

The Almanac

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

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WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES

PHOTOS SHOW HOW RESIDENTS REBOUNDED FROM PANDEMIC LOCKDOWNS IN 2022

By Magali Gauthier

How 2022 started was quite different from how it ended in our community.

In early January, students and staff at Woodside High School had to sit behind plexi-glass at socially distanced stations to test themselves for COVID-19 during the virus' omicron wave. By the time the Nov. 8 election rolled around, unmasked voters were filling out their ballots indoors.

The Almanac's coverage illustrates the community's progression from living with overwhelming surges of illness to return to something more closely resembling the pre-pandemic moments and milestones that were sorely missed in the previous two years.

Among the highlights, in May, Ladera couple Debra Meyerson and Steve Zuckerman completed their 4,300-mile journey across the U.S. on a tandem bicycle to increase stroke and aphasia awareness.

In September, Menlo Park's SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory unveiled the world's largest digital camera that had been 20 years in the making. It will sit inside the Simonyi Survey Telescope at Vera C. Rubin Observatory on a mountaintop in northern Chile to map the night sky.

That same month, a ballet studio opened its permanent doors in East Palo Alto for the first time. Mannakin Theater and Dance company's new En Avant School of Dance welcomed around 100 students in its first fall session.

The year saw the return of in-person community events, including Halloween festivities



Magali Gauthier

Above: Daisy Valencia monitors Woodside High School senior Diego Ruiz taking a COVID-19 test at Woodside High School in Woodside on Jan. 10. **Right:** Children react as Leung's White Crane Dragon and Lion Dance Association performers Calvin Liu and Devin Horng approach them during a performance at the Woodside Library on Jan. 25.



Magali Gauthier

in Atherton and Menlo Park's holiday tree-lighting in December, complete with artificial snow.

Turn to page 12 for our collection of images that best capture this remarkable year in our communities. ■

See **WHAT A DIFFERENCE**, page 12

INSIDE

Help local families in need **I2**

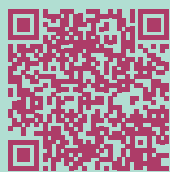
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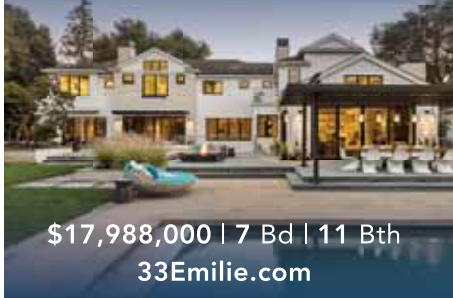
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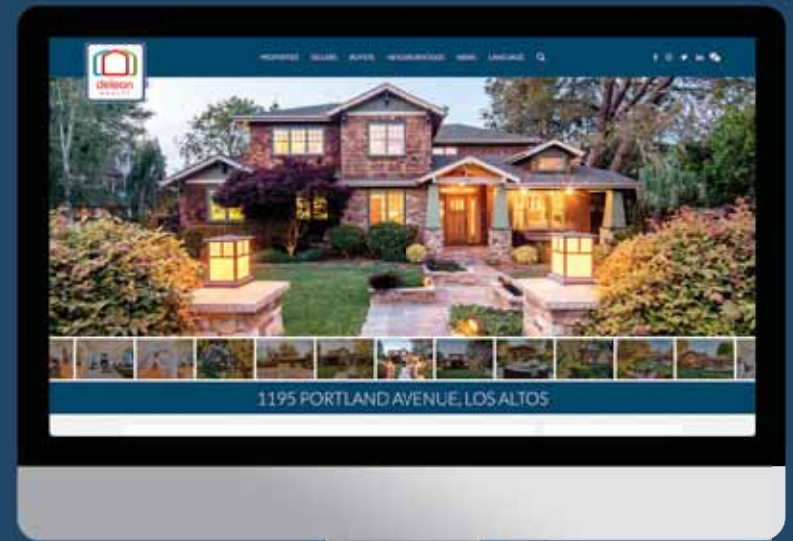


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THE AGENCY WOODSIDE

Local News

MENLO PARK | AThERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY



Courtesy J. Wiley

Flooded houses at the end of Emma Lane in Menlo Park. Residents said that water flowed from the San Francisquito Creek backwards through the storm drain to the end of nearby Oak Court on Saturday, Dec. 31.

Heavy rain led to flooding in Menlo Park and Palo Alto as creeks reached capacity

By Gennady Sheyner and Sue Dremann

Nervous residents of Palo Alto, Menlo Park and East Palo Alto gathered at the historically troublesome San Francisquito Creek on Saturday morning, Dec. 31, as the heavy rains from a storm caused

water levels to rise rapidly and threaten to overflow the creek's banks.

Some neighbors kept a close eye on data from online creek monitoring systems, trying to predict what might happen, while others hurriedly placed sandbags near their doors.

As the rainy day wore on, San Francisquito Creek overflowed

in multiple locations, flooding streets and closing some roads in Palo Alto, East Palo Alto and Menlo Park — but without the kind of damage that occurred when the same location flooded in 1998. Waters began to recede in the early afternoon.

See **FLOODING**, page 18

Despite new housing, enrollment set to decline in Menlo Park school district

Demographer says new apartments won't fit the needs of families

By Angela Swartz

A surprising trend is expected to hit one Menlo Park school district in the next five years: significant enrollment decline.

The Menlo Park City School District student body will stand at around 2,500 students in 2027, down 7.4% from 2,700 today, according to a report by Demographer Thomas R. Williams presented to the school board on Dec. 15. Current kindergarten enrollment is the lowest since before 2006, despite the impacts of the pandemic otherwise easing this year, demographers said. District students come from Menlo Park and Atherton, which boast some of the wealthiest ZIP codes in the country.

"All of my clients are hemorrhaging kids," Williams told the school board. "You're actually doing better than everybody else. Cupertino is down thousands of kids. ... It's been a crazy few years."

The decline is due, in large part, to a lower birthrate and the assumption that housing in the district is unaffordable for many young families who would otherwise love to send their children to public school in the area.

"It's still way up from where it was in the 1990s," he said. "A little more space in your schools can be

beneficial."

The demographic trends in Menlo Park are consistent with other communities in the region, according to Williams. Increased enrollment in San Carlos is the one exception Williams is seeing.

In years past, Menlo Park district officials feared that schools would be overcrowded with students.

Where is new enrollment coming from?

The district is expecting to grow by about 95 students in next school year when its transitional kindergarten (TK) program expands to all three of its elementary schools and opens to all 4-year-olds. TK enrollment is projected to rise from the current 41 children to 173 a year from now. Currently, the TK program is only offered at Lower Laurel School and is limited to older 4-year olds. If not for that increase, the total district enrollment would be forecast to drop by 37 students next year.

New housing in the next five years will contribute to the enrollment, with 100 additional students projected in 2027 from those dwellings. The majority of that growth is expected to come from families moving into

See **ENROLLMENT**, page 17

Bistro Vida owner connects community with holiday event

By Cameron Rebosio

Ali El Safy, the owner of Bistro Vida in downtown Menlo Park, finds joy even on his drive to work. He describes the trees following the recent flooding as the happiest he's ever seen them, and says he hopes people will look at the world with a more positive eye.

Nearly three years into the pandemic, El Safy said he wants to give back to the community that supported his business during the COVID-19 lockdown. To do so, El Safy, in

collaboration with other local restaurants, held a holiday concert event on Dec. 17.

The event featured performances from the La Entrada and Menlo-Atherton High school bands, face painting, Santa Claus and free food provided by many local restaurants on Santa Cruz Avenue, including Bistro Vida.

"We wanted to thank the

community for being supportive of all our businesses during the pandemic," El Safy said.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Bistro Vida managed to avoid laying off a single one of its 25 employees, in part thanks to donations from the community. El Safy says that he wants to help build a community, bridging the gaps he sees between people. The holiday concert, for example, presented an opportunity to connect residents to public safety personnel, as many police officers and fire officials attended.



Ali El Safy

"It's just the nature of human beings. We all start to complain about a lot of things but we don't see the goodness in things ourselves," El Safy said. "The event was more of (a) thank you ... whatever you do, you do it with good intention and good heart."

El Safy says he wants people to look at the world with more hope and less pessimism, pointing to the recent rainfall as an example. People are upset about the flooding and inclement weather, but it's helpful to natural surroundings and a necessity in California.

"We're human, we rebound back and we learn and we move on," El Safy said. "Of course there is damage. Of course, there was some stuff, but everything is replaceable, except the human being."

El Safy promises that the holiday concert won't be his last effort to bring the community together, and that he aims to hold more events when the weather begins to improve in the spring. ■

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



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NEWS

CRIME BRIEFS

Homicide arrest in missing East Palo Alto woman

A 44-year-old man has been arrested in connection with the homicide of Breanna Labat, an East Palo Alto resident, police said.

The East Palo Alto Police Department and San Mateo County District Attorney's Office launched a missing person investigation for Labat, 32, on Dec. 6, East Palo Alto interim Police Chief Jeff Liu said in a press release.

Information early in the investigation suggested that Labat had been murdered and the suspect disposed of her remains.

Investigators identified the suspect as John Caisiano Thompson of East Palo Alto and arrested him on Dec. 28, in connection with Labat's murder, police said.

"Both the East Palo Alto Police Department and San Mateo County District Attorney's Office personnel devoted and continue to devote extensive amounts of personnel and resources to this investigation. Investigators are continuing efforts to locate Breanna's remains, which have not been found as of Dec. 30. The motive for the murder is not being released at this time," Liu said in a statement.

This is East Palo Alto's fifth homicide of 2022.

Anyone with information is asked to call acting Cmdr. Angel Sanchez at 650-853-3154. Anyone who witnessed the homicide or has any information is urged to contact the East Palo Alto Police Department by email to epa@tipnow.org or text or voicemail to 650-409-6792. Tips can be left anonymously.

—Sue Dremann

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Special meeting to appoint Menlo Park council member

The Menlo Park City Council plans to appoint a new member to represent District 5 at a 5 p.m. meeting on Monday, Jan. 9. This meeting is continued from the Dec. 21, when 11 candidates were interviewed by the council. The appointment is to fill the remaining two years on Council member Ray Mueller's term following his resignation from the council after getting elected to the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors.

—Cameron Rebosio

Talk on new goals for families

Counselor Edwin Fernandez of One Life Counseling Center will host a talk in Spanish on Metas de Año Nuevo Para Mejorar las Relaciones Familiares (New Year's Goals to Improve Family Relationships) on Jan. 10 online. Sign up at tinyurl.com/metasdeano.



Courtesy Rick DeGolia

Adelante Selby Lane Spanish Immersion School students collect gifts at Atherton Town Hall in December 2022.

Selby Lane School Toy Drive

Atherton residents dropped off 500 toys and other holiday gifts on Dec. 20 for Adelante Selby Lane Spanish Immersion School. The toy drive is put on annually by the Atherton Police Activities League and Police Officers' Association.

Gifts included bicycles, keyboards, guitars and more, according to Atherton Council member Rick DeGolia.

Atherton housing element public outreach

There will be a community meeting about Atherton's housing element on Jan. 12 at 6 p.m. at Menlo College, 1000 El Camino Real. There will be another meeting with the Planning Commission on Jan. 19 at 6 p.m. in Council Chambers, 80 Fair Oaks Lane.

—Angela Swartz

Raft of new state laws will affect Silicon Valley in 2023

From labor laws to road rules, here are new regulations that will affect local residents

By Loan-Anh Pham/
San Jose Spotlight

A flurry of California state laws will go into effect in 2023, impacting the daily lives of Silicon Valley residents.

Here's a look at the biggest changes involving housing, transportation, criminal justice and more next year. All laws go into effect Jan. 1 unless otherwise specified.

Housing

With the passage of AB 2011, also known as the Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act of 2022, affordable housing could pop up near the neighborhood mall. Developers will be able to take advantage of underused commercial areas with parking, office or retail buildings and repurpose the land for affordable housing projects. The bill goes into effect July 2023.

Sandy Perry, president of the Affordable Housing Network of Santa Clara County, said AB 2011 is a response to COVID-19 pandemic measures that cleared commercial spaces like offices. More than 17% of Silicon Valley offices remain vacant today.

But it's not enough, he said, and widespread government action is still needed.

"There's a lot of incremental changes which are being enacted now to increase housing production," Perry told San Jose Spotlight. "They're all good, but they're not sufficient."

Labor

California workers have more protections in 2023. AB 1041 lets workers use paid sick leave to take care of loved ones other than immediate family members.

"It'll make a difference for the workers," said Ruth Silver Taube, a worker's rights attorney and columnist for the publication San Jose Spotlight. "People won't be coming to work sick, and they'll take time off."

Other changes are in the works: SB 951 increases the amount of wages low-income workers can get during paid family leave. The law, which goes into full effect in 2025, allows employees that make 70% of California's average wage to receive 90% of their wage while on leave.

Transportation

Bicycle safety protections are on a roll. AB 1909, dubbed the "OmniBike Bill," sets several changes in motion: eliminating ordinances that required cyclists to obtain a bike license, allowing e-bikes in bike lanes, allowing cyclists to cross with pedestrians on walk signals and requiring cars to change lanes to bypass cyclists on the road.

Sandhya Laddha, policy director for the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition, said safety is crucial for residents. The bill's requirement for cars to shift an entire lane to avoid cyclists limits the

possibility of collisions as people jostle for space on the road, she said. A recent study revealed San Jose is at the bottom of the list for bicycle safety across Silicon Valley cities.

"It enhances (a cyclist's) experience, and it's just safer for them to bike around," Laddha said.

Giving space to e-bikes also increases bike accessibility, Laddha said, especially for low-income residents looking to make quick trips to the grocery store or coffee shop.

AB 2147, the Freedom to Walk Act, decriminalizes jaywalking in California. It also requires a report by 2028 to examine the impacts the act has on pedestrian safety.

Criminal justice

The passage of SB 903 requires the state to examine how many individuals, especially those with severe mental illnesses, are impacted by homelessness when they leave prison. The bill aims to highlight the need for housing services.

Meanwhile, SB 731 secures a series of protections for individuals with prior convictions starting July 2023. Existing law allows the possibility of sealed records for offenders arrested or charged with a misdemeanor. SB 731 would allow those arrested for a felony and those charged with a felony on or after Jan. 1, 2005 the same protections. Assembly members Ash Kalra and Alex Lee co-authored the bill.

Social justice

California provides a safe haven for transgender individuals with the passage of SB 107, co-authored by Assembly members Kalra, Lee and Evan Low.

The law prevents state agencies from complying with information or extradition requests from other states that have laws against transgender health care. This also prevents California law enforcement from aiding out-of-state agencies in taking transgender children away from parents from states that punish families for allowing children to undergo gender-affirming procedures.

Adrienne Keel, director of the LGBTQ Youth Space in San Jose, said protections for the transgender community are vital as transphobia continues to manifest in nationwide conversations. Increases in protections, Keel said, should come with increases in resources, such as medical insurance coverage for gender-affirming care.

"There are countless examples of LGBTQ+ people being criminalized throughout history, simply for existing as their authentic selves," Keel said. "If we listen to young people and give them the space to voice their needs and receive the treatment that is right for them, it can be life-saving."

Reproductive rights are also expanding next year with SB 1375, co-authored by Kalra. The law allows qualified nurses to

perform first trimester abortions without doctor supervision.

Education

Hate has no place on school campuses, with the passage of AB 2282. The law specifies individuals who display hate symbols, such as swastikas and nooses, at places like K-12 schools, college campuses, workplaces and places of worship can face fines and jail time. Local law enforcement launched hate crime investigations in November when dolls with dark complexions were found hanging at three Santa Clara County schools.

The state is also implementing a slew of other education laws focused on early education and nutrition.

COVID-19

AB 2693 requires workplaces to continue notifying employees of any COVID-19 infections and exposures. The bill is effective until January 2024.

Elected officials are working to tackle the tide of misinformation surrounding COVID, with the passage of AB 2098. The law, authored by Assembly member Low, enables medical professionals, including doctors and surgeons, to face disciplinary action if they spread misinformation.

This story was originally published on San Jose Spotlight. ■

San Mateo County's COVID-related expenses fell by \$156 million

By Bay City News Service

San Mateo County's revenue rose by \$22 million during the 2021-22 fiscal year while expenses fell by nearly \$200 million, driven largely by a reduction in COVID-19-related expenses, county finance officials said Dec. 30.

San Mateo County's COVID-related expenses fell by \$156 million, according to the county's 2021-22 Annual Comprehensive Financial Report, which is issued by the county Controller's Office.

COVID-related expenses were so much higher during the 2020-21 fiscal year, according to county officials, because the county allocated funding toward, among other things, the acquisition of hotels and other buildings to shelter residents at risk of infection, labor costs and a program

that provided meals to older adults at higher risk of contracting COVID.

In total, the county's revenue rose 1% between the 2020-2021 fiscal year and 2021-22 to \$2.49 billion while expenses fell 9% to \$1.99 billion.

The county also released its financial highlights report for the 2021-22 fiscal year, which summarizes the more granular

information in the comprehensive financial report.

"Providing transparent and useful information about the county's financial activities to taxpayers and residents is important to us," county Controller Juan Raigoza said. "These two annual reports help us to do that."

The county's financial reports can be found at smcgov.org/controller. ■

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include **Clements Edward Pausa**, 92, an Atherton resident, on Dec. 23, 2022; **Mary Marcia Gainer**, 86, a Menlo Park resident, on Dec. 22, 2022; **Sheryl Ann Battaglia**, 79, a Menlo Park resident, on Dec. 13, 2022; **Nancy "Lee" Murphy**, 75, a Menlo Park resident, on Dec. 11, 2022; and **George Miller**, 84, a Menlo Park resident, on Nov. 15, 2022.

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

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman

Planning in 2023



Dear Monica: Like many, we want to move near our children and grandchildren and want to do this soon. How would you advise us?
Grace G.

Dear Grace: We are in the first week of January and it's not clear what the year will bring. Presently there are major storms causing flooding and other damage and slowing down property preparations. But many people think that the market probably won't change much in the next months so they are not waiting to put their homes on the market. You may need to paint, carpet, refinish floors, landscape and make repairs, all of which take time. There will also be inspections to do and disclosures to complete. You should start the process now and by the time you are ready there will be new market data to guide you.

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

Portola Valley mayor lays out his vision for 2023

By Angela Swartz

Portola Valley's new mayor expects his first month or two on the job to be primarily focused on something that's been all-consuming for residents and staff over the last year and half: the town's housing element.

The mandatory plans for housing over the next eight years are due to the state on Jan. 31. The Planning Commission has met several times since November to try to nail down changes based on feedback from the state housing officials, but staff is still finalizing the report before it makes its way to the Town Council. The number of units the town has to plan for increased significantly from last cycle, a challenge the council had been aware of for about five years, thanks to former Council member Maryann Derwin, who was plugged into the housing conversation in the state, said Mayor Jeff Aalfs.

"We knew it was going to be a game-changer," Aalfs said, noting he and other officials spent more than 50 hours in public meetings alone discussing the housing plans. "We knew

the public was watching and we all knew it was going to be a difficult thing going into it, and frankly, it was."

He said he's proud of the work the council did. "We covered a lot of ground, a lot of the public (was) not always happy but we explored a lot of options, made some substantial adjustments in midcourse," he said.

Aalfs, who works in energy and green building consulting, joined the council in 2011 and this is his third time serving as mayor. Breaking from the normal rotation, Vice Mayor Sarah Wernikoff asked not to be nominated to serve as mayor for Portola Valley in 2023, citing family obligations.

Town officials are also eagerly awaiting new fire hazard maps from both the Woodside Fire Protection District, expected to be completed early this year, as well as from Cal Fire in the next few months.

"We'd love to have those maps," Aalfs said. "We've been waiting on them for a long time."



Jeff Aalfs

Some residents have implored the town to hold off on finalizing its safety element, which is due at the same time as the housing element, until the new fire maps are available.

The town will need to make adjustments to its safety, evacuation and housing plans based on the new maps, he said. The town's continued fire mitigation work will also be another focus in 2023.

Town Manager Jeremy Dennis doesn't yet know when the Stanford Terrace housing project, formerly called the Stanford Wedge, will come back to the Planning Commission, but Aalfs expects the Town Council will make a final decision on the development plans this year.

"That's going to be contentious and take a lot of our time," Aalfs said.

The town will also need to tackle rising operational costs, he said, as annual budgets are getting harder to balance.

"Things like the housing and safety element are unfunded mandates," he said. "We can't easily raise taxes. We're at the point of thinking about where more revenue would come from."

Fees from large construction

projects could be the answer, but it's going to be a community discussion, he said.

Town resiliency center

Aalfs has long wanted to set up a "resiliency center" with solar panels and batteries at Town Center, where residents could go during a prolonged power outage to charge their phones or sit in an air conditioned area.

The idea was shelved in the past because of the steep price of establishing it.

"I would like to revisit it and look at alternatives for financing it," he said. "My interest has long been in sustainability and resilience for energy."

Resident relations

In 2022, tensions were high between residents, town staff and volunteers. Aalfs said he hopes to cut some of that tension.

"In the past I have done my best to explain what we're (the council) doing and why," he said. "During COVID, I got a lot of positive feedback for trying to explain what was going on in a way that people could understand. ... We're trying

to get back to communicating regularly with the residents, in person and on the (PV) Forum. I'm not sure (residents) will like everything we have to do."

Aalfs said he finds the massive public records requests and a Brown Act lawsuit against the town troubling.

"It costs up to tens of thousands of dollars to respond to these things," he said. "It's dozens of hours of staff time. I'm hoping those don't continue, but the reality is people will start using them for certain things. Times have changed."

Aalfs plans to hold office hours, where residents can grab coffee and talk with him, at the beginning of each month.

Aalfs, whose term ends in 2024, doesn't plan to run for reelection next year, something he stated when he ran for office in 2020. Before joining the council he served on the town's Architecture and Site Control Commission for three years.

"It's taken me away from my family at times," he said. "My kids don't remember a time when I wasn't volunteering for the town. I've done a lot and I'm ready for a break." ■

Email Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com.

Tesla driver arrested after car plunges from Highway 1 cliff, with adult and two children inside

By Bay City News Service

Monday's Tesla crash off a steep cliff near Devil's Slide in San Mateo County that injured two adults and endangered two children is being investigated as a deliberate act, the California Highway Patrol said on Jan. 3.

The car landed in the rocks nearly 300 feet below Highway 1 shortly before 11 a.m. on Jan. 2 and multiple agencies assisted in the rescue. Two adults were

taken to the hospital in critical condition but the two children in the car were unharmed.

Video of the rescue was posted by Cal Fire at twitter.com/CALFIRECZU.

"CHP investigators worked through the night interviewing witnesses and gathering evidence," said the San Francisco CHP on Facebook on Tuesday afternoon. "Based on the evidence collected, investigators developed probable cause to believe this incident was an

intentional act."

Dharmesh A. Patel, of Pasadena, was arrested on suspicion of attempted murder and child abuse, CHP said.

Speculation arose after the crash about whether the electric vehicle had been in self-driving mode.

"There has been no determination as to what driving mode the Tesla was in," said CHP. "However, that does not appear to be a contributing factor in this incident."

Patel remains in the hospital but will be moved to the San Mateo Jail when he has recovered, CHP said.

Officers and other first responders were first dispatched to the area just south of the Tom Lantos Tunnels

around 10:50 a.m. and extracted everyone from the wreck, CHP said.

The agency is still seeking anyone who may have witnessed the event and asking them to contact the CHP San Francisco office at 415-557-1094. ■



Via San Mateo County Sheriff's Office Facebook

Emergency crews work to remove the crashed car that fell down a steep cliff near Devil's Slide in San Mateo County on Jan. 2. Crash victims were rescued by helicopter.

Menlo Park City Council focuses on mixed-use development, tenant displacement in housing element update

By Cameron Rebosio

Mixed-use developments and anti-displacement were among the topics highlighted at the Menlo Park City Council's Dec. 22 study session on the housing element.

The meeting marked one of the final steps before the draft housing element comes back to the City Council for possible approval on Jan. 30. The document has to be submitted to the state by Jan. 31 or the city risks repercussions.

The housing element requires cities to accommodate 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 them by over 2,000 units, the plan was rejected by the California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) on Oct. 9.

Among the late-stage changes to the plan, the city is looking to revise the housing element to change retail zoning to coexist with housing. Specifically,

multiple sites along Willow Road were recommended for a change to neighborhood mixed-use zoning.

Another way that retail is intended to exist alongside housing is "carveout" sites, which allows for a horizontal mixed-use development. If applied, vacant areas of a lot and parking lots could be used for housing. Principal Planner Tom Smith said these carveout sites would be specifically used for affordable housing. One site where this is proposed is the First Republic Bank at 2500 Sand Hill Road.

One parcel identified as a carveout does not currently have office buildings on it, and was

described as an "exception."

Council member Drew Combs was critical of the idea of the exception using the carveout overlay of up to 100 units.

"What is attempting to be achieved? And can we achieve it in a more transparent way?" Combs asked.

The subcommittee recommended expanding the state's just cause eviction and tenant protections, which have a one-year residency requirement, to residents who have lived in Menlo Park for any period of time. These protections include a requirement that a landlord must serve a tenant with a three-day written notice to cure an

at-fault reason for eviction before proceeding.

The subcommittee also recommended increasing tenant relocation assistance to four months for all no-fault evictions and offering "know your rights" education, including legal aid, at no cost.

These measures are to be brought before the City Council by December 2023 or June 2024 at the latest.

"The intention is just to address displacement as quickly as possible," Taylor said. "Whatever is within the city's wheelhouse." ■

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

State water officials 'cautiously optimistic' that rain could improve California's drought conditions

By Olivia Wynkoop/
Bay City News Foundation

The Bay Area was under a flood watch as rains were expected to continue throughout Northern California starting Jan. 4 and the following weekend, just after a soggy end to 2022.

State water officials at the California Department of Water Resources (DWR) say they are cautiously optimistic that this could replenish some of the state's heavily depleted water reservoirs. But after four years of drought, heavy rains of this frequency and magnitude pose a threat to property, natural resources and human life.

On Tuesday morning, Jan. 3, the National Weather Service noted that the storm, which was expected bring extreme wind and anywhere from 2 to 10 inches of rain around the Bay Area, would likely result in the loss of human life.

Under Gov. Gavin Newsom's latest water supply strategy, released in August, a myriad of

California agencies are bracing for the state's precipitation to swing more severely between drought and flood in the near future as the Western region of the country experiences a rapidly changing climate.

Deputy Director of Flood Management and Dam Safety for DWR, Gary Lippner, said that the state-federal Flood Operations Center is closely monitoring weather conditions to inform local partner agencies about elevated river and creek levels. He added that it's a multi-agency partnership across the federal and state level to minimize downstream flooding and provide resources to overwhelmed local agencies.

Lippner said that in the event of the state utilizing its 1,600-miles worth of flood mitigation levees and weirs, the system has enough capacity to handle the anticipated showers this week.

"That flood system is designed to take pressure off the mainstream rivers of the San Joaquin and the Sacramento river," Lippner said.

Lippner said Californians should pay close attention to alerts and warnings from the National Weather Service and their local and county emergency service agencies.

On the one hand, heavy rainfall is boosting California's snowpack. On Tuesday, DWR's snow survey team determined that parts of the Sierra Nevada have snow depths 177% of average for this time of year. But the same storms are bringing flooding to other parts of the state, said Karla Nemeth, director of DWR.

"This is a prime example of the threat of extreme flooding during

a prolonged drought as California experiences more swings between wet and dry periods brought on by our changing climate," Nemeth said.

Michael Anderson, state climatologist for DWR, said that when looking at the bigger atmospheric patterns, the region will likely be in a transition period from the winter's fading La Niña conditions to neutral conditions within the next few months, lending an increased probability of extreme weather.

"It's sad to see with those higher (atmospheric river) scales, more hazards are introduced as the

events become more extreme," Anderson said. "But there's a lot to storms beyond just the rain."

Drought Manager of DWR Jeanine Jones said that the state needs above-average precipitation throughout the rest of its wet season in order to reach 100% of average runoff.

"We are overcoming a deficit in soil moisture," Jones said. "We lose runoff until things get very wet, and we start getting good inflows into reservoirs and groundwater basins. But we do have deficit conditions in these basins from our prior dry years." ■

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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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Ecumenical Hunger Program

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.

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By Ellen Izuka

Ecumenical Hunger Program offers new hope to struggling families

For many years Ecumenical Hunger Program (EHP) offered a modest financial assistance program to low-income families requesting help with paying for an unexpected bill or emergency. When COVID-19 hit our community, the need for financial assistance skyrocketed due to loss of employment and/or illness. Our families barely had time to recover before rising inflation made living in our community almost impossible with some falling into deeper and deeper debt. What could EHP do for these families?

During this time, our generous donors gave more than what could be spent due to pandemic related operational limitations. This surplus would be key to the solution. What if these families had a support system that could sustain them long enough to truly make a difference? Not just a shot in the arm, to pay the gas bill this month, but enough support to set them on the road to self-sufficiency. Would these families succeed?

In July, EHP announced a special \$2 million fund which would provide direct assistance to local families in need for the next two years and the creation of the Family Sustainability Fund. This new fund, an all-inclusive support program, would help selected families over the course of several months reduce debt and increase income through modest financial assistance combined with budget planning, employment and financial counseling, and referrals to other agencies that specialized in affordable housing, childcare, and government aid.

We recognized that providing financial assistance alone without providing the tools to become financially stable had the potential to lead to dependency instead of self-reliance. Now, in its fourth month, we are already seeing positive changes in our five inaugural FSF recipients. They have all significantly reduced their credit card debt, two have found new employment while another is working to revive his business which suffered greatly during the pandemic. Additionally, one of our families will be moving from a cramped apartment into an affordable-income three-bedroom house later this month.

EHP is one of the 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.

A fund recipient wrote about what this new EHP lifeline would mean for her family, saying: "I grew up in an abusive household where I witnessed my father abuse my mother. After my father was gone, my mother was not very present, and we were constantly struggling to make ends meet. Times were always hard, and it was harder not having supportive parents to get me through those tough times. Despite all the hardships I went through in my childhood, I made sure to stay on top of my grades because I saw school as my only way out. I felt like I needed to escape from my family and my circumstances and that was how I was going to do it."

She wrote that she was able to graduate from San Jose State University's Lucas College of Business with a degree in business administration with a 3.0 GPA. "This was a huge accomplishment that I will carry with me for a lifetime," she wrote. "Starting from the ground up has been hard, especially after having a son shortly after I graduated college. I've been a single mom since he was born and have had no help. Living in a place with one of the highest costs of living has been hard to say the least. Because I'm on my own, I'm often living paycheck to paycheck, now even more because of the rising costs for everything from groceries to rent and PG&E. When I don't have enough cash, I use my credit cards which have added to my overall debt. I currently have \$50,000 in outstanding federal student loans, and around \$7,000 in credit card debt," she wrote.

"I dream to be a homeowner some day and give my son the life I never had even if I have to do it all on my own. However, with piling debt and no real way out it has been hard to see the bright future I've always dreamed of. I appreciate any help you could offer as it would greatly change my life's trajectory and allow me to get on a path to being the woman and mother I've always dreamed of being." ■

Ellen Izuka is a development associate for Ecumenical Hunger Program.



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WHAT A DIFFERENCE A YEAR MAKES

continued from page 1



Magali Gauthier

Clockwise from top left: Ormondale Elementary School transitional kindergarten teacher Sherry Andrighetto leads her students through an activity in Portola Valley on Feb. 15; Debra Meyerson and her husband Steve Zuckerman ride their tandem bike in Portola Valley on May 11, ahead of their “Stroke Across America” ride; Lily Arangio, the outreach coordinator at March for Our Lives San Jose and an incoming senior at Saint Francis High School, leads chants during a protest in Redwood City on June 11; Sixth grader Arturo Elizalde makes an adjustment to his robot during the robotics club meeting at Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School in East Palo Alto on March 22; Alice Lee watches her daughter Jiami Lin, 4, play inside Cheeky Monkey in Menlo Park on March 15.



Magali Gauthier





Magali Gauthier



Magali Gauthier



Magali Gauthier

Clockwise from top left: An aircraft drops water by a home under construction near the Colton and Edgewood fires on June 21; Students twirl in a class for children aged 6-8 at Mannakin Theater and Dance company's new En Avant School of Dance in East Palo Alto on Sept. 7; Joy Culture Foundation founder LuLu Roberts reads a book to families in the backyard of the Little Bookworm Library in Menlo Park on June 23; Janet, right, watches jewelry expert Kevin Zavian examine a ring on set of the Antiques Roadshow at Filoli in Woodside on June 22.



Magali Gauthier



Magali Gauthier



Magali Gauthier



Magali Gauthier



Magali Gauthier



Magali Gauthier

Clockwise from top left: The world's largest digital camera, the Legacy Survey of Space and Time camera, at SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory in Menlo Park on Sept. 30; Melva Davis participates in the Aqua Fit class at the Menlo Swim and Sport pool in Burgess Park in Menlo Park on Oct. 4; Kids line up for the costume contest at at Atherton's Halloween party on Oct. 28.



Angela Swartz



Left: Jonathan Hayward casts his ballot at a vote center in the Town Center in Portola Valley on Nov. 8. **Below:** Harby Hayer holds his son, Chance, as artificial snow falls around them at Menlo Park's annual tree lighting in Fremont Park on Dec. 2.

Magali Gauthier



Magali Gauthier

ENROLLMENT

continued from page 5

three new apartment complexes this year. Springline near the Menlo Park train station, Realm on San Antonio Street near Menlo College and Stanford University's Middle Plaza along El Camino are all moving in tenants. All three are in the Encinal Elementary School attendance area and the new arrivals should lessen the anticipated decline in enrollment when compared to Laurel and Oak Knoll elementary schools.

Williams noted that many of the new apartment complexes coming online in Menlo Park should not lead to an increase in students because they're too small to be hospitable to families. These developments don't include affordable three-, four- or five-bedroom homes, he said.

"We're seeing an aging of the population," he said. "It's sad. The most desirable districts to be in are going to have the least kids."

For example, at Springline there are only eight three-bedroom apartments and only 45 units over 1,000 square feet, according to the developer. The maximum apartment size at the Realm is also three bedrooms. The largest apartments at Middle Plaza are two bedrooms and rent will cost up to \$4,700, according to its website.

Williams said that a problem with state housing mandates is that they encourage building the maximum number of new units, which lends itself to building more small units. For example, at the Parkline project proposed at the SRI campus, he expects that the more apartments that are built on the site, the smaller each unit will be.

Board member Sherwin Chen noted that the dip could provide the district with time to plan for an eventual increase in enrollment generated by new housing developments in Menlo Park.

Williams said he is doubtful that the city will be able to lay the groundwork for building housing that could accommodate families.

Real estate for expansion

Before the report was available, district officials had considered whether they should consider buying property to help accommodate growth.

The school board discussed, in closed session, purchasing 2 Lowery Drive in Atherton, an ideal location for expansion since it is next to the Lower Laurel School campus, said Superintendent Erik Burmeister. The price (the property sold for \$5.6 million in 2021, according to Redfin) was going to be far too high for the district, though, he said. ■

Mary Marcia Gainer

February 15, 1936 - December 22, 2022

Marcia Gainer passed away peacefully at age 86 on December 22, 2022.

Born Mary Marcia Gainer at Palo Alto Hospital on Feb. 15, 1936, to Mary Regina Harrington and Thomas Francis Gainer. She grew up in Menlo Park attending St. Joseph's elementary, then Sacred Heart Schools, Atherton and finished her college education at Notre Dame College.

Marcia was employed at Stanford Medical Center in multiple roles over 25 years. After Stanford, Marcia completed her work life in the insurance industry, retiring at age 70.

Marcia was predeceased by her mother Regina in 1997 and sister Joanne in 2016.

Marcia was a brilliant, gregarious friend who loved socializing, travel, and current events. She was an avid reader and loved eclectic movies.

Marcia is survived by her cousins, Mary Ellen and Richard Harrington of California; Barbara and Tom Walczykowski of Virginia; Thomas, his son Kristoffer and his wife Sabrina Harrington of Nevada; Barbara, Bob and Amy Gregory and Lynn and Andy Jones of California.

A Mass celebrating Marcia's life will be held at The Church of the Nativity, 210 Oak Grove Ave., Menlo Park, CA on Jan. 18, 2023 at 1:00 p.m.

Donations are requested in Marcia's name to the Dominion Nuns, Corpus Christi Monastery, 215 Oak Grove Avenue, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

PAID OBITUARY

Clements Ed Pausa

October 18, 1930 - December 23, 2022

We are broken hearted to announce the death of our father, Clements Edward Pausa. He passed away peacefully with family by his side, at 92 years. Born October 18th, 1930 in South Gate, California. Son of Oscar and Kathleen Pausa. He leaves behind two sons, Geoffrey and Ronald Pausa along with two grandchildren, Zachary and Ashton Pausa.

Growing up in South Gate dad was into academics, music and custom cars. He graduated valedictorian from South Gate High School. Played the oboe in several marching bands including two Rose Parades.

After high school he enrolled in the Air Force ROTC and the California National Guard while attending UCLA. He then moved north to attended college at UC Berkeley where he joined the Delta Chi fraternity. It was working on a float for the Cal vs. Stanford "Big Game" that dad met his future wife, Janice Mary Hanson. They celebrated 54 years of marriage before she passed. He completed a B.S. Degree in Engineering and a Master's of Science in Physical Metallurgy.

Having graduated from UC Berkeley he was commissioned in the Navy for 2 years, serving on the USS Montrose and the USS Gull during the Korean conflict. He remained in the Navy Reserves for 20 years and attained the rank of Captain.

Having completed his Navy commission he found work at US Steel in Pittsburg, California as a combustion engineer. A friend at the plant mentioned a job fair at a small startup company called Fairchild Semiconductor in Mountain View, California. He was hired in May of 1959. This turned out to be the start of a passionate and rewarding 35 year career. Later he joined National Semiconductor where he became an officer of the company, overseeing manufacturing plants around the world.

He retired from National Semiconductor in 1990 and used his experience to work as VP of two other companies, Power Integrations and Alphatec Group. He moved onto work as a consultant at Cooper & Lybrand. While at Price Waterhouse Cooper in 2004 he and a close friend created and published the "China Impact on the Semiconductor Industry" until 2017.

He would like to give his warmest to all his friends, colleagues and SIRS members for the love, laughter and support you showed him on his journey in life.

PAID OBITUARY



Lee Murphy

May 1, 1947 - December 11, 2022

Nancy "Lee" (Press) Murphy was born in Chicago, IL to Norman and Eleanor Press. Nancy attended Catholic grammar and high schools in La Grange, IL and went on to attend the University of Wisconsin at Oshkosh. It was there that Nancy decided to go by her middle name, "Lee" when there were five other Nancy's living on her dorm room floor. While many other girls were reading Nancy Drew books growing up, Lee read Vicki Barr flight attendant books.

In 1967, Lee moved to Boston and became a flight attendant for TWA so she could travel the world. In December 1968, Lee went on a blind date and met her future husband Jack Murphy. Later that year, Jack proposed to Lee at 1 a.m. at the Old Water Tower in Chicago and in October



1969 the two were married in Brookline, MA. Jack and Lee lived in many different locations over their 50 year marriage, including Boston, New York, Vancouver, San Diego, Los Angeles, Orange County, Castle Pines, Woodside, Westport, Carmel, and Menlo Park. Jack predeceased Lee in November 2019.

Ultimately an entrepreneur at heart, Lee started her own company, Calla Designs, Inc. in 1985 representing jewelry lines at various Junior League and other trade-shows. In 1989, Lee and her family moved to Woodside, CA where she and the then owner of Images of Woodside, Charlene became friends. Charlene encouraged Lee to sell lines of clothing from within the salon which gave Lee the confidence to open her first boutique in Menlo Park in 1993, Calla. In the years that followed, Lee opened, owned and operated five more stores - Calla Los Altos, Pink Wasabi Crystal Cove, Pink Wasabi Carmel, Kicks, and Number Six.

Up until her recent illness that led to hospice care, Lee was still actively traveling, buying for future seasons, and working almost daily at Kicks in the pursuit of finding "fabulous" things to delight her customers. Lee loved the beach, traveling, binge watching new shows, discovering the next hottest trend in food, toasting with a glass of champagne, and fashion.

The Menlo Park community and her customers were a very important part of Lee's life. She made life-long friends over her 30 years as a merchant. Most of all Lee was a proud mother and loved her extended and very modern family.

Lee is survived by her two brothers and their wives, Jim and Carol Press and Jeff and Eileen Press; her sister in law, Mary Murphy; oldest son Matt and his wife Laura and their three children, Sara, Nolan and Ben; middle daughter Abby and her daughter Catie, Abby's fiancé Rick and his three daughters Kelsey, Taylor, and Rylee; former son-in-law Trent Collins and his partner Cristina; and youngest son Ryan and his wife Tracy. The family is especially grateful to Dr. Henry Chun at Kaiser in Redwood City who saved her life more than once and to her caregivers, William H. and Taiana F., who cared for her as they would their own mother in her final weeks.

A memorial service open to family, friends, customers, and the community will be held Friday, January 20 at 1 p.m. at the Church of the Nativity in Menlo Park.

Lee had a lot of passion around supporting local businesses, so in lieu of flowers or donations, please shop and dine locally at the many great places in Menlo Park, especially in the month of January which can be slow for retailers and restaurants.

PAID OBITUARY

FLOODING

continued from page 5

The Pope-Chaucer Bridge, which spans the San Francisquito Creek between Palo Alto and Menlo Park, was of particular concern that morning.

According to Palo Alto's creek monitor, the water levels at the creek were exceeding 21 feet at about 10:40 a.m., nearing the bridge's 24-foot capacity. City officials issued a warning shortly after 10 a.m. that flooding at the bridge was likely within 30 minutes. They also noted that minor flooding was occurring at Seneca and Hale Streets near the creek.

The city's announcement urged residents near the creek to take protective actions, including placing sandbags near the entrances to their homes, raising valuables from low to high places in their homes and making sure vehicles are ready for possible evacuation.

By 10:48 a.m., the roiling, muddy water escaped the creekbed in some spots, rushing down the side streets onto University Avenue and crossing onto Crescent Drive in Crescent Park. The water reached the top of the curbs and approached the sidewalks as it rose up driveway aprons.

Roads flood in Menlo Park

Menlo Park officials also sent out a warning Dec. 31, as heavy rainfall led to pooling along streets and created driving hazards.

Intersections throughout Menlo Park and Atherton were flooded. Middlefield Road between Ravenswood and Oak Grove avenues, by the Menlo-Atherton High School campus on the border of Atherton and Menlo Park, was closed to traffic in the morning and by afternoon, it was closed from Oak Grove to Survey Lane.

Middlefield Road at Linfield Drive in Menlo Park, across from the main fire station, had a growing area of standing water just before noon, as did intersections along Waverly Street in the Linfield Oaks neighborhood.

At Burgess Park, the duck pond had spilled over its banks and flooded areas of the surrounding lawn and the fountain outside of Menlo Park City Hall was surrounded by a growing pond of water before 11 a.m.

Atherton drainage system strained

In Atherton around 10:30 a.m., swiftly flowing muddy water rushed through the Atherton Channel at the intersection of Middlefield and Marsh Roads but hadn't risen to the level of the roadway.



A tree fell on a car on Valparaiso Avenue in Atherton during the Dec. 31 storm.

Courtesy George Rodericks



Andrea Gemmet

Flooding caused the closure of Middlefield Road from Oak Grove to Ravenswood Avenues Saturday morning, Dec. 31. Southbound traffic was detoured onto Ravenswood Avenue in Menlo Park.

Atherton's drainage system was at capacity during the storm, said Town Manager George Rodericks on Tuesday, Jan. 3. The Atherton Channel reached nearly 7 feet, but it did not overflow, he said.

"There were capacity issues at many of the town's drainage inlets and those systems inundated the surrounding inlets," he said. "There were numerous properties in town, mostly along the Atherton Channel that experienced localized flooding on their property."

There were three power outages, each one affected 49 or fewer homes, due to downed trees, which have all been remedied by PG&E, Rodericks said. Sandbags were distributed at

Holbrook-Palmer Park but, as with other jurisdictions in the county, there were not enough and the town ran out, he said.

Woodside flooding

Woodside saw widespread flooding, and culverts and bridges became blocked with vegetation and other debris at numerous locations, including roadways, during Saturday's storm, said Town Manager Kevin Bryant said Jan. 3.

The town Public Works Department was responding to storm related issues all day Saturday, he said.

"From Sunday through today, the town crew and additional crews we have been able to hire



Andrea Gemmet

Stormwater rushed through the Atherton Channel at the intersection of Middlefield and Marsh roads in Atherton.

have been working to clear debris from roadways as well as bridges and culverts in preparation for the next storm," he said in an email.

Fallen tree and power poles

caused the closure of Highway 84 from Portola Road to La Honda on Dec. 31, and it remained closed Jan. 1, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office reported.



Kate Bradshaw

Residents helped their neighbor on Woodland Avenue in Menlo Park clear out a flooded driveway and fortify it with sandbags.

The Menlo Park side of the Pope-Chaucer Bridge

The Menlo Park side of Woodland Avenue didn't flood near the Pope-Chaucer Bridge, but residents said the creek flooded streets in spots just upstream of the bridge.

Hedeff Essaid said the water ran down Pope Street and drained down to Laurel Avenue. The water had retreated by 11:30 a.m. and the level had receded by about a foot. Still, an enormous debris field of logs, branches, trash and even a kitchen sink had gotten jammed up at the bridge.

Essaid, a hydrologist, was philosophical: "We have dry years and we have wet years. We have to be prepared for both," she said.

A crowd gathered along Woodland Avenue near the

Pope-Chaucer Bridge to observe an area taped-off by the Menlo Park Police Department. Behind the tape, an excavator plucked out enormous logs blocking the creek while police officers supervised and onlookers in rain gear cheered. The mood had lifted from hours earlier, when some residents living along the creek had feared their homes could flood.

"This is the highest I've ever seen it," said resident Jim Geimer.

Jenny Jones said that a neighbor had woken her up that morning, telling her that the creek had flooded onto the street and was coming toward the curb. She was directed to get sandbags, which she had to fill herself, to place in her driveway.

Others, some of whom rebuilt their homes since the area last

flooded in 1998, said they'd been required to comply with flood protection regulations for their new homes and weren't concerned about the risks.

Farther down the creek on Woodland Avenue, resident Ali Hooshmand stood behind a low fortified wall of wood and sandbags. Earlier that morning, he said his neighbors had alerted him to the flooding and helped form a "bucket brigade" to scoop water out of his flooded driveway. Someone even set up a pump in the adjacent



Courtesy Jonathan Duckles

A man paddles a kayak through the flooded intersection of Waverley Street and Linfield Drive in Menlo Park.

gutter puddle to redirect the water away from the driveway.

While the flood anxiety appeared to diminish on the Menlo Park side of the San Francisquito Creek that Saturday, Sgt. Aaron Dixon of the Menlo Park Police Department wasn't ready to call the situation under control.

What really makes an impact

on the creek's water levels, he said, is the amount of rain that's falling in the foothills of the Santa Cruz Mountains farther upstream. And that could still change.

"I'm glad they're clearing out the grates," he added.

See **FLOODING**, page 20



Kate Bradshaw

Water levels reached capacity near the the Pope-Chaucer bridge along the San Francisquito Creek, flooding nearby homes. Debris is removed from just below the bridge.

FLOODING

continued from page 19

Palo Alto homes spared

Palo Alto Mayor Pat Burt visited the areas around the creek Saturday and said the water went over the banks at numerous places. These breaches, however, were part of the reason the creek did not overflow at the bridge.

One house, at the corner of Chaucer Street and Palo Alto Avenue, had water pouring into its garage and backyard, he said. Otherwise, the properties in the area had generally avoided damage, he said.

“It looks like we had significant street flooding but limited impact on homes,” Burt said.

When he returned to the Pope-Chaucer Bridge later in the morning, the water levels had dropped somewhat. By 12:30 p.m., the creek waters around the bridge had receded by about 18 inches, Burt said. He noted, however, that water levels were also high near the Woodland Avenue area in East Palo Alto.

“Downstream, it’s still running really heavily and also still overtopping some places, even as it has receded at Pope-Chaucer,” he said at around noon.

At the Newell Bridge, which

is downstream from the Pope-Chaucer near the Palo Alto and East Palo Alto border, fast-moving water rose to within a foot of the bottom of the bridge. Emergency crews blocked Woodland Avenue at University and removed large chunks of debris with grappling hooks that threatened to dam up the University Avenue Bridge.

Those efforts didn’t stop the creek from overflowing in spots in the section between the Newell and University bridges. Parts of Woodland Avenue flooded, inundating yards.

East Palo Alto apartment inundated

At one East Palo Alto residence, water threatened to enter a home. The residents moved a car out of the garage to higher ground and were piling sandbags at the front door. The water was flooding the rear yard where several cars were parked under a carport.

“This hasn’t happened for years. The landlord is bringing more sandbags,” Juan Cuevas said, as he stood in the flooding yard.

Nearby, a driver in a red pickup truck stopped in the road, tentative about driving



Courtesy Webster Lincoln

Washing machines in the basement of an apartment building at Manhattan Avenue in East Palo Alto are flooded on Dec. 31.

through water that had covered the roadway on Woodland. Eventually, the truck driver and others slowly made their way across the streaming current.

Orange caution cones blocked University Avenue at Woodland to prevent drivers heading west from entering the area. Cars traveling east were allowed to pass through to clear the roadway, an East Palo Alto police officer said.

At Manhattan Avenue in East Palo Alto, the road was well flooded, as were several side streets all the way to the West Bayshore Road at the U.S. Highway 101 sound wall.

East Palo Alto resident Webster Lincoln reported that an underground parking structure at the Woodland Apartments had flooded, where cars were up to their wheel wells in water. He took photos that showed a foot or more of water lapping at a bank of front-loading washing machines and filling them halfway.

Work is planned on two bridges

The neighborhoods around the Pope-Chaucer Bridge experienced severe flooding in February 1998, when a storm caused the creek to overflow and water to inundate area homes. Since then, the San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority, which includes elected officials from Palo Alto, East Palo Alto, Menlo Park and the two water districts on either side of the county line, has been working on plans to improve flood protection.

These include replacing both the flood-prone Pope-Chaucer Bridge and the Newell Street Bridge, which is further downstream.

The agency’s current plans call for replacing the Newell Street Bridge in 2024 and the Pope-Chaucer Bridge in 2025.

The San Francisquito Creek Joint Powers Authority has completed Phase 1 of the flood

protection project, which widened the West Bayshore overpass at Highway 101, added flood walls, a reconfigured channel and protective berms in the creek and flood channel east of the freeway, held up well as the water shot down the creek past East Palo Alto’s Gardens neighborhood. The work likely preserved an entire neighborhood that would likely have experienced serious flooding in the current storm.

The Gardens neighborhood has experienced significant flooding in the past, when city officials feared that a major storm could cause a Hurricane Katrina-like disaster event with loss of life. In 2012, the earthen levees were undermined in spots, which could have caused a failure. On Saturday afternoon, the neighborhood remained dry.

Saturday’s storm led to numerous street closures in Palo Alto. The underpass on El Camino Real at University Avenue was flooded and traffic was still being diverted at the area on Jan. 3.

Menlo Park police issued an advisory at 4:21 p.m. warning that southbound Middlefield Road at Survey Lane was completely flooded and shut down. Eastbound Marsh Road was reported closed at Haven Avenue.

For coverage of the Jan. 4 storm, go to AlmanacNews.com. ■

Kate Bradshaw, Andrea Gemmet and Angela Swartz contributed to this report. Email Staff Writers Gennady Sheyner and Sue Dremann at gsheyner@pawekly.com and sdremann@pawekly.com.

Public Notices

995 Fictitious Name Statement

J CAFE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-292928
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
J Cafe, located at 246 El Camino Real, Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
J CAFE, INC
1246 El Camino Real
Menlo Park, CA 94025
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 N/A.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on December 9, 2022.
(ALM Dec. 30, 2022; Jan. 6, 13, 20, 2023)

MOUNTED PATROL FOUNDATION
MP FOUNDATION
MPF
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-293018
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Mounted Patrol Foundation, 2.) MP Foundation, 3.) MPF, located at 521 Kings Mountain Road, Woodside, CA 94062, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
MOUNTED PATROL OF SAN MATEO COUNTY FOUNDATION
521 Kings Mountain Road
Woodside, CA 94062
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 01/01/2012.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on December 22, 2022.
(ALM Dec. 30, 2022; Jan. 6, 13, 20, 2023)

LAMARQUE'S
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-293063
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
Lamarque's, located at 1139 Carlton Ave, Menlo Park, 94025, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
MARTIN LAMARQUE
1139 Carlton Ave
Menlo Park, CA 94025
SILVIA LAMARQUE
1139 Carlton Ave
Menlo Park, CA 94025
This business is conducted by: Married Couple.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 08/04/2017.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on December 28, 2022.
(ALM Jan. 6, 13, 20, 27, 2023)

REYES LANDSCAPING
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-293064
The following person(s) is (are) doing business as:
Reyes Landscaping, located at 641 Warrington Ave, Redwood City, CA 94063, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
ISMAEL REYES SOTO
641 Warrington Ave
Redwood City, CA 94063
This business is conducted by: An Individual.
The registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on N/A.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on December 28, 2022.
(ALM Jan 6, 13, 20, 27, 2023)

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A personal story

Life is full of choices, big and small, but there is also much that's out of our control. In her new memoir, "Boundless: An Abortion Doctor Becomes a Mother," author Christine Henneberg ponders the concept of choice — from her own career decisions and journey toward motherhood to the importance of trusting the choices of her patients — and how to reconcile a need for boundaries with the boundless love and dedication of parenthood. Though it's a deeply personal book, Henneberg also beautifully recounts many stories of patients, family members, friends and colleagues that have stuck with her over the years, from harrowing to heartwarming (and sometimes both at once).

Her book came together a few years ago, in the early months of her newborn daughter's life, as Henneberg reflected over many of the experiences and feelings she'd written about in her journal during her medical residency and beyond. She began recognizing common themes, "all about mothers, all about this same ambivalence I had during my training — not just whether to keep going but whether I could be a mom, whether I wanted to be a mom — the stories, they all already existed in my notebook," she said.

In "Boundless," she discusses her struggles during the grueling period of medical school and residency; her doubts about her choice of career; and ultimately finding fulfillment as an abortion doctor.

"I think in general people have this misconception that women going in to an abortion clinic are kind of careless, or clueless, or naive ... and that the clinic is full of people who are dejected and ashamed. It could not be farther from the truth," she said. Yes, there are plenty of moments of pain, sadness, and difficulty, but there is also empowerment.

"We're so proud to be there helping women through these difficult decisions," she said. "It's very rewarding work that we take a lot of pride in. Women leave the clinic carried to some extent on that pride they feel from the good care they've received there."



Courtesy Christine Henneberg

Author and physician Christine Henneberg, who grew up in Palo Alto, discusses her work as an abortion doctor and her thoughts as she became a parent for the first time in her book, "Boundless: An Abortion Doctor Becomes a Mother."

One of the reasons Henneberg said she loves her work as an abortion provider is the opportunity to fully support women in their choices.

"I really love meeting a woman in a place and a time in her life when she has every reason to feel anxious, afraid or certain that she's going to be treated poorly. To meet her and say, 'I completely trust you. I'm going to treat you with all the dignity and respect you deserve and keep you safe,'" she said. "Really trusting her with her life and her body, I think that is not something that women get — especially pregnant women — very often."

As a California-based doctor, Henneberg has not seen much change to her day-to-day clinical work since the U.S. Supreme Court ruling in June 2022 that overturned the 1973 *Roe v. Wade* decision and denied the constitutional right to abortion, although she said she does now see more patients from out of state.

"I certainly have strong feelings about the women who are stuck in other states who we will never see, who are so stuck they can't really access any solution. For so many women it was so hard for them to get an abortion

already," she said. "And I think about my colleagues in other states who trained to do the work that I do, who can't do it any more."

When her two children are older, she hopes to travel to help provide care in states like Kansas, where abortion clinics are facing an influx of patients from neighboring states, and engage in more activist work. "I think about what's happening in the rest of the country a lot," she said.

While becoming a mother has not changed Henneberg's commitment to abortion work, it has had an impact on how she relates to the women in her care, especially to the many who already have children and are making a decision on ending a subsequent pregnancy.

"I really identify more with my patients. I empathize with them," she said. "They make decisions for what's best for their families. I understand the complexity of that choice, of that decision, much better than before."

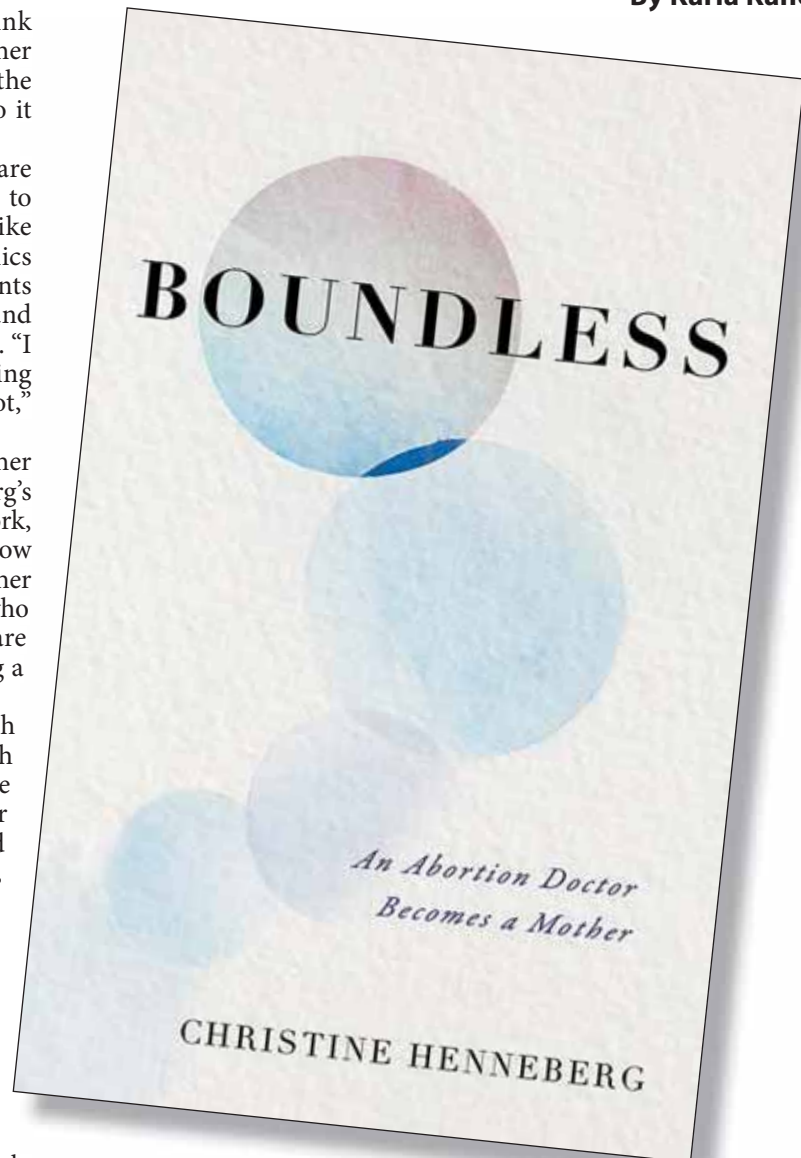
The structure of "Boundless" follows Henneberg's pregnancy leading up to the birth of her first child, interspersed with memories from her childhood and personal life as well as her medical work. In addition to her evolving thoughts about motherhood, she reflects on her relationship with her husband, his close-knit family, and her own parents, including the sometimes fraught connection with her father, who died nearly three years ago.

"He knew very much the complexities of his and my relationship and how we loved each other and pushed each other very hard," Henneberg said. "I don't think there's anything in the book that would have surprised him."

From a young age, Henneberg always dreamed of being a writer. She was raised in Palo Alto and fondly recalls many happy days spent visiting the former downtown bookshop, If Wishes Were Horses, and the Palo Alto Children's Library, where she spending hours reading in its Secret Garden.

With recent book, Bay Area author and physician reflects on life as a parent and her work as an abortion doctor

By Karla Kane



"For someone who liked to read, Palo Alto was the perfect place to grow up," she said. Her love of writing soon followed her love of reading. At age 14, in fact, she won the Palo Alto Weekly's annual Short Story Contest ("She writes compulsively," her mother told this news organization at the time).

While writing remains perhaps her truest calling, she became interested in medicine after volunteering as an English teacher in rural India during a semester off from college.

The experience "really opened my eyes to public health and poverty," she said, particularly in regards to women's health, and she was inspired by the work of Paul Farmer, the late physician and co-founder of the nonprofit Partners in Health, as well other writer-doctors. "I knew it was possible," she said of

combining medicine and writing. She earned a bachelor's degree in English and creative writing from Pomona College, then completed the UC Berkeley-UCSF Joint Medical Program.

In recent years, she's published essays in the New York Times, the San Francisco Chronicle, Boston Review, HuffPost, Slate, the Los Angeles Times and others, and plans to return to fiction writing as well.

"I'm always writing about abortion stories because there are so many of them," she said. "I hope to help people understand what's at stake and how complicated it can be."

More information is available at christinehenneberg.com. ■

Email Contributing Writer
Karla Kane at karlajkane@gmail.com.

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**Leah
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LEAD REPORTER

Hear from reporter, Leah Worthington

As a new reporter to Embarcadero Media, a small local news organization on the Peninsula that covers news for the Palo Alto Weekly, the Mountain View Voice, The Almanac, and Redwood City Pulse, I could never have imagined what this year would bring.

Over the last 12 months, as a founding reporter for the Pulse, I've had the opportunity to moderate local political debates and go behind the scenes at a beloved family circus. I've spent hours uncovering the reality of homeless encampment evictions and going door-to-door to speak with neighbors affected by wildfire. Most recently, on the night of the Pulse's one-year anniversary celebration no less, a tragedy struck our community and threw me into a deeply wrenching and complex story.

On Nov. 4, a car crash took the lives of a young, local couple and the parents of two twin girls. In the aftermath of the crash, I found myself in difficult, often emotional conversations with family members, friends, law enforcement and county officials, as we tried to piece together what had happened—and what the impacts would be. The stories that have come since have touched on both our shared humanity and our political differences, as families try to heal and legal and law enforcement experts grapple with how to seek justice.

Local journalism truly runs the gamut. From heated political protests to colorful Día de los Muertos festivals to hours-long city council meetings, I'm out there with my fellow reporters, catching the action, talking to the community and reporting back on what we find.

You, our readers, are as essential in this work as anyone else. You ask critical questions, share invaluable tips and remind us what this work is really about—keeping our communities engaged and informed.

You've made these stories possible, and with your help, we'll be able to keep them coming. Please take a moment to support us in bringing you essential, hyper-local coverage.

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Food & Drink

Healthy recipes for the new year

Palo Alto home chef publishes French- and Lebanese-inspired cookbook

By Kate Bradshaw

Fida Milki for years had been a health-conscious home chef and enjoyed cooking for friends and family at her Palo Alto house. But until recently, the most she'd showcased her culinary skills had been to donate meals to school fundraisers at the former International School of the Peninsula, now the Silicon Valley International School, where her children attended.

Her daughter encouraged her to start an Instagram page at the onset of the pandemic to showcase her cooking, but Milki was resistant at first. Eventually, with encouragement from her daughter and from a niece who lives overseas and helps women build businesses, she agreed to try it out, launching the Instagram account Fertayket Fida.

Her recipes and beautifully presented food photos were a hit on the social media platform. She drew inspiration for her plating from long walks around Palo Alto, picking up locally grown and seasonal flowers to decorate her dishes.

Last year, she released her first cookbook, called "Recipes for Every Day," and just released an e-cookbook of recipes for the new year themed around detoxing from the holidays. The cookbook, "Detox for Every Meal," is available for purchase online and includes smoothies, soups, main courses and desserts.

"All these recipes are like my babies," she says.

Growing up in Lebanon, her mom did most of the cooking. When Milki got married and came to the U.S., she didn't know how to cook anything, she says.

As a newlywed, she recalls making a special trip to the Sharon Heights Safeway in Menlo Park, near where she lived at the time, to make one of her husband's favorite dishes, a white bean stew with chicken. But by the time she'd followed the recipe, she found the beans had more or less melted, losing their shape and leaving only chicken chunks behind. It took

time and experimentation to become a better chef, but her skills slowly grew.

Today, she's an avid cookbook collector and regularly finds inspiration from books by Yotam Ottolenghi and the Barefoot Contessa's Ina Garten, looking for ways to take their recipes and twist them to be more health conscious, she says.

Milki also draws upon her multicultural background in her cooking. She studied language and translation in college and met her husband, a local doctor, in Lebanon through mutual friends. She still visits there most summers and uses Lebanese and French influences to inspire her dishes, which

place an emphasis on nutrition and healthy eating.

Two years into building up Fertayket Fida, she has no plans to slow down, she says. With her latest e-cookbook now published, she's dreaming of writing a cookbook that draws on her mom's recipes from Lebanon.

"Don't be afraid to attempt to cook," she says when asked how home chefs can build on their skills. "It's not scary. A few times you will fail, and then you will be cooking over and over, and it will become a pleasure."

"You can always find some time to cook," she adds. "Home-cooked (meals) are better quality and healthier ... you know you are eating something healthy."



Courtesy Leila Milki

Palo Alto cookbook author Fida Milki prepares her coconut quinoa salad.



Courtesy Fida Milki

Fida Milki's fig salad includes sweet potato, arugula and melon.

Coconut quinoa salad

- 1 cup rinsed quinoa
- 2 cups coconut milk
- 1 cucumber, peeled and sliced
- 2 tablespoons pomegranate seeds

- 1 avocado, peeled and sliced
- 2 tablespoons fresh mint leaves
- 2 tablespoons fresh basil leaves
- 1 cup greens, your choice
- Crumbled feta or goat cheese to taste
- 2 tablespoons toasted chickpeas*
- Salt and pepper to taste

In a small pot, mix the rinsed quinoa with the coconut milk and 2/3 cup of water. Add salt and bring to a boil.

Lower the heat and let simmer covered for 20 minutes or until all the liquid is absorbed.

Transfer to a serving bowl and top with the cucumber, pomegranate, avocado, mint, basil, goat cheese and chickpeas. Toss together and enjoy.

*To toast the chickpeas, heat the oven to 400 F. Spread the chickpeas on a cookie sheet lined with parchment paper. Drizzle with avocado oil, paprika and zaatar to taste. Roast for 20 minutes until crispy. ■

Email Associate Digital Editor Kate Bradshaw at peninsulafoodist@embarcaderopublishing.com.

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