the best school for Volodymyr, who was ready to start kindergarten. She was referred to the Holy Family School of St. Francis Center, and after researching all her options, she knew it was the best school for him.

When the war broke out in Ukraine, it was hard for Yulia and her husband, but even harder for Volodymyr, who had just turned five. He was scared and clung to his parents; afraid he would be taken away from them. For Yulia, it was crucial that she find a school that would help him feel safe, and get him through what she knew could be a difficult



Courtesy St. Francis Center

St. Francis Center, led by Christina Heltsley, provides social safety net services for needy families in addition to running a school for young children.

time of adjustment to a new culture, language, and making new friends.

Holy Family School fits the bill with its small class size, personalized teaching and attention. There is also a children's library and a youth center for after-school

activities. And one of the best parts? The school is tuition free, as long as Yulia commits herself to one-on-one tutoring one day per week to learn Spanish. Yulia, who speaks five languages and

See **ST. FRANCIS CENTER**, page 14

Menlo Park talks anti-displacement and limiting short-term rentals in housing element update

Revised housing plans are due to the state by Jan. 31

By Cameron Rebosio

Rezoning, Airbnb rentals and anti-displacement strategies were all hot topics at a Dec. 6 Menlo Park City Council meeting, as city officials weigh changes to its housing element ahead of a looming state deadline.

The meeting's study session was just one step toward completing the city's housing element update, a state-mandated process that occurs once every eight years. This time around, the state is strongly enforcing the regulations.

The housing element requires cities to build according to projected growth, with an eye toward balancing jobs and

housing. Menlo Park's housing target, also known as the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), requires the city to plan for close to 3,800 new housing units by 2031.

Though Menlo Park submitted its housing element to the state in July, with a prediction that the city would not only reach its RHNA requirements but exceed it by over 2,000 units, the plan was rejected by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) on Oct. 9.

Many council members at the meeting said that they were hesitant to speak too in depth as council member Drew Combs was not in attendance at the meeting.

Council member Jen Wolosin said that the rezoning process is critical to the success of the housing element.

"A lot of it's going to come down to zoning and our height and our density numbers," Wolosin said. "It just all seems to ride on some big assumptions."

Wolosin added that she was concerned that the city was stepping down its affordable housing assumptions for some sites as part of the housing element update. Wolosin said this shift made her nervous, and that the City Council should focus more of its attention on housing in downtown Menlo Park.

Several council members named anti-displacement strategies as a focus in developing

the city's housing plans, and created a subcommittee in order to decide which measures would be brought to city staff at a later date.

The informal subcommittee will be made up of council members Wolosin and Cecilia Taylor.

One other topic brought up was the vacancies created by Airbnb rentals. Mayor Betsy Nash brought up the use of ADUs as Airbnb rentals instead of housing, and considered placing restrictions on such rentals. City staff will be pursuing data of Airbnbs in Menlo Park.

Menlo Park's Housing Commission and Planning Commission will have a joint meeting on Jan. 12 to make

recommendations on the housing element, followed by a Jan. 30 City Council adoption hearing. The housing element has to be submitted to the state by Jan. 31.

Menlo Park is required to revise and resubmit a housing element to the state to demonstrate it can build what is proposed. Failure to meet the Jan. 31 deadline means the city would have a noncompliant element, which could result in "builder's remedy" and open the door for developers to build housing projects without having to comply with local zoning rules. ■

Email Staff Writer Cameron Rebosio at crebosio@almanacnews.com.

East Palo Alto breaks ground on University Ave. pedestrian overcrossing

By Sue Dremann

A long-awaited pedestrian-bicycle overcrossing that's expected to make for safe passage over U.S. Highway 101 at University Avenue in East Palo Alto broke ground on Dec. 9.

The University Avenue/101 Pedestrian Overcrossing Project, which will parallel but be separate from the existing bridge, will create safe access to the east and west sides of East Palo Alto and neighboring Palo Alto after decades of separation by the busy freeway.

The \$14.6 million project,

which is the second of two pedestrian overpasses to join the city — the first is the Clarke Avenue bridge near the Ravenswood 101 Shopping Center — has been more than a decade in the works. It will span 12 feet wide and connect the east side along East Bayshore Road to a route in the University Circle business development near the Four Seasons Hotel Silicon Valley.

The project has been granted \$4.8 million from Measure A funds through the San Mateo County Transportation Authority, \$771,000 in federal

earmark funds and \$1 million from the Stanford Recreation Mitigation Grant, which was approved by the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. The city was recently awarded \$5.7 million through Measure W and \$2.3 million through the State Local Partnership Program to fill the construction funding gap. The project is scheduled to begin construction this spring and be completed by winter 2024.

"This is an unbelievably busy route for drivers, cyclists, and pedestrians. I'm really pleased to see this project move forward," Santa Clara County Supervisor

Joe Simitian, who spearheaded the collaborative effort with city and county partners in San Mateo County, including the city of East Palo Alto, said in a Dec. 7 statement.

Bicyclists and pedestrians making their way across the existing University Avenue bridge are forced to walk or bike along a narrow paved walkway that has caused as many as eight crashes, two involving pedestrians and six involving bicyclists, Rep. Jackie Speier, who helped obtain the federal earmark, said during the groundbreaking event at University Circle. At one point,

pedestrians and cyclists must walk across the southbound freeway offramp in front of vehicle traffic to reach part of the walkway.

There's a harrowing spot that is only 15 inches wide to separate cars from bicyclists and pedestrians, said East Palo Alto City Council member Carlos Romero, a regular bicyclist.

"I'm very much looking forward to not taking my life into my own hands when I cross that bridge," he said.

The existing overpass, which

See **BRIDGE**, page 14

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Contributions to the Holiday Fund go directly to programs that benefit Peninsula residents. Last year, Almanac readers and foundations contributed \$309,000 from more than 170 donors for the 10 agencies that feed the hungry, house the homeless and provide numerous other services to those in need.

Contributions to the Holiday Fund will be matched, to the extent possible, by generous community organizations, foundations and individuals, including the Rotary Club of Menlo Park Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. No administrative costs will be deducted from the gifts, which are tax-deductible as permitted by law. All donations to the Holiday Fund will be shared equally among the 10 recipient agencies listed on this page.

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Provides after-school academic support, enrichment, and mentoring for 1,800 low-income K-12 youth at nine locations across Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, and the North Fair Oaks neighborhood of Redwood City.

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Provides emergency food, clothing, household essentials, and sometimes financial assistance to families in need, regardless of religious preference, including Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for more than 2,000 households.

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Provides shelter/housing and supportive services across 18 sites in Silicon Valley and the Peninsula. Serves thousands of homeless families and individuals annually on their path back to permanent housing and self-sufficiency.

Literacy Partners

Supports literacy programs and projects through fundraising and community awareness. Helps community members enhance their reading, writing and related skills and education to improve their economic, professional and personal wellbeing.

Ravenswood Family Health Center

Provides primary medical and preventive health care for all ages at its clinic in East Palo Alto. Of the more than 17,000 registered patients, most are low-income and uninsured and live in the ethnically diverse East Palo Alto, Belle Haven, and North Fair Oaks areas.

St. Anthony's Padua Dining Room

Serves hundreds of hot meals six days a week to people in need who walk through the doors. Funded by voluntary contributions and community grants, St. Anthony's is the largest dining room for the needy between San Francisco and San Jose. It also offers take-home bags of food, as well as emergency food and clothing assistance.

St. Francis Center

Helps low-income, working families become self-supporting members of the community by providing long-term solutions through educational programs for children and parents, as well as after-school programming at Siena Youth Centers. St. Francis Center also provides housing, food and clothing services to address short-term needs.

StarVista

Serves more than 32,000 people throughout San Mateo County, including children, young people and families, with counseling, prevention, early intervention, education, and residential programs. StarVista also provides crisis intervention and suicide prevention services including a 24-hour suicide crisis hotline, an alcohol and drug helpline, and a parent support hotline.

Upward Scholars

Upward Scholars empowers low-income adults by providing them with financial support, tutoring, and other assistance so they can continue their education, get higher-paying jobs, and serve as role models and advocates for their children.

DONATE ONLINE: almanacnews.com/holiday_fund



The Almanac Holiday Fund 2022

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Literacy Partners strives to support local literacy initiatives

By Mike Goodkind/
Special to The Almanac

Literacy Partners — Menlo Park (LPMP) completed the first full year of its expanded mission in July 2022, providing some \$85,000 to local partner organizations to address a range of issues helping toddlers to seniors.

“We see our job as creating opportunities to help our neighbors who might say, ‘I want to help’ but who may be looking for guidance about where their resources might best help literacy programs serving preschoolers to seniors,” said John Schniedwind, a retired American Century vice president and now LPMP’s treasurer.

Angie Holman, executive director of Ravenswood Classroom Partners, said in late November an LPMP grant enabled her group to design “a new high-dosage literacy model to provide deeper one-on-one support” — tutoring strategies that were designed to support local school efforts to prevent kids from falling behind during COVID classroom closures.

LPMP is one of this year’s beneficiaries of The Almanac’s Holiday Fund. Donations are divided equally among this year’s 10 nonprofit organizations and 100% of the funds raised go directly to the recipients. Donations to the Holiday Fund can be made at almanacnews.com/holiday_fund.

Heriberto Madrigal, a Belle Haven native and professional librarian in San Mateo County, said he was pleased to see before joining the LPMP board of directors in November how the group’s programs and relationships cross-fertilize each other. “These inspire working relationships that are likely to promote insights that can supercharge programs LPMP supports.”

For example, East Palo Alto Kids’ (EPAK) Micro Grants program, another LPMP recipient, provides small grants to individual teachers for incidentals, such as classroom supplies that may be taken for granted in wealthy schools. EPAK noted that one Belle Haven School teacher, Brianna Richards, used a micro grant to buy materials to create a classroom soccer scenario developed to help her 4th graders learn math. The micro grant program also supports another LPMP recipient, All Five, an early education program in Belle Haven. Karen Pace of All Five noted that the research-inspired preschool is



Courtesy All Five and Ravenswood Classroom Partners

Partner organizations supported by Literacy Partners serve literacy needs of community members of all ages, from preschoolers to seniors, along with volunteer opportunities.



high quality enough to attract and retain full-pay families. The other 75% of enrolled families have incomes at or near the poverty line, and their tuition is paid by state funding or a family’s sliding scale rate. All students receive the same high-quality programming regardless of income, Pace said.

LPMP, founded in 2020, started as Literacy Partners — Project Read in 1984 to support the Menlo Park Public Library, a relationship which continues. In September, LPMP gave \$31,000 to buy loanable laptops and library amenities, notably furniture for public areas needed by the public returning to the library after the pandemic.

Initially, the furniture was used by seniors bused to the library when their own day use meeting place in Belle Haven was closed for construction. Madrigal noted that the mix of books and socialization could be empowering for low-literacy patrons who might not see the library as a destination but might be interested in browsing books once there — “and that’s another important connection,” she said.

Other LPMP recipients this year include StreetCode Academy to support a portion of the nonprofit’s program

that provides laptops, internet and tech education to students in East Menlo Park and East Palo Alto through its LevelUp initiative. LPMP also supports JobTrain, a Menlo Park-based regional career training program, that teaches basic digital skills to adult community members. LPMP is interested in developing/supporting programs that will help, small business people, such as landscapers and housecleaners, efficiently manage basic paperwork, including, bids and billing.

Along with Schniedwind and Madrigal, current LPMP Board Members include President Mike Goodkind and longtime Bay Area and international educator Margaret Simmons. Jason Schendel of Sheppard Mullin is the organization’s pro bono attorney, and Madhavi Desai recently joined as volunteer webmaster.

LPMP continues to recruit qualified and enthusiastic board members who can participate in fundraising and community grant vetting that often includes hands-on involvement. Donations and inquiries are always welcome through LPMP’s website, <https://www.literacypartnersmenlopark.org>, or by mail at Literacy Partners — Menlo Park, 1259 El Camino Real, #176, Menlo Park, CA 94025. LPMP’s President, Mike Goodkind, may be reached at m.goodkind@literacypartnersmenlopark.org. ■

Mike Goodkind is the president of Literacy Partners, a nonprofit in Menlo Park.



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Crypto exchange founder Sam Bankman-Fried faces federal fraud charges

FTX leader was arrested in the Bahamas on Dec. 12

By Zoe Morgan

Samuel Bankman-Fried, a Bay Area native and son to two Stanford professors, has been arrested in the Bahamas on various federal fraud charges in connection to his cryptocurrency exchange FTX. Prosecutors in the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of New York unsealed an indictment on Tuesday, Dec. 13, that charges Bankman-Fried with eight counts, including wire fraud on customers and lenders, and conspiracy to commit commodities fraud, securities fraud, money laundering and to violate campaign finance laws.

The U.S. Securities and

Exchange Commission (SEC) also announced on Tuesday that it was civilly charging Bankman-Fried for allegedly defrauding FTX investors in violation of the Securities Act of 1933 and the Securities Exchange Act of 1934.

According to the SEC, FTX raised over \$1.8 billion, with Bankman-Fried representing the company as a “safe, responsible crypto asset trading platform.” The SEC alleges that Bankman-Fried concealed from investors that FTX customers’ money was being diverted to his privately held cryptocurrency hedge fund, Alameda Research LLC, which was being given special

treatment on FTX.

“We allege that Sam Bankman-Fried built a house of cards on a foundation of deception while telling investors that it was one of the safest buildings in crypto,” SEC Chair Gary Gensler said in a press release. “The alleged fraud committed by Mr. Bankman-Fried is a clarion call to crypto platforms that they need to come into compliance with our laws.”

Bankman-Fried was arrested without incident at roughly 6 p.m. local time at his apartment complex in the Bahamas on Monday, according to a press release from the Royal Bahamas Police Force.

The arrest came after the United States told officials in the Bahamas that criminal charges had been filed against Bankman-Fried and the U.S. was likely to request his extradition, according to a statement from the attorney general of the Bahamas.

Various officials have called in recent months for greater oversight of cryptocurrencies. U.S. Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen told CBS News last month that FTX’s collapse was the result of the “absence of appropriate supervision and regulation” and described cryptocurrencies as “extremely risky assets, and even dangerous in some ways.”

Bankman-Fried’s parents — Joseph Bankman and Barbara Fried — are both longtime teachers at Stanford Law School and have drawn scrutiny for their connections to their son’s business ventures.

Bankman was a paid FTX employee who publicly appeared on behalf of the company, according to a New York Times article about the family. Neither parent has been linked to potential criminal wrongdoing, according to the Times, but both have been impacted by the demise of their son’s business.

Fried resigned as the board chair of a political donor group and Bankman announced that he wouldn’t teach a scheduled class at Stanford this winter, according to the Times. Fried is an emerita professor who retired this year, the Times said. ■

Email Staff Writer Zoe Morgan at zmorgan@paweekly.com.

Robert Hugh Francis Lloyd

April 23, 1934 – November 21, 2022

Robert Hugh Francis Lloyd, Engineer, Entrepreneur and Loving Father, died at the age of eighty-eight on November 21, 2022, surrounded by his family. Born in Burnham, England, as the youngest of 2 sets of twins among the 5 children. The family left England for the US to avoid the bombing during WWII, while his father stayed an officer in the British Army. They settled in Sudbury, MA, living on his mother’s family farm. Robert left Sudbury in 1949 to attend Mount Hermon School in western Mass., then subsequently graduated from Tufts Univ. in electrical engineering in 1957. His first job was with RCA in New Jersey and then worked for IBM Poughkeepsie, NY, France, England, and Menlo Park, CA. Robert married Dorothy Gruss in 1960. They had two sons and a daughter. Andrew, Robin, and Stephen. The family moved to Sunnyvale, CA in 1965 with IBM and then Robert started the first semiconductor memory company, AMS, in “Silicon Valley” in 1970, going public in 1972. He later ran a division of National Semiconductor for two years before starting another electronics company in 1982. In 1990, Robert started a technology transfer and consulting company in China. He was divorced and married Angela Yu in 1988. Two sons, Emile and Larry came with this marriage. Robert lived in China from 1995 to 2000 then returned to California in 2000 to become CFO of a memory systems company. Retiring to Menlo Park, he regularly played tennis and golf, as well as discussing solutions to the world’s problems with a close group of friends. Robert is predeceased by his mother Nesta Piper Lloyd, his father William Francis Lloyd, sister Margaret, and brothers Richard, John, and David. Robert is survived by his two former wives Dorothy and Angela, 3 children Andrew, Robin, and Stephen, 8 grandchildren, and the many friends of his tennis, golf, and discussion group.

There will be a celebration of life in the Bay Area in early 2023.



PAID OBITUARY

ST. FRANCIS CENTER

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is already fluent in English, is excited to learn Spanish so that she can integrate fully into her newfound community.

Yuilia reports that Volodymyr is doing well, learning English, math, writing and making new friends knowing he is safe. He likes school so much that he’s disappointed when the weekend comes. She said, “St. Francis Center is a comfortable place where everyone tries to help each other. It is a community, and people who need help can achieve it here. They are knowledgeable, answer all our questions and even helped us

find a medical center for health care.”

St. Francis Center families like the Karpenkos have access to a wide range of essential services and resources, including the food pantry, clothing closet, shower and laundry facility, elementary school, youth center, affordable apartments, rental assistance, GED & ESL programs, two community gardens, a holiday toy program, and more.

St. Francis Center is one of this year’s beneficiaries of The Almanac’s Holiday Fund. Donations are divided equally among this year’s 10 nonprofit organizations and 100% of the funds raised go directly to the recipients. Donations to the

Holiday Fund can be made at almanacnews.com/holiday_fund.

“The need for family services has never been greater,” said Sister Christina Heltsley, executive director of St. Francis Center. “We need the community’s help now more than ever to help us expand our services and resources for underserved families. We firmly believe that together we can transform lives and build strong, flourishing communities.

“No one person can ‘save the world,’ but together we can change it for the better,” she said. ■

Pam Kelly is a senior account manager for PRxDigital writing on behalf of St. Francis Center.

BRIDGE

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Romero said is perhaps the oldest crossing over Highway 101 in the county, will eventually be replaced. The upgrade could take 15 or 20 more years and would likely cost upward of \$83 million — the cost the California Department of Transportation (Caltrans) paid to replace the overpass at Willow Road in Menlo Park, he said.

Instead, city, county, state and federal officials came up with a replacement that would be separate from the existing bridge so that it could eventually be torn down without impacting pedestrian and bike access.

The new bridge would also open access to mothers with baby strollers and people with assisted devices such as wheelchairs as well as foot and bike traffic.

“It’s putting the final stitch in

putting our community together (again),” Romero said.

Mayor Ruben Abrica said when the city first formed, there was no safe way for residents on the east and west sides to interact. About 20% to 30% of the city’s population lives on the west side adjacent to the Palo Alto border. The city’s amenities and services, including shopping centers, City Hall, libraries, medical facilities, parks and schools, are on the east side.

The overcrossings at Clarke and University are “a symbol and reality of the great progress we have made over the last 40 years as a city,” Abrica said.

Speier, who represents East Palo Alto in Congress and who has worked to help the city since her early days as a San Mateo County supervisor, said the government “has always had a terrible way of cutting up communities” through transportation projects.

“In decades past, transportation agencies didn’t care if they cut up the community.” But with new and safe bridge access, “we are knitting the community together again,” she said.

The new overcrossing will serve generations of East Palo Altans, Vice Mayor Lisa Gauthier said, such as her 2-year-old grandson, Camden, who was holding her hand. Other city infrastructure improvements, such upgrades on Bay Road, are improving transportation around the city. The major thoroughfare was once so rutted that a person practically needed a Jeep to access parts of the road to reach Cooley Landing’s open space, Gauthier said.

The new bridge “will put East Palo Alto on the map in a new way,” she said. ■

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

Arts briefs: Orchestra's holiday concert brings big news, Stanford Theatre cancels screening of holiday favorite

By Heather Zimmerman

The Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra (PACO) is staging a "Holiday Extravaganza" that features music along with big news for the youth orchestra.

The Dec. 18 concert brings together all five of PACO's ensembles and invites alumni back to the stage to perform, but it also comes with a special reveal: the identity of the orchestra's new music director.

PACO has been conducting a nationwide search for the past year as Music Director Ben Simon, who has led the orchestra for 20 years, plans to step down after the close of the 2022-23 season. Simon is only the second director for the orchestra, despite its nearly 60-year history, according to a press release about the event. He will be retiring from his work with PACO, as well as his role as conductor of the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra. Founded in 1966, PACO is a



Courtesy Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra

Music Director Ben Simon conducts the Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra's senior ensemble.

strings-only orchestra made up of musicians who are high school age and younger. The orchestra boasts alumni who include Bay Area musician Robin Sharp and members of the St. Michael Trio. The "Holiday Extravaganza"

program will see performances by PACO's five ensembles. The program culminates with the groups playing together, along with alumni, in a performance of J.S. Bach's Brandenburg Concerto No. 3.

PACO's *Holiday Extravaganza* takes place Dec. 18, 4 p.m. at Spangenberg Theatre, Gunn High School, 780 Arastradero Road, Palo Alto. Tickets are \$30. For more information, visit pacomusic.org/current-season.

The Stanford Theatre announced on social media on Dec. 9 that for the third consecutive year, it won't be holding its annual Christmas Eve screening of "It's a Wonderful Life."

Director Frank Capra's 1946 holiday favorite typically packs the house at the classic movie palace each Dec. 24, but the need for further improvements at the downtown Palo Alto theater will keep local audiences from their annual visit with George Bailey and the denizens of Bedford Falls for one more year.

"We still have no heat, and hope to have a new heating system in place in 2023 (as well as other structural improvements

to the theatre)," the post said.

The Stanford was among the first Peninsula businesses to temporarily shutter due to the pandemic in March 2020 and, during its closure of more than two years, the venue underwent renovations including seismic upgrades.

The theater reopened this summer with a series of screenings that featured a wide variety of classic films. After that series ended in mid-September, the Stanford shifted to presenting occasional weekend screenings, as not all renovations have been completed, according to a notice on the Stanford Theatre website.

The theater will be closed through early 2023, the notice said.

For more information, visit stanfordtheatre.org. ■

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

RAVENSWOOD

continued from page 5

a portion of the site to meet its state mandated housing goals, Eger said. Alternatively, the district could take advantage of a new law, AB 2295, that allows school districts to build housing on properties like this that are not already zoned for residential use.

The district could also draw from some of its roughly \$16 million in reserves and keep the space at the middle school site as a field and park. The district has historically planned on spending this money on programs.

Trustees Ana Maria Pulido and Tamara Sobomehin both said they were not proponents of placing housing at the middle school. Traffic and the proximity to classrooms were both concerns.

"It feels like a lot of action for a school campus," Sobomehin said. She asked that staff look into other options for the district office funding gap.

There is significant change happening at the middle school aside from the latest housing proposal, with a \$50 million planned makeover using bond money. It also recently received a \$30 million donation from the SHP Foundation to build a community hub on the campus, with a new gym and other community spaces.

The district made an agreement with Madison Capital to

lease out its district office site to bring in about \$1.5 million annually.

The new district office will be a smaller, single-story building that would comfortably fit about 30 employees.

"It is designed to be as small (and affordable) as possible, while still meeting all of our needs (e.g. maintenance and fleet year)," according to the staff report. "We are hoping to

create a space that fosters a sense of togetherness (as opposed to the physical silos we have now). Moving to a school site will literally bring us closer to students — and hopefully metaphorically as well."

Flood School site

Ravenswood is already in the process of trying to build workforce housing at another

school site across city lines in Menlo Park. It faced substantial resistance to develop the former Flood Magnet School site when a community group, Menlo Balance, sponsored a measure for the November ballot that would prohibit rezoning of single-family residential properties (where the school site resides) without a public vote.

The initiative, Measure V,

failed to pass last month. The district is now working to finalize an agreement with Alliance Development Services at the former elementary school campus. Eger hopes the Menlo Park City Council allows them to build 90 units on the vacant 2.6-acre lot. ■

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

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Public Notices

995 Fictitious Name Statement

TACOS EL GRULLENSE GRILL & BAR
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-292712
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
Tacos El Grullense Grill & Bar, located at 2525 El Camino Real, Redwood City, CA 94061, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
TEG-CKD INC.
10 Danford Court
Redwood City, CA 94061
This business is conducted by: A Corporation.
State of Incorporation: CA
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 10/19/2017.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on November 14, 2022.
(ALM Nov. 25; Dec. 2, 9, 16, 2022)

BAY GENERAL CONTRACTOR LLC
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-292700
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
Bay General Contractor LLC, located at 308 Sheridan Drive, Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
BAY GENERAL CONTRACTOR LLC
308 Sheridan Drive

Menlo Park, CA 94025
This business is conducted by: A Limited Liability Company, State of Organization: CA.
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 November 10, 2022.
(ALM Dec. 2, 9, 16, 23, 2022)

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ABC LIMOUSINES
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Registered owner(s):
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15 S Bayshore Blvd
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This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on October 28, 2022.
(ALM Nov. 4, 11, 18, 25, 2022)

For legal advertising call Alicia Santillan at 650-223-6578.

Taking aim at local military arsenals

How AB 481 is requiring law enforcement to disclose all of its military-grade equipment

By Leah Worthington and Sue Dremann

With the passage of a new state bill, California's police departments and sheriff's offices are facing unprecedented oversight of their so-called "military equipment" arsenals.

Assembly Bill 481, which Governor Gavin Newsom signed into law in September 2021, gives governing bodies regulatory power over all such equipment owned by local law enforcement agencies.

Introduced in February 2021 by State Assembly member David Chiu, D-San Francisco, the bill seeks to increase transparency and control by requiring law enforcement to document the existence and use of all military equipment in their possession. In addition to submitting an annual report, agencies are required to get approval before acquiring any new equipment, including everything from armored vehicles and high-caliber firearms to chemical weapons and launchers.

"The public often have little to no information about such acquisitions, which can cost local governments tens of millions of dollars," Chiu wrote in an Assembly Floor analysis report. "This bill is about rebuilding community trust."

With the first annual reports due starting in May 2023, law enforcement agencies throughout the state, including in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, are tasked with inventorying their arsenals, which include hundreds of thousands of ammunition rounds and unmanned devices like drones and robots. So far Atherton, East Palo Alto, Menlo

Park, Mountain View, Palo Alto, Redwood City and Santa Clara and San Mateo counties have approved new policy ordinances.

Experts and policymakers alike hope that greater transparency and accountability will help repair fractured police-civilian relations.

"Our streets in California are not war zones, and our citizens are not enemy combatants," Chiu wrote. "Law enforcement in California are our partners in public safety."

Under AB 481, all law enforcement agencies in California seeking to continue to use military equipment acquired before Jan. 1 had to begin a multi-step approval process with their local governing bodies.

Each department was required to draft and seek approval for a Military Equipment Use Policy describing each piece of equipment in its possession and the authorized uses. The deadline to begin the process was May 1; approval was required within 180 days of submitting the policy or use of the equipment would be suspended.

In the coming years, agencies are required to track the type and amount of all military-grade equipment in their possession on an ongoing basis. This information, as well as details about how the equipment has been used and any associated use of force reports, will be disclosed to the local governing bodies in an annual report.

All reports are to be made publicly available online, and residents will be invited to attend an annual community

engagement meeting to discuss the report's findings. Agencies are also required to seek legislative approval before acquiring any new military equipment or for using existing equipment in a way not previously approved.

Know your arsenal

Law enforcement agencies along the Peninsula currently have military equipment arsenals valued at thousands, if not millions, of dollars.

Both the San Mateo and Santa Clara county sheriff's offices have spent upwards of \$2 million, not including annual maintenance and operations costs, on everything from semi-automatic rifles to tear gas to infrared drones. Palo Alto has spent the most among its surrounding cities, with equipment adding up to \$418,820.

The Redwood City Police Department's equipment, which includes items from eight of the 15 categories named on the state's military equipment list, is valued at more than \$258,755, not including annual costs. Among the city's items are "less-lethal" equipment, including launchers and shotguns for kinetic, foam and beanbag rounds; diversionary devices such as flash-bangs, pepper balls and tear gas; drones and unmanned robots; a breaching shotgun; and a mobile command vehicle. Several other types of equipment — including a Lenco BearCat vehicle, an armored rescue vehicle and several drones — are owned and operated by other local emergency agencies within the city limits.

All Redwood City patrol officers are equipped with a semi-automatic patrol rifle and baton launcher, a device that looks like a rifle and shoots sponge, bean bag, wooden and plastic projectiles that are meant to impact the body rather than penetrate it.

Redwood City and Mountain View police departments have just over 100 semi-automatic rifles each, and Redwood City has more than two dozen sniper rifles and machine guns for use by SWAT officers only.

Menlo Park has a few sniper rifles and nonlethal flash-bang grenades, and it depends on the San Mateo County Sheriff's SWAT for militarized equipment such as surveillance and building-breaching equipment,



Courtesy Wikimedia Commons

A drone hovers in the air.

according to its equipment-use policy. In crisis situations requiring the use of equipment such as bomb-disposal robots or advanced sniper weaponry, the county sheriff's department SWAT team can be asked to come out to assist the city police department through "interoperability" agreements between the departments.

Palo Alto's arsenal includes more than 100 flash-bang launchers, a SWAT rifle and non-lethal projectile launchers. The city has invested heavily in an advanced mobile-command-unit program and long-range acoustic device equipment, which delivers extremely high decibel levels for crowd control or to deliver instructions during natural disasters or other emergencies. It relies on Mountain View and the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office for more advanced military equipment through joint interoperability programs.

Mountain View is the most heavily invested of the northern Santa Clara County city departments in terms of the amount of equipment, with a large quantity of flash-bang launchers, chemical munitions, less-lethal projectiles, an aerial surveillance system (drone), robot and mobile-command center. The department is evaluating a large caliber sniper program.

East Palo Alto interim police Chief Jeff Liu said the only piece of military equipment

his department possesses and deploys is a less lethal 40mm launcher, which is used as an alternative to deadly force.

"My officers handle mental health crisis calls with empathy and compassion. Our officers already have the adequate equipment available to them to perform their duties, and I do not feel we need any additional 'military equipment,'" he said.

Liu also noted that East Palo Alto is a small community with a relatively small police department.

"We do not have the same specialized teams that larger departments have, and thus do not need to procure any of the associated equipment that fit this definition," he said.

What is military equipment anyway?

There is no standard definition of the term "military equipment," a fact that, even as law enforcement agencies seek to implement AB 481, has caused confusion and some consternation.

The United States Department of Defense's Office of Corrosion Policy and Oversight defines military equipment as "all weapon systems, weapon platforms, vehicles, and munitions of the Department of Defense, and the components of such items." However, this definition is not referenced directly in the state bill, which appears to sidestep



Courtesy Matti Blume/Wikimedia Commons

A Lenco BearCat G3 is a standard vehicle used by U.S. SWAT teams.



Courtesy Ventura County Sheriff's Office

A deputy for the Ventura County Sheriff's Office holds up a beanbag shotgun.

a definition in favor of listing items that the bill's collaborators — California legislators as well as bill sponsors and statewide law enforcement groups — deem to be "military equipment."

An initial version of the bill described military equipment as "equipment that is militaristic in nature," but the line was subsequently removed from the text. The final version of the law does not define military equipment but instead lists items in 15 categories.

Military equipment, as outlined in the state law, includes all chemical agents, specialized firearms and munitions, projectile launchers, flashbang devices, auxiliary vehicles and remotely operated devices.

Jen Kwart, communications director for Chiu, said that the state bill should not be seen as the "end-all be-all definition of military equipment across all of California."

"These laws are very specific as to what the definitions mean and apply to. This law didn't say this is what the state of California believes is military equipment across the board," she said. "This is the definition for the purposes of complying with this specific code section."

But some law enforcement personnel take issue with the term "military equipment" — and the implied dangers the weapons and other supplies pose to the general public.

"We haven't purchased any from the military or received any through military programs," Lt. Eamonn Allen of the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office said. "These are all civilian types of equipment."

The county's Bearcat, for example, is a significantly less "heavy-duty" armored personnel carrier than the type used by the military, he said, calling it the "civilian version of these vehicles." And yet, the Bearcat qualifies under the state bill to be categorized as military equipment.

Palo Alto Police Acting Capt. James Reifschneider agreed "military equipment" may not accurately describe what a law enforcement agency has in its arsenal.

"The phrase 'military-grade equipment' may be unintentionally misleading to readers — at least as applied to PAPD," he said in an email. "While we possess certain pieces of equipment that are now statutorily-defined as 'military equipment,' these items are all designed specifically for a law enforcement (not military) application."

"While AB 481 does also cover true military-grade equipment (e.g. 'surplus' equipment originally supplied to the U.S. Armed Forces but then given to a police agency), PAPD does *not* use this



Veronica Weber

A detail of an arm extension of the RoboteX Avatar II shows the robot's camera and claw attachments.

type of equipment and is not in possession of any of it like some other agencies in the Bay Area," Reifschneider said.

However, Kwart pushed back on terminology and characterizations not included in the official state text.

"Military-grade equipment' is not a term that is used in the bill," she said. "So for purposes of analyzing local jurisdictions' obligations under the law, they should use the definition of 'military equipment' that is spelled out in the law."

Stanford Law Professor David Sklansky concurred that the military equipment category "can be hard to define."

He said that equipment that "seems inarguably military," like certain kinds of arms, can still be appropriate for police department use. On the other hand, he argued that some less obviously "military" equipment may also be in the hands of public safety officers. And that could be a cause for concern.

"Drones are a perfect example of this," Sklansky said. "Even drones that don't seem military raise concerns about privacy. And communities may have concerns about the police using them."

Free surplus from the U.S. military

So what are the roots of the phrase "military equipment"? While not the complete source of local law enforcement's military arsenals, local agencies have, for years, been the recipients of free, surplus military equipment from the Department of Defense (DOD). Under the federal 1033 Program, which came about under then-President George H. W. Bush in the early 1990s, the DOD is legally required to make excess equipment available to local police forces. Since then, some 8,200 law enforcement agencies have participated in the program which, as of 2020, has facilitated the transfer of over \$7.5



Courtesy Palo Alto police Department/Palo Alto OES

Palo Alto's Mobile Emergency Operations Command unit allows the police and Office of Emergency Services to communicate and strategize during critical incidents.

billion in equipment, according to the administering Defense Logistics Agency (DLA).

"Weapons, military-grade vehicles, devices that can be used for a forced entry into residences, military-style clothing, bayonets," said Sklansky, naming a few examples. "Police departments get all kinds of equipment that the military winds up not needing and that's provided to departments free or at reduced rates."

Some of this equipment has made its way into the hands of law enforcement throughout the Peninsula.

In 2015, Mountain View acquired 20 M-16 rifles worth nearly \$15,000 for free from the military under its 1033 surplus equipment program, while San Jose has several dozen items,

including cameras, armored vehicles and night vision goggles, valued at more than \$900,000.

The Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office was the recipient of a single camouflage set in 2014.

In San Mateo County, Defense Logistics Agency records show that the cities of Belmont, San Mateo and East Palo Alto have received nearly \$215,000 worth of surplus equipment from the DOD, including rifles, thermal imaging cameras and — in Belmont and San Mateo — military robots.

Robots have generated controversy recently, with the San Francisco Board of Supervisors voting on Tuesday to ban using the robots in its arsenal to deliver and detonate explosives against a suspect. Not all robots have this

capacity; many are used instead to surveil, deliver messages or to sense and manipulate objects.

The Redwood City Police Department sparked some outrage among community members in 2014 after acquiring a mine-resistant vehicle worth roughly \$750,000 from the U.S. government. The vehicle ultimately was returned to the federal government in 2020, and the department has currently no other equipment through the 1033 program.

"Having that particular vehicle was always somewhat controversial," said Capt. Ashley Osborne. "It was too large and heavy to be practical and it presented an image inconsistent with our desire to be a community oriented police department."

Not all equipment comes from federal surplus, however. The Mountain View Police Department acquired its Barrett .50-caliber sniper rifle during a 2006 criminal investigation during which officers confiscated the weapon. The department now owns it.

Law enforcement agencies have also historically used grants and general funds to finance the purchase of various types of equipment. The Palo Alto Police Department purchased its Mobile Emergency Operations Command Center in 2010 with \$300,000 in grant funding -- \$150,000 from the Homeland Security Grant Program and \$150,000 from Homeland Security's Bay Area Urban Areas

See **WEAPONS**, page 18

How much have local law enforcement agencies spent on military equipment?

Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office*

\$2,873,027

San Mateo County Sheriff's Office

\$2,102,523

Palo Alto**

\$718,820

Mountain View**

\$661,395

Redwood City

\$258,755

Stanford***

\$51,340

East Palo Alto****

\$46,470

Atherton

\$8,348

embarcadero media

Graphic by Jamey Padojino

Source: City police departments and county sheriff's offices. *Includes a mobile command post and another mobile command post for Santa Clara County costing \$450,000. **Palo Alto and Mountain View's totals each include a command vehicle. ***Stanford Department of Public Safety is supplied by the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office. ****East Palo Alto total excludes munitions.

What types of weapons do local law enforcement have on hand?		East Palo Alto	Palo Alto	Menlo Park	Stanford
	FIREARMS				
	Semi-automatic rifles/ammunition	37	—	47	32
	Sniper rifles/specialized firearms	—	1	3	—
	DIVERSIONARY EQUIPMENT				
	Flash devices	—	108	2	—
	LESS LETHAL EQUIPMENT				
	Launchers	2	30	2	8
	Projectiles	—	—	—	140
	UNMANNED EQUIPMENT				
	Aerial systems	—	—	—	—
	Robots	—	—	—	—
	Long range acoustic devices	—	1	—	—

Sources: East Palo Alto, Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Stanford police departments

From top: A semi-automatic rifle, courtesy Getty Images; a smoke grenade, courtesy Getty Images; A closeup of a beanbag round, courtesy Techjess/Wikimedia Commons; A long-range acoustic device, courtesy NSSchueth/Wikimedia Commons.

WEAPONS
continued from page 17

Security Initiative plus \$375,000 in city funding. The MEOC is not a “military vehicle,” the department said, but it could support coordination with the National Guard, FEMA and other cooperating agencies after major disasters.

This distinction between military- and civilian-grade equipment has caused some confusion among the communities that law enforcement agencies serve. During the April 19 meeting of the San Mateo County Board, Supervisor Warren Slocum asked the sheriff for clarification.

“This item is listed under the topic of ‘military equipment,’ but I thought I heard the sheriff say that the sheriff’s office doesn’t currently have any military equipment and doesn’t have any plans to purchase military equipment,” he said. “So, why is this matter referred to as ‘military equipment?’”

“In our interpretation, military equipment or military grade equipment would be ... what is used by the military as well or from military contracts,” Allen said. “We don’t have any equipment like that.”

Nicholas Perna, a Redwood City police sergeant, said that using the term “military equipment” was “painting it with a very broad brush.”

“I was in the army for 13 years,” he said. “Military-style helmets and vests worn by military and law enforcement — they’re just there for protection, to stop rounds. It’s protective gear, no different than wearing goggles or protective glasses.”

Resident Elsa Shafer also voiced her concerns during public comment.

“I think there is an unnecessary delineation between whether it’s being bought from the military or whether it’s military-grade,” she said. “I don’t understand what the

WEAPON TYPES & USES

FIREARMS
Semi-automatic rifles
Examples: AR-15 — standard issue to patrol officers, SWAT rifles, M16s
Uses: Hostage situations, barricading violent subject, dangerous animals
Sniper rifles
Examples: Thompson machine gun, bolt-action rifles, large-caliber rifles
Uses: Only used by a SWAT officer trained and certified as a sniper; critical incident to immediately stop a threat to life
DIVERSIONARY EQUIPMENT
Flash devices, chemical munitions
Examples: Noise flash diversionary device, flashbang, tear gas, pepper balls, smoke grenades, barricade penetrator liquid chemical agent, chemical agent canisters
Uses: Temporarily immobilize dangerous suspects, riot control
LESS-LETHAL EQUIPMENT
Launchers
Examples: Beanbag shotguns
Uses: Less-lethal use of force against an aggressor
Projectiles
Examples: 40 mm kinetic projectiles, sponges and foam rounds, bean bags
Uses: Riot/crowd control, potentially vicious animals
UNMANNED EQUIPMENT
Aerial systems
Examples: Infrared drones
Uses: Search and rescue; critical incidents (barricaded, hostage and active shooter); bomb investigation; traffic accident reconstruction; crime scene reconstruction; and “hot pursuits” of suspects

reason is to need it in our county ... I personally would like to know in what situations it would have improved an interaction.”

A move toward transparency

Allen of the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office said that his agency is generally supportive of the new legislation as a means of

increasing transparency. “We’re responsible to the community, and the taxes that they pay fund our salaries; they fund the equipment we have,” he said. “So adding an extra layer of transparency and visibility, and accountability, we’re happy to comply with.” Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian said that as far back as 2020 the supervisors, and he in

Robots
Examples: Remote-controlled devices with cameras and two-way radio capabilities
Uses: Remove vehicle-borne improvised explosive devices, homemade explosives; enter, observe or mitigate dangerous situations for dangerous chemicals; observe, locate suspects/terrorists donning explosive materials
Long-range acoustic devices
Examples: Acoustic hailing devices
Uses: Crowd control through high decibel sound
Mobile-Command Centers
Uses: Communications hub and command for disasters, wildfires, special events
BREACHING EQUIPMENT
Explosives
Examples: Blasting caps, explosive breaching initiators
Uses: SWAT team. Creates an opening in a wall or window to quickly enter a building for an emergency rescue of hostages. Reserved for rescue operations only
Weapons
Examples: Mossberg breaching shotgun
Uses: Breaching doors, glass and other entrances; to launch chemical munitions when needed
VEHICLES
Wheeled
Examples: Lenco Bearcat
Uses: Ballistic protection during tactical events like rescues, evacuations, deployments of officers or chemical agents, and large events.
Armored
Examples: Lenco Bearcat, outfitted Chevrolet Suburban
Uses: Response to critical incidents

particular, wanted to know what military equipment the sheriff’s office possesses, what policies are in place for its use, and under what circumstances the equipment could be used. In 2021, after learning the legislature had a good chance of passing AB 481, he waited to further pursue the issue because the law would give the board real statutory authority. He’s pleased with the scope of

the new state law. If an agency doesn’t comply, the county or a local governmental body could decide not to fund the military weapons. Plus, AB 481 has a provision requiring that a law enforcement agency must stop using its military equipment if the local governmental body hasn’t approved the policy, list and annual report in subsequent years.

Osborne, of the Redwood City Police Department, doubted that the new ordinance would change how law enforcement trains with or uses its military-grade equipment. He said one of the biggest changes would be the additional burden of reporting.

“We have to produce a report that’s pretty comprehensive — money spent, how equipment is used, any feedback we get,” he said. “Certainly it’s going to take up a good bit of administrative time, probably more this first year as we figure it out.”

Still, he agreed with Allen about the added public benefit.

“The reporting requirements will probably require us to take a better look at the overall cost of things,” he said. “It will be public information, so that increases transparency with feedback from city council and community.”

He also hoped that the annual report and public meetings would help educate the community and dispel some “misconceptions about what (equipment) we have and how we use it.” ■

This article is the first in a two-part series about AB 481 and local law enforcement agencies’ military arsenals. Part 2, detailing the surrounding controversy and how departments are using the equipment, will be published in January.

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‘Wonderful, wonderful’

‘The Lady with the Crown’ captures decades of a unique and unbreakable mother-daughter bond

By Heather Zimmerman

Palo Alto author Kathleen Canrinus’ book “The Lady with the Crown: A Story of Resilience” is the memoir of two people: Canrinus and her mother, Dorothy.

The book explores their lives together over decades as they navigated the seismic changes brought by a car accident that left Dorothy with a traumatic brain injury and the author — a teenager at the time of the accident — trying to adapt, along with her father and brother, to a starkly different family order.

The event flipped the expected dynamic between mother and daughter, with Canrinus helping her father to care for her mother, whose short- and long-term memory and ability to walk and communicate were impacted by the injury. She was in a coma for three months following the accident, and when she woke, was unable to walk and had lost most of the mobility on one side of her body. Her speech was garbled, which often meant she had difficulty communicating with people aside from friends and family who knew her speech patterns.

“The Lady with the Crown,” published earlier this year, weaves together scenes from Canrinus’ youth before her mother’s injury through the 54 years that followed it, all the way to her mother’s death at age 99.

Her mother became a focus of Canrinus’ writing because she wanted to honor her and share her story.

“I thought she lived her life so well. ‘Wonderful, wonderful’ — she used to say that about almost everything: dinner, lunch, a ride, a visit — she found something to appreciate, and she told me all the time that she was lucky, which I didn’t understand for a very long time,” she said.

Canrinus grew up in Los Gatos, where roughly the first half of the memoir takes place, but much of the remaining story unfolds on the Peninsula. Except for a few years away in southern California, Canrinus has been a Palo Alto resident since the 1960s. She and her husband, Don, raised their two daughters in Palo Alto. Following in the footsteps of her

parents, who were both educators, Canrinus worked as a teacher at several Palo Alto elementary schools.

It was retirement that gave Canrinus a chance to bring her and her mother’s story to the page. Drawn to both oil painting and writing after she retired, Canrinus said she briefly tried painting, taking up the same easel, paints and brushes that her father had enjoyed using during his own retirement, but writing won out.

“I wanted to study the craft of writing. I had a couple of stories that I wanted to put on paper. One of them is the chapter “Blindsided” in the book and another is about a hike I took in the Himalayas. I wanted to write those stories well, so I signed up for writing classes, and for the better part of 12 years, I worked on the craft,” she said.

“I was writing stories about my mother, and about marriage and friendship and aging and hiking, and there was a very positive response to the mother stories. In fact, one of my classmates said to me, ‘I like her better than I like you.’ I took that as a compliment because I had written my mother — I had created her on the page.”

These “mother stories” became the inspiration for “The Lady with the Crown.” As her classmate found, Canrinus’ portrait of her mother throughout the book is appealing and relatable: adventurous and fun-loving if sometimes impatient, with an irreverent sense of humor, a kind but no-nonsense nature, and an occasional penchant for cheating at cards.

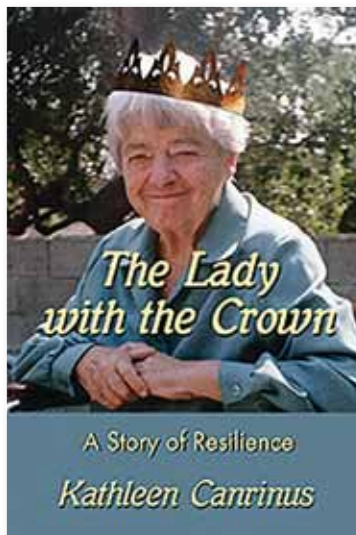
“The book is funny in parts because my mother was funny — and uplifting. I hope that readers will enjoy meeting her. That said, I am not a believer in silver linings. This is not a book about them,” Canrinus said.

The chapter “Blindsided” tells of the February 1960 car accident that injured Dorothy Canrinus — “the day everything changed in our lives,” as Kathleen Canrinus describes it. It’s a key chapter, and the first story that she wrote for class. Faced with an initial writing assignment about “My First Date,” instead she chose to write about the day of the accident because



Courtesy Don Anderson

Author Kathleen Canrinus, seen above with her mother, Dorothy Canrinus, shares scenes from 54 years of caring for her mother following a traumatic brain injury in the memoir, “The Lady with the Crown,” the cover of which is seen below.



Courtesy Fuze Publishing

she said that she felt she couldn’t write anything else.

The piece set the tone for a memoir that’s honest about the difficulties that Canrinus experienced — struggling with the pressures of juggling work, children and caring for a parent, or negotiating a succession of unhelpful caregivers — and sharing the gratitude and contentment of good times with her mother, from a chaotic but joyful trip to Italy to numerous card games, picnics in the car and time spent together just running errands.

“It is deeply personal,” Canrinus said of the book. “Why not go for the deeply personal? I didn’t want

to write about it from a distance.”

She is also open in writing about the guilt, fear, anger and frustration she experienced at various points in her life, as a teen grappling with her family’s new situation and as an adult, with a family and career of her own, trying to meet the commitment of being the primary caregiver for her mother after her father died.

“I was never writing, really, as therapy, although I hold all those experiences a little lighter now that they’re in story form and I’ve looked for patterns and meaning. It was hard to write the difficult parts but I thought they were essential,” she said. “I thought it was essential to reveal my own shortcomings when I was not rising to my own best self or standards for best self — when I failed miserably, not only in taking care of her but in taking care of my children, shorting work, my husband.”

Writing did reveal some surprises or greater perspective in some cases, Canrinus said, whether it was further insight into her teen years following the accident or the realization that her mother was still, in subtle ways, mothering her. For instance, Canrinus recalled realizing that her mother took pleasure in the fact that Canrinus enjoyed cooking for her, although she couldn’t taste the food.

“I missed that I really did have a mother, even though I was in a parental role. There are things that she was showing me that are just so valuable, and I missed that for a while,” she said.

Although aspects of trauma, loss and grief inform “The Lady with the Crown,” its focus on the challenges and joys of relationships with family and friends, especially, of course, between Canrinus and her mother, make it overall a thoughtful story about life.

“My own takeaway from the way my mother lived her life is that if she can say, ‘I’m very lucky,’ given her unimaginable losses, I, who can do everything she was unable to do, can certainly look for things to appreciate and be grateful for. ‘You’re very lucky too,’ she said to me. I’m lucky she was my mother. She was a great teacher,” Canrinus said.

“The Lady with the Crown” is available at Amazon, Barnes & Noble and ePub and can be ordered at any independent bookstore, or purchased directly from the author. Canrinus is also available to participate in book clubs in person or virtually. Contact her at kcanrinus@gmail.com. ■

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Food & Drink

Sip and savor 10 chocolateries to satisfy your hot cocoa cravings

By Kate Bradshaw



Courtesy Erik Mclean / Pexels

When it gets truly cold outside (by California standards anyway), there's a reason that the hot drink many people of all ages reach for remains the tried-and-true humble mug of hot cocoa. It's the quintessence of cozy: warm, creamy and revitalizing. And while many cafes and restaurants tend to treat hot chocolate as a kids-menu afterthought, we think our readers deserve better this holiday season.

So we scoured the Peninsula to find the best hot chocolate — and European drinking chocolate — offerings around. We've got both boozy and alcohol-free options, some for drinking out

and others for making at home, and even a best-served-cold option or two. Here's your classy cocoa guide:

Bird Dog, Palo Alto

Palo Alto's Bird Dog offers both no-buzz and boozy hot chocolate kit options for gifting (or keeping — we won't judge). The tradition started in 2020 during the pandemic, when the restaurant offered weekly takeout bundles, according to co-owner Emily Perry Winston. "The team loved them so much we continue to bring them back," she says. "They actually bring back lovely memories because even though

it was a challenging time, our small team truly bonded then since it was only us in the space (without guests) for months." The hot chocolate kits come with Tcho chocolate and made-to-order marshmallows; the boozy option also comes with bourbon.

Bird Dog, 420 Ramona St., Palo Alto; 650-656-8180, birddogpa.com. Instagram: [@birddogpaloalto](https://www.instagram.com/birddogpaloalto).

Après Village, East Palo Alto

Skip the Tahoe traffic and get your European winter lodge vibes a bit closer to home at the Four Seasons Hotel Silicon Valley at East Palo Alto's seasonal Après Village. The menu includes boozy hot cocoa made with a secret

recipe, plus Tullamore Dew whiskey, green Chartreuse and vanilla or cherry whipped cream. Reservations required.

Après Village, Four Seasons Hotel Silicon Valley, 2050 University Ave., East Palo Alto; 650-566-1200, fourseasons.com. Instagram: [@fourseasons](https://www.instagram.com/fourseasons).

Coupa Cafe, multiple locations

The spicy Maya hot chocolate at Coupa Cafe has warm cinnamon notes, plus a touch of cayenne and pasilla chile. They also offer a "deluxious" hot chocolate, made from melting down dark chocolate

Continued on next page



Courtesy Four Seasons Hotel, Silicon Valley

The hot chocolate from the Four Seasons Après Village in East Palo Alto is made with a secret recipe, plus Tullamore Dew whiskey, green Chartreuse and vanilla or cherry whipped cream.



Courtesy Kristen Loken / SAFFRON

The Rasa cocktail from Saffron offers a more subtle chocolate flavor from the chocolate bitters among its ingredients.

Continued from previous page

and combining it with “just enough” milk to make it a rich drinking chocolate. The first Coupa Cafe, offering Venezuelan-style coffee and chocolates, came to Palo Alto’s Ramona Street via Jean Paul Coupal and Nancy Farid-Coupal in 2004.

Coupa Cafe, multiple locations in Stanford, Palo Alto, Redwood City and Los Altos; 650-322-6872, coupacafe.com. Instagram: @coupacafe.

SWEET55, Half Moon Bay and Palo Alto

This hot chocolate is lighter and frothier than some of the other options we sampled, but with each sip still infused with a rich chocolate flavor — the perfect way to warm up on a rainy day. The retailer also offers tins of hot chocolate mix to make at home. Owner Ursula Schnyder says the cool coastal climate of Half Moon Bay is ideal for working with chocolate; this year she also opened a shop at Palo Alto’s Town & Country Village to

serve more customers.

SWEET55, Half Moon Bay and Palo Alto locations; 650-618-6525, sweet55.com. Instagram: @sweet55swiss.

Saffron, Burlingame and San Carlos

This drink isn’t hot, but it does offer a sophisticated hint of chocolate. The seasonal Rasa cocktail by Delhi-born chef and restaurateur, Ajay Walia, is made with ghee-infused bourbon, Alessio, Cynar, orgeat, mint and chocolate bitters. The ingredients lend it dark



Kate Bradshaw

The hot chocolate from ZombieRunner is made with Tcho chocolate.

Holiday Wish List

Have you been naughty or nice?

Either way, it's time to create your holiday wishlist of things that would bring you joy, such as:

- ☐ A support network you can rely on
- ☐ More opportunities to make new friends
- ☐ Home safety checkup & handyman help
- ☐ Educational activities geared to your interests
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To learn more, visit us at <https://avenidas.helpfulvillage.com> and sign up to attend an informal “Coffee Chat” session, or call us at (650) 289-5405.

Avenidas Village



Kate Bradshaw

The hot chocolate from SWEET55 in Half Moon Bay is frothy, sweet and a perfect way to warm up on a rainy day.

chocolate, cinnamon and spice flavors, with a hint of bitterness and a note of cacao, according to spokesperson Makenna Lepowsky.

Saffron, Burlingame and San Carlos locations; 650-910-6351, thesaffronrestaurant.com. Instagram: @saffron_restaurants.

Shekoh Confections, Palo Alto

Shekoh Moossavi of Shekoh Chocolates in Palo Alto says a copper vessel is expected to arrive any day so that she can begin to offer drinking chocolate next week. Moossavi trained at l'ecole Valrhona and brings a palette of global flavors from her time spent in countries around the world to her chocolate craft.

Shekoh Confections, 2305 El Camino Real B, Palo Alto; 650-384-6322, shekohconfections.com. Instagram: @shekohconfections.

Timothy Adams, Palo Alto

The European sipping chocolate available at Timothy Adams stood out for its quality and options. The team infuses 110 grams of specialized chocolate into whole milk or almond milk at a variety of richness levels, from 30% to 100%. You can also add whipped cream and spices,

or make it a mocha or milkshake. It comes with a complimentary marshmallow.

According to co-owner Adams Holland, the 100% cacao sipping chocolate is difficult to drink hot, but ideal for turning into a milkshake and blending with ice cream. A serving of the 64% dark sipping chocolate was so rich it entirely halted my usual chocolate cravings for a whole 48 hours afterward. My colleague Magali, who sampled the 35% sipping chocolate, and I agreed that the beverages made our throats feel like the chocolate-coated pipes that suction up the character Augustus Gloop from "Charlie and the Chocolate Factory" — but in a very good way.

Timothy Adams Chocolates, 539 Bryant St., Palo Alto; 415-755-8923, timothyadamsschocolates.com. Instagram: @timothyadamsschocolates.

ZombieRunner, Mountain View and Palo Alto

Known more for its coffee and espresso drinks, I figured this would be a good spot to try out given the high-quality chocolate sold on this shop's retail shelves, and the hot chocolate did not disappoint. Made with Tcho chocolate, it was rich, sweet and frothy.

ZombieRunner, locations in Mountain View and Palo Alto; 650-325-2048, zombierunner.com. Instagram: @zombierunner.

Lula's Chocolates, Santa Clara

This chocolatier offers sipping chocolate kits with chocolate flakes and marshmallows for making at home. Formerly Mrs. Lund's, the operation rebranded in 2006 and moved from Salt Lake City to Monterey, where they have a factory available for tours now. An added bonus: Santa Clara visitors are offered samples upon entry.

Lula's Chocolates, 2712 Augustine Drive #140, Santa Clara; 669-292-5353, lulaschocolates.com. Instagram: @lulaschocolates.

Snake & Butterfly, Campbell

Campbell's Snake & Butterfly is an organic chocolatier that sells bars for making hot chocolate at home. You'll have to provide the milk (or half and half, as the recipe suggests) and the suggested extras, which include whipped cream, Bailey's, orange peel, marshmallows, peppermint and Amaretto.

Snake & Butterfly, 191 East Campbell Ave., Campbell; 408-508-4788, snakeandbutterfly.com. Instagram: @snakeandbutterfly. ■

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