

The Almanac

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Rare late-winter storm brings snow to the Midpeninsula

By Andrea Gemmet and
Bay City News Service

Midpeninsula residents woke up last Thursday, Feb. 23, to the rare sight of local hilltops decorated with a dusting of snow, as a cold winter storm moved through the Bay Area.

The wintry weather continued through the weekend, with rain at lower elevations and snow in the mountains. In Palo Alto, upper Page Mill road was closed to traffic more than once due to snow in the road between Moody Road and Skyline Boulevard.

Adventurous residents bundled up and brought their snow gear to local open space areas to take in the unusual sight. Alton Hartzell, 13, of Portola Valley managed to do a little skiing at the Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve on Feb. 23. Eleanor Raab took photos of a winter wonderland at Windy Hill Open Space Preserve in Portola Valley and Alice's Restaurant in Woodside, with snow coating rooftops, trees and parking lots.

More than a foot of snow fell Friday, Feb. 24, in some parts of the Bay Area, the first sizable amount of snow in the region in more than a decade, according to



Courtesy Eleanor Raab

See **SNOW**, page 17

A tree and a picnic table covered in snow at Windy Hill Open Space Preserve in Portola Valley on Feb. 23.

Murder trial wraps up in slaying of Atherton arborist

Testimony paints picture of alleged killer as a misogynist obsessed with work

By Cameron Rebosio

The murder trial of 30-year-old Francis Wolke, who is accused of murdering retired Atherton town arborist Kathy Hughes Anderson in 2018, concluded on Tuesday, Feb. 28.

In closing statements, Deputy District Attorney Tricia Povah made the case for Wolke's

intent to murder. Povah laid out in graphic details the injuries that Wolke inflicted during multiple attempts to take the life of Hughes Anderson, including attempted strangulation.



Kathy Hughes
Anderson

Wolke is accused of murdering Hughes Anderson in her Menlo Park home by stabbing her in the eye with a pencil, hitting her brain. Wolke also allegedly attempted to behead Hughes Anderson, and his defense lawyers alleged that he intended to engage in cannibalism. He pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity.

Wolke reportedly told inves-

tigators he "wasn't very good at (it) because (he'd) never done it before."

Povah told the jury that investigators found Wolke's ankle brace, belongings and shoes on the floor of the guest bedroom. The bed was disheveled, and they believe that when Wolke was discovered in the house, he had been sleeping.

The prosecution pointed out

that Wolke was not seen talking to himself and did not report any auditory hallucinations in the two weeks following his arrest. Povah argued that he showed awareness of his situation. When police officers went to enter the house to investigate, Wolke told them where to find Hughes Anderson.

See **TRIAL**, page 18

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**Andrea
Gemmet**
EDITOR

The **Almanac**

A message from our Editor, Andrea Gemmet

I'm Andrea Gemmet a news editor for 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.

It was a typically busy Tuesday afternoon in June when one of my reporters called to tell me the power had gone out in Emerald Hills and she planned to take her laptop to a coffee shop to finish working. We were still on the phone when she realized a wildfire had broken out.

In that moment, our conversation shifted. Smoke was in the air, firefighters were racing to the scene and she needed to evacuate. As she and her family scooped up their dogs and headed to safety, the rest of the newsroom team sprang into action. There was no telling how fast or how far the fire would spread, and we wanted to make sure the rapidly changing news about road closures and evacuation areas reached our readers as quickly as possible.

Being familiar with the steep, narrow, and winding roads in the area, I was worried about the havoc a large-scale evacuation might cause, and had been frantically posting emergency information on our social media channels in an attempt to reach as many people as possible.

As the Edgewood fire spread, our reporters worked the phones, our visual journalist hurried to the scene and I ended up grabbing a notebook and heading a press conference at Woodside Fire Protection District's Station 19. On the way there, I called friends to tell them that they were in the evacuation zone and needed to leave.

After more than a decade as the editor of the Mountain View Voice and more recently, The Almanac, it had been a while since I'd been out covering a fire. I vividly remembered being a pregnant reporter, eyes stinging and throat raw from the smoke as I walked all over Woodside on the sweltering day in August 2002 when wind-blown embers spread a six-alarm fire that started on the grounds of the Fleishhacker estate. Once the flames were quenched, I covered the efforts to make Woodside, Portola Valley and Emerald Hills more fire-resistant and better prepared for the next wildfire.

As journalists from this community, the work isn't always easy. These stories affect us, our families, and our neighbors. Yet, it gives us the opportunity to gain a deeper understanding of local issues, and a responsibility to enhance our reporting with context. We wouldn't be able to do that without the ongoing support of our members.

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Local News

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Magali Gauthier

Costano Elementary School in East Palo Alto was closed for two days last week due to power outages, drawing the ire of Ravenswood City School District officials.

Power outages cause school closures in Ravenswood district

Board members express disappointment with PG&E's treatment of East Palo Alto community

By Angela Swartz

Students were back in classrooms Friday, Feb. 24, following several school closures across the Ravenswood City School District due to weather-related power outages. The school board is questioning why Pacific Gas & Electric Company did not do more to restore power in the community.

In East Palo Alto, Los Robles-Ronald McNair Academy closed last Wednesday, Feb. 22, and Costano Elementary School closed Wednesday and Thursday of last week because of power outages, said Chief Business Officer Will Eger. Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School and Belle Haven Elementary School remained open. All schools were closed Monday and Tuesday, Feb.

20-21, for the Presidents' Day holiday.

Trustee Mele Latu said 4,000 households were affected by outages, which means about "10,000 to 15,000 people were subjected to that type of disrespect" by PG&E.

"We won't be ignored," said board President Jenny Varghese Bloom. The school

See **POWER OUTAGES**, page 19

Local schools respond to increase in hate speech

Hillview Middle School and M-A launch initiatives to combat the trend

By Angela Swartz

Noticing an increase in hurtful and offensive language — including antisemitic, racial and ethnic slurs — over the last year and half, administrators at Hillview Middle School and Menlo-Atherton High School have started initiatives to combat the issue and campuses more welcoming to all students.

The Menlo Park middle school launched "Walk a Mile" Wednesdays in late January in which staffers record video testimonials of their own experiences with hurtful language as middle schoolers. The uptick district officials have noticed includes two incidents at the end of last school year and three this school year, said district Public Information Officer Parke Treadway in an email.

"Unfortunately, we are not immune to the rise in hate speech and ethnic slurs being used across the country as incidents of Islamophobia and antisemitism have recently affected our own families," a recent Menlo Park City School District newsletter states.

The number of hate speech incidents at Hillview remain low, but more incidents may be reported and noticed as a result of the work around creating belonging and connection, Treadway said.

The week of Feb. 13, a racial slur was written on a desk in one of Hillview's classrooms, Principal Danielle O'Brien said in a Feb. 17 email to families.

As part of the "Walk a Mile" project, sixth grade teacher Danielle Beres shared how classmates made antisemitic comments toward her when she was in middle school and how they affected her.

Assistant Principal Johnna Becker described how her elementary school classmates gave her offensive nicknames as a kid.

"I still to this day, at my age, many, many, many years older, I can't even say those words ... because they still hurt me," she said.

Incidents at M-A

Menlo-Atherton Principal Karl Losekoot reported an antisemitic incident on campus. There was a single swastika on one bathroom tile, and two swastikas (with lines drawn over them) on a second tile in a G-Wing girls bathroom at the Atherton school in early December, according to a Dec. 8 Atherton Police Department report.

Because this was not the first time 'swastika' type of emblems were found on school grounds,

See **HATE SPEECH**, page 15

County probation officer accused of sexually abusing teens and young men for years

10 civil lawsuits allege San Mateo County was negligent and aware of decades of abuse complaints

By Michelle Iracheta

Now-deceased probation officer who worked with young men and boys is at the center of 10 civil lawsuits recently filed against San Mateo County that allege the county was aware of sexual abuse within the probation department but did nothing to investigate or stop it from continuing.

Plaintiffs allege that John Domeniconi, who retired in 2016,

used his position of authority as a San Mateo County probation officer to sexually abuse at least 10 victims through acts such as forced oral sex, touching their genitals and anuses, and making explicit sexual comments.

They also claim that, in some cases, Domeniconi watched minors shower without a legitimate reason and threatened them with increased sentences or tougher confinement if they did not comply with his demands.

According to the lawsuits, the plaintiffs, who were teen boys or young men at the time, were allegedly victimized in the 1990s through 2020 and have suffered from severe emotional distress, physical pain, emotional anguish, fear, anxiety, humiliation and embarrassment, as well as other physical and emotional injuries as a result of Domeniconi's alleged conduct.

Ignored complaints

Joseph Goethals, an attorney representing the accusers, said that despite complaints and reports, no investigation was ever conducted by the county, probation department, or anyone in law enforcement.

"This was extremely traumatic for them," Goethals said. "And, some of them did complain and speak up. So there's documentation, but there was no investigation."

Goethals said he believes that had an investigation been conducted and witnesses interviewed, it could have prevented additional victims from being molested.

Despite raising their concerns, Goethals said, the conduct continued, and the victims were not provided with any advocates or attorneys to protect them. Instead, they

See **ABUSE**, page 14



TOWN OF PORTOLA VALLEY NOTICE OF PLANNING COMMISSION SPECIAL MEETING

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the Planning Commission of the Town of Portola Valley will hold a public hearing on **Monday, March 6, 2023 at 7:00 p.m. via hybrid format at the Historic Schoolhouse, 765 Portola Road, Portola Valley and Zoom.**

The Planning Commission will consider a recommendation to the Town Council regarding amendments to the Housing Element of the General Plan and associated actions as follows:

- **Housing Element Update (2023-2031)**
- **Conforming General Plan Amendments** 1) Creation of a new "Gateway" land use classification that allows affordable housing, recreation, and open space uses to be applied to two parcels. 2) Creation of two new multi-family land use classifications allowing up to four and 20 dwelling units per acre. 3) Creation of an opt-in overlay classification to allow for a up to four units on approximately three single family lots (not to exceed a total of 12 units during the new housing element cycle). 4) Creation of a new mixed-use land use classification to allow for up to six dwelling units per acre as well as the uses currently permitted in the existing A-P Administrative Professional District. The Land Use Element, Alpine Scenic Corridor Plan and Nathhorst Triangle Plan, the General Plan Land Use Map and the Nathhorst Triangle Plan diagram would be revised to include these new land use designations.

An Initial Study/Mitigated Negative Declaration has been prepared in compliance with the California Environmental Quality Act.

Information pertaining to these actions may be viewed by contacting Thomas Geisler, Development Review Technician, at tgeisler@portolavalley.net. The agenda and staff report will be published at <https://www.portolavalley.net/town-government/planning-commission/minutes-and-agendas> in advance of the meeting.

Public Hearings provide the general public and interested parties an opportunity to provide testimony on these items. All interested persons are invited to appear before the Planning Commission to be heard at the time and place mentioned above. If you challenge a proposed action(s) in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at a Public Hearing(s) described above, or in written correspondence delivered to the Planning Commission at, or prior to, the Public Hearing(s). Public Comments should be directed to housing@portolavalley.net.

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Laura Russell, Planning & Building Director

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CRIME BRIEFS

Hit-and-run driver kills man, crashes into five cars

A man was killed by a hit-and-run driver on Sunday, Feb. 26, in East Palo Alto.

Police were dispatched to the 2200 block of Ralmar Avenue at 10:08 a.m. to reports of a man being struck by a vehicle that fled the scene.

Officers found a 64-year-old unconscious man on the driveway of a residence. Three nearby vehicles were also struck and damaged.

The victim was transported to the hospital where he later died. As of Wednesday, the coroner's office had not released the man's name.

The vehicle police believe hit the man was found a block away, where it had collided with two more vehicles and a fence.

Police ask anyone with information about the driver or the collisions contact Cmdr. David Carson at 650-853-3160.

—Bay City News Service

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Woodside Priory to present 'The Oresteia'

Tickets are on sale for Woodside Priory School's high school play "The Oresteia," an adaptation of the Greek tragedy by Ellen McLaughlin.

Set in modern day, Agamemnon returns triumphant after a decade battling in the Trojan War to his wife Clytemnestra, who is waiting for him.

The play will be performed by two casts for four performances. This link shows you which cast is performing: tinyurl.com/Oresteia-Casts-and-Show-Days.

Performances are Thursday, March 9, to Saturday, March 11, at 7 p.m. and Sunday, March 12, at 2 p.m. at Woodside Priory School, 302 Portola Road in Portola Valley.

Tickets are \$5 for students and \$15 for adults. Purchase tickets at the door or at priory.ticketleap.com/oresteia-at-priory/details.

Woodside High School production of 'Cinderella: Enchanted'

Woodside High School's Theater Arts department will perform "Cinderella: Enchanted" this month.

The play is inspired by the 1997 film adaptation of "Cinderella," which starred Brandy as Cinderella and Whitney Houston as her Fairy Godmother.

Cinderella is played by Roxanne Bobo and Izzy Wynne plays the stepmother. Annabelle Hopkins and Kate Chernykh play the stepsisters, and Nicki Weppner plays the prince. The play is directed by Barry Woodruff.

The play takes place at Woodside High School Performing Arts Center, 199 Churchill Ave. in Woodside.

The show runs from March 17-26, with performances at 7:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays and 2 p.m. on Sundays.

Buy tickets at showtix4u.com/event-details/70930.

For more information, contact dramaboosterswhs@gmail.com.

M-A spring musical is 'Newsies'

Based on the real-life Newsboy Strike of 1899, 'Newsies' tells the story of newsboys who organize a strike when executives raise the price of papers to increase profits.

Tickets are \$10 for students and seniors; and \$15 for adults.

The show runs March 17-26. Showtime is 7:30 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays and 5 p.m. on Sundays.

The shows take place at Menlo-Atherton High School Performing Arts Center, 555 Middlefield Road in Atherton.

Buy tickets at tix.com/ticket-sales/MADrama/7119.

For more information, go to MADrama.org.

Broom pull in Portola Valley is March 26

The Portola Valley Conservation Committee, community volunteers and Scout troops will host the annual French "broom pull" on Sunday, March 26. The event was originally scheduled

See **COMMUNITY BRIEFS**, page 18

Community college district to restart chancellor search over 'compromised' confidentiality

Skyline College president to take over as San Mateo County district's interim chancellor

By Angela Swartz

The San Mateo County Community College District halted its search for a new chancellor after one of the candidates issued a statement about his decision to withdraw from the process in January, according to a Feb. 22 press release.



Melissa Moreno

On Wednesday, Feb. 22, the board opted to appoint Skyline College President Melissa Moreno to the role on an interim basis.

The board announced three finalists for the permanent role in November. When the work of the district's selection committee was finished, the school board requested a site visit with one of the candidates to "complete confirmatory diligence prior to negotiating a formal offer," said board President Lisa Petrides in a statement.

"The candidate declined to make such arrangements, withdrew from the process, and issued a public statement regarding their decision," she said. "Unfortunately, the confidentiality of the search process was compromised when this candidate issued a press release regarding their decision to withdraw. Shortly following this public statement, the two other finalists forwarded by the selection committee subsequently

withdrew their candidacies from consideration."

Although the district does not name the candidate, Bradley Davis, chancellor of the West Valley-Mission Community College District in the South Bay told The Almanac that he was offered the position in January but declined it and is no longer a candidate. West Valley issued a press release on Jan. 19 saying that Davis would remain with the district.

"I stand by my earlier statement, but have moved on from this," Davis said in an email Monday, Feb. 27.

Mike Claire has filled the role of interim chancellor for the San Mateo Community College District since 2019, when he stepped in for disgraced chancellor emeritus Ron Galatolo. Claire took on the role permanently in May 2020. Galatolo exited the district before being charged with 21 felonies in April for public corruption and misuse of funds during his leadership of the district.

The board plans to restart the permanent selection process, Petrides said.

Interim chancellor

Moreno, who became Skyline's president in August 2020, will begin as interim chancellor on April 1 and her contract runs until June 30, 2024. Her contract is for \$350,000 annually.

Claire plans to stay on until June 30 to help Moreno with the transition, according to a Feb. 17

email from Petrides.

"In Dr. Moreno, we have selected a higher education leader that is truly focused on the overall wellbeing of our students, and our valued team members," Petrides said in a statement. "On behalf of the Board of Trustees, I would like to thank Dr. Moreno for her partnership, and for her steadfast commitment to our mission of making access to higher education a right for all in San Mateo County."

Moreno said in a statement that she is humbled to fill the role.

"As the district's newest caretaker, I will work with our stakeholders and community to ensure that our nationally recognized college district sets the example in our state for progressive and equitable educational opportunities for our most disproportionately impacted student populations that works to remove barriers to their success," Moreno said.

Moreno will receive 225 hours of vacation annually, and can cash out up to 10 days of vacation annually. She would receive one day per month of sick leave, and the same health and welfare benefits, including post-retirement medical benefits, as are generally provided to management personnel of the district, according to the contract. ■

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

Child care shortage persists in San Mateo County

By Angela Swartz

There are still great unmet needs for infant and toddler care, but preschool level care is improving in San Mateo County, according to a new report from the San Mateo County Office of Education.

The 2022 Child Care Needs Assessment found that there is demand for 58,505 child care spaces in the county, including 53,574 spaces for residents and 4,930 spaces for non-resident employees working in San Mateo County. There is a shortage of 17,157 spots, meaning 29% of demand is going unmet.

By 2032, unmet demand is expected to grow to 34%.

The majority of the shortage is in infant care, with only 34% of demand being met.

"I am cautiously optimistic," said Sarah Kinahan, coordinator of the Child Care Partnership Council, which is part of the county's Office of Education. She said the county rallied to support the child care sector during COVID-19, and that the pandemic highlighted how much families rely on child care centers in order to work.

"We have the will now," she said. "There's a spotlight on the issue."

Kinahan, who helped put the study together, noted that meeting the demand is expensive and a "deep problem."

Brion Economics prepared the study for the San Mateo County Office of Education, in partnership with the San Mateo County Child Care Partnership Council, First 5 San Mateo County, and the Silicon Valley Community Foundation. This report is based on a countywide study of child care needs for infants through 12-year-olds and is one part of a larger, countywide study that identifies current and future

See **CHILD CARE**, page 19

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



How to Protect Your Property During a Power Outage

Dear Monica: We lost electric power during the recent storm and had no heat, spoiled food, and more. What can we do to avoid this in future?

Mary C.

Dear Mary: Power outages are common during storms and more owners are installing back-up power sources such as generators and home energy storage batteries. Prices of these vary widely and there are other differences to consider.

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Kepler's hosts Bernie Sanders in book talk on capitalism in the U.S.

Senator's co-author talks about intersection of politics and economics and the role of billionaires

By Kate Bradshaw

Sen. Bernie Sanders handily won the popular vote in the 2020 primaries in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, but ultimately lost the primaries to now President Joe Biden. The two counties are at the heart of Silicon Valley, which has cultivated many of the targets of Sanders' fiery viral speeches, from the billionaires he wants taxed to the tech giants he wants to break up.

Sanders will be in Silicon Valley March 4 for the only Northern California appearance scheduled to talk about his new book, "It's OK to be Angry About Capitalism," hosted by Kepler's Literary Foundation at San Jose's California Theatre. The event, which is nearly sold out, promises a lively discussion about topics ranging from the senator's calls for health care reform to the future of work.

In their book, Sanders and co-author John Nichols, a Wisconsin-based journalist and national affairs correspondent at *The Nation*, explore the senator's influence over the last few tumultuous years in American politics and the unfettered ways that money drives political decision-making and is widening the wealth gap.

They lay out a vision for how the country's politics could be reshaped, offering guaranteed economic rights to all individuals in areas like health care, work and education.



John Nichols



Bernie Sanders

This publication chatted with Nichols to hear more about the book he co-authored with Sanders and what messages it contains for readers in Silicon Valley. This interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Kate Bradshaw: Could you start by telling me a little bit about your role in working with Senator Sanders on this book? What was that process like?

John Nichols: Well, I've known Sen. Sanders for decades and written about him a lot over the years. I wrote the afterword to his autobiography; a couple of editions of it. And then he wrote an introduction to one of my books. So we've written things together before or at least had these literary connections over the years. In the summer of 2021, we were talking, and he said he was trying to put together a book that might talk more deeply about policy issues. And he asked if I would like to help do it.

We both contributed to all the different parts of the book. It's a book about his campaigns and also about his policies. What we tried to do was to explore some policy issues that maybe haven't been dug into as deeply. One of

the things that I was particularly interested in was making sure that we wrote a lot about media policy. Also, I've written some articles over the years on technological change, robotification, the new era of work in America, and so particularly in some of those areas where we're talking about work life and the future of work, I encouraged us to go deep in those areas.

Bradshaw: So the overall thesis of the book is in its title, but it's also deeper than that. Can you summarize what are some of the book's calls to action?

Nichols: At the core, the book is trying to open up a discussion in America that goes to a deeper place. Too frequently, our discussions about politics and about the economy are delinked, and so we don't think of economic issues as being those that should be close to or at the center of our politics. Often, there's a sensibility in the United States that economics sort of happens to us, right? Like, we don't know why the stock market went up or went down. What we wanted to argue is that there are a lot of decisions made about our economy by powerful people in politics and in business that affect all of our lives, but that we don't have as much say in it as we should.

If there's a call to action, it is for people to be more engaged in these debates and more willing to make demands of our politics. One of the core demands is that we tax the rich, that we make sure that billionaires

and multinational corporations pay their fair share. Another aspect of it is that when these resources come from a fairer tax system — a fairer system in general — that those resources should be allocated in ways that create universal guarantees for people: a guarantee of health care, not as a privilege but as a right; a guarantee of access to education, not as a privilege, but as right. That's really the core call to action: for people to seize their democratic — small "d" democratic — power and demand a fairer and more just society.

Bradshaw: In this particular area's voting history, (in the 2020 primaries) there were plenty of super-wealthy precincts that picked Michael Bloomberg (a billionaire) over Bernie. And one of this book's messages is that there shouldn't be billionaires. What's Sen. Sanders' message for those voters? And what would you say to them?

Nichols: What we set out to do was write a book that talks about empowering the working class, and creating a more fair and equitable society. I think people of many backgrounds feel that is necessary and know that is good for the United States. Will there be people who resist? Of course.

Silicon Valley has a very rich political history, and it has sent some of the most creative thinkers to Congress, going back to the 1960s. Now, the district sends Ro Khanna to Congress. Khanna was co-chair of Bernie

Sanders' presidential campaign and has taken many of the issues that Bernie Sanders has raised and put them at the center of his political activism and his political service.

There's plenty of space in Silicon Valley for a discussion about how to make our politics better, and, frankly, how to make our economy better. And at the center of that discussion, there is space for a real examination of how capitalism is working in the United States. That discussion will take people in a lot of different directions. One of the things we talked about in the book is what we refer to as uber-capitalism — that's capitalism out of control, where there's very little regulation, very little guidance and frankly, very, very wealthy people do whatever they want. What we argue is that's not healthy. It's not healthy for our society, it's not healthy for our economy, or for our politics. That's where the book is coming from.

Sen. Bernie Sanders and co-author John Nichols are scheduled to discuss their new book, "It's OK to be Angry About Capitalism" Saturday, March 4, 7-8 p.m. at an event hosted by the Kepler's Literary Foundation at the California Theatre in San Jose. Masks required. For more information, visit keplers.org.

Read a longer version of this Q&A at almanacnews.com/arts.

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

Portola Valley town manager announces resignation

Jeremy Dennis spent seven years leading town staff

By Angela Swartz

After seven years with Portola Valley, Town Manager Jeremy Dennis' last day in the role will be March 17.

Dennis, who joined town staff in 2016, made the announcement at a Feb. 22 Town Council meeting. Dennis told *The Almanac* that he isn't sure where he will land next.

"To the Town Council, each and every resident, the incredible staff, and the many community and regional partners that I have had the distinct pleasure of working with over the last seven years, I simply say thank you," Dennis said in a statement. "I am immensely proud of the work I've had the great opportunity to contribute to that I hope has made Portola Valley a better place."

Dennis said he was emotional

while making the announcement at the meeting.

"Very few people can say that they had their dream job and I've had my dream job for the last seven years and I want to thank the council and the council members that I've had the pleasure to work for," he said. "The amazing staff of people who work hard every day, not to earn a bonus, not to earn a little extra cash but because they care about government and care about the community. Each and every resident that I've had the great fortune to interact with, learn from and hopefully represent to the best of my abilities, and every other partner that we've had

the chance to engage with."

Dennis said he plans to spend more time with his aging extended family.

During the meeting, resident Betsy Morgenthaler told Dennis she was in shock he was leaving and thanked him for his service to the town. Others echoed her comments of surprise and gratitude to Dennis for his ability to listen and be even keeled.

A town press release notes that Dennis was instrumental in modernizing town systems, policies, communications and the budget process, including the town's first capital improvement program. During the COVID-19 lockdown, Dennis moved services online quickly. Dennis also put the town on the radar of regional and state entities, ensuring needed funding and support in the broader

political landscape.

"For the past seven years, I have had the honor to work with Jeremy Dennis as Portola Valley's Town Manager," said Mayor Jeff Aalfs in a statement. "He has guided the town (and me) through countless complicated situations, perhaps none more so than the COVID-19 pandemic of 2020 and the torrent of policies, decisions and communications that came with it.

"Jeremy's mastery of technical details, combined with his calm demeanor, his unfailing commitment to public service, and his political knowledge and skills have made him invaluable to the town of Portola Valley, and to amateur elected officials like myself. I thank Jeremy for his years of service and wish him well on his next adventure," Aalfs said.

Before joining Portola

Valley town staff, Dennis was a district director for former Assemblyman Rich Gordon, D-Menlo Park, and an advance planning manager for the city of Palo Alto, according to *The Almanac's* archives.

He holds a bachelor's degree in political science and U.S. history from the University of California at Davis, and a master's degree (in 2002) in regional and urban planning from the London School of Economics and Political Science, according to the archives.

Dennis' exit follows the departure of Assistant Town Manager Melvin Gaines, who became East Palo Alto's city manager, in late January. ■

Email Staff Writer Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com

Tim Sheeper wins bid to keep running Burgess Pool

By Cameron Rebosio

The Menlo Park City Council voted 3-2 on Tuesday, Feb. 28, to give Tim Sheeper the contract to manage Burgess Pool and the under-construction Menlo Park Community Center (MPCC), with Vice Mayor Cecilia Taylor and Council member Betsy Nash dissenting.

His company, Team Sheeper, has operated Burgess Pool since 2006 and has coached in Menlo Park since 1993. Team Sheeper has operated Rinconada Pool in Palo Alto since 2017, and ran the Belle Haven Pool that closed in 2021 for renovation and will reopen as the Menlo Park Community Center (MPCC) later this year.

The vote directs Menlo Park city staff to pursue negotiations with Tim Sheeper on a contract to run the city's pool and aquatic programs.

Several residents came to speak on behalf of Team Sheeper, asking the City Council to continue with the programs currently offered by Team Sheeper at Burgess Pool.

"Our vibrant pool community is really the envy of the communities around us, as evidenced by Palo Alto contracting



Magali Gauthier

Burgess Pool in Menlo Park is a popular spot for lap swimmers.

with Team Sheeper to revitalize their Rinconada facility," resident Michael Rothenberg said. "The pool has been affordable, reliable (and) safe, even through the pandemic, which deserves a huge amount of recognition."

Two other companies, SOLO Aquatics and The Swimming Swan, also submitted proposals

to take over pool operations. City staff found they could not recommend SOLO Aquatics, as the organization doesn't have experience operating a community pool. The Swimming Swan has experience in pool operation, but there would be a possible disruption in programming as a new pool operator moved in.

Nash said she was in favor of moving forward with both The Swimming Swan and Team Sheeper in negotiations, possibly exploring the separation of responsibilities between the two.

"I see the programming is different from the operations of the pool," Nash said. "I do believe that we do have two respondents to

the RFP who both would be very satisfactory."

Council member Drew Combs said that he couldn't vote to support SOLO Aquatics for the city since it doesn't have experience of running a pool.

"As in my role on City Council ... I want to see what you're actually doing," Combs said. "I can't take that risk."

Council member Maria Doerr supported moving forward to negotiations with Tim Sheeper "who already is building relationships, not just with individuals, but with community organizations and groups here to ensure that pool programming and aquatic opportunities are made available to as many people as possible in our city."

Combs made the motion to identify Team Sheeper as the city's preferred aquatics operator, and was seconded by Doerr with Mayor Jen Wolosin also in favor. Nash and Taylor voted against it and were selected to create an ad hoc subcommittee to advise city staff during the negotiation process with Team Sheeper. ■

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

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Stanford University receives \$1.35M grant for climate research

By Grace Doerfler

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency announced \$5 million in grant funding Feb. 27 for California institutions researching the impacts of climate change on underserved communities, including \$1.35 million awarded to Stanford University.

The grant Stanford received will fund a research project on sanitation infrastructure and climate change in African American communities.

William Abraham Tarpeh, an assistant professor of chemical

engineering at Stanford, is the principal investigator for the project.

“Although access to sanitation infrastructure in the U.S. is widespread, it is still not equitable, particularly for underserved African American communities,” the project team wrote in its research abstract posted on the EPA’s website.

Researchers involved in Tarpeh’s project will examine sanitation-related environmental contaminants, comparing two Black-majority communities (one in an urban setting and another in a rural setting)

and focusing on how climate change affects infrastructure. They said they intend to design improved sanitation infrastructure to help address the impacts of climate change in the communities where they’re researching.

Investing in this research is intended to help address the disparate impacts of climate change on marginalized communities, the EPA said in a press release announcing the grants.

“Some communities are more vulnerable because they already face greater exposure to pollutants and lack the resources to

respond to and cope with environmental stressors,” the press release said. “These communities may be more likely to suffer sustained or even permanent damage from the impacts of climate change, further worsening health disparities.”

A total of four research institutions in California received EPA grants. In addition to Stanford, the University of California, Davis; University of California, San Francisco; and Physicians Scientists and Engineers for Sustainable and Healthy Energy were awarded research funding.

“These projects will advance solutions to challenges lying at the intersection of climate change and environmental justice, both here in California and in communities around the country,” EPA Pacific Southwest Regional Administrator Martha Guzman said in a press release. “Advancing scientific research that helps protect public health and the environment is central to EPA’s mission and these projects will have lasting results for years to come.” ■

Email Intern Grace Doerfler at gdoerfler@almanacnews.com.

Stanford sues Santa Clara County over tax exemptions for faculty residences

University calls current taxing practices ‘discriminatory’

By Gennady Sheyner

Seeking to cement a tax exemption for faculty homes on its campus, Stanford University on Monday, Feb. 27, filed a lawsuit against Santa Clara County contending that these residences should be treated like other educational facilities.

The complaint, which the university filed in Santa Clara County Superior Court, pertains to the roughly 900 dwellings in the 450-acre area behind the main academic campus known as the Faculty Subdivision. Composed of 691 single-family homes and 222 condominiums, these residences are reserved for Stanford faculty, who like other homeowners are responsible for paying their property taxes.

But, as Stanford emphasizes in its lawsuit, there is a major difference between these homes and most other properties: While the homeowners purchase leases for these

dwellings, the university retains an interest in these properties. It enforces the criteria for eligibility and requires homeowners who stop meeting these criteria to sell their leaseholder interests within a specific period of time. Furthermore, faculty must use the property as a primary residence and they cannot perform any home improvement projects without Stanford’s permission. If they want to sublet a portion of the property, they can only do so if the tenants are students enrolled at Stanford.

The university, which is forbidden by its founding documents from selling the land, is arguing in its lawsuit that because of these circumstances, the value of the property is split between “faculty interest” and “college interest.” The former, which pertains to about 75% of the property’s assessed value, does not qualify for tax exemptions while the latter does, Stanford contends.

The suit notes that both the

faculty interest and the college interest are presently included in the local property tax assessments for these properties. Stanford is seeking a ruling that would establish that the college interest portion of the property tax bill should be exempt.

The lawsuit focuses on one particular home, 838 Cedro Way, which changed hands in 2018 and which in 2021 received a property tax bill for \$37,217, with no reduction for the college interest. Stanford paid the bill but filed a claim for a refund of about \$9,000.

According to a letter that Whitney McNair, Stanford’s senior associate provost and executive director for Faculty Staff Housing, wrote to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors in February 2022, the property on Cedro Way had a fair market value of \$2.97 million in 2018 (a more recent assessment from the county tax collector in the 2021-22 period raised the assessed value to \$3.06 million). About 75% of this value, or \$2.23 million, is considered “faculty interest” — the purchase price that the faculty member paid for the property and that is not subject to tax exemptions. The remaining 25% of the assessed value, or about \$745,000, is considered “college interest” and, as such, is entitled to the tax exemption, Stanford argued. The amount of the refund was estimated at about \$9,087.

In September, Stanford received a letter from County Counsel James Williams, informing it that its refund request was denied.

While \$9,087 may seem like a piddling amount for an institution like Stanford to fight over, the ramifications of the lawsuit could be far-reaching. Williams had previously told this news

organization that if the university pursues additional refunds based on the same claims, the county and local jurisdictions could lose nearly \$5 million annually, which includes a \$2.3 million loss for the Palo Alto Unified School District.

Stanford’s arguments didn’t sway the county’s Assessment Appeals Board, which informed the university that it has no jurisdiction over granting exemptions. Williams, for his part, had previously differentiated between tax-exempt facilities such as student dorms,

more financial contributions to their communities (Stanford ultimately withdrew its growth proposal in 2019).

But Stanford and its faculty homeowners are arguing that the tax exemptions at the heart of the lawsuit are necessary to fulfill its academic mission. James Sweeney, president of Stanford Campus Residential Leaseholders, an association of faculty leaseholders, applauded Stanford’s legal action. In a letter to Stanford President Marc Tessier-Lavigne and Provost Persis Drell, Sweeney noted that recent tax assessments for newly purchased homes have been significantly above purchase prices, a departure from past practices that has created a high financial burden for homeowners.

“Campus homeowners expect to pay their fair share of property taxes, just like everyone else, based on their ownership interests. But high assessment of newly purchased homes — often more than a million dollars above the purchase prices — has led to major financial burdens and hardship,” Sweeney wrote in the Monday letter.

The practice of assessing newly purchased homes at such high values, he argued, “endangers the Founding Grant vision of a ‘residential campus,’ of students and faculty scholars.”

“The impacts are felt most acutely by campus homeowners — both home purchasers and those wishing to sell their homes — but also by faculty precluded from purchasing on campus because of the very high tax costs,” Sweeney wrote. “These high property taxes create particularly large barriers to homeownership for first-time, often younger, faculty.”

Martin Shell, Stanford’s vice

‘These high property taxes create particularly large barriers to homeownership for first-time, often younger, faculty.’

JAMES SWEENEY, PRESIDENT OF STANFORD CAMPUS RESIDENTIAL LEASEHOLDERS

libraries and academic buildings. The university, according to Williams, was not required to pay taxes on more than \$15.9 billion of its holdings during fiscal year 2021, the largest tax exemption in the county. The faculty homes, the county had argued, should be treated like any other homes in the county and assessed based on their market value.

Stanford is no stranger to criticism over its tax exemptions. During the university’s recent effort to approve a new growth plan, the subject came up repeatedly during public hearings and many local officials from cities around the university, including Palo Alto, made the case for requiring Stanford to make



Sue Dremann

Stanford University is seeking a tax exemption from Santa Clara County for its ground leases used for faculty housing claiming an educational exemption. These faculty homes are located in a subdivision on Stanford-owned land at the corner of El Camino Real and Stanford Avenue.

See **TAX EXEMPTIONS**, page 19

Menlo Park's \$2.5 million endowment won't be enough to offset enrollment costs from Stanford's new faculty housing project

By Chloe Shrager/
Special to The Almanac

Menlo Park school board officials say the \$2.5 million endowment slated to cover the costs of extra students from Stanford's new Middle Plaza housing project won't be enough.

Located within the boundaries of the Menlo Park City School District, Middle Plaza's 215 rental units will primarily house eligible university faculty and staff, including families with children. MPCSD's main source of funding is property taxes, but as a nonprofit, Stanford is exempt from paying taxes on the housing development. That means the project is expected to add students to Menlo Park schools, but it will not generate tax revenue that would help pay for their education.

Adding students without also adding new property tax revenue is a huge problem for the district. "It's our whole funding," the district's Chief Business Officer, Marites Fermin, said in an interview. She said about

60% of MPCSD's funding comes from property taxes. "We rely on the property tax. If there's no property tax, we might as well close the school districts."

As part of the development agreement, Stanford negotiated with the city of Menlo Park to provide \$1.5 million to the school district in the form of an endowment, which was funded in January. The city of Menlo Park donated an additional \$1 million to offset the remaining costs.

Erik Burmeister was superintendent of the school district at the time and was present at some negotiation meetings. "Would we like Stanford to just, like, write a check for every kid that comes to school? Yes," he said in a recent interview. "But it was clear that that wasn't where the conversation was going to go."

Joel Berman, Stanford's director of land and local policy communications, said in an email that

Middle Plaza "will revitalize long-underutilized properties along El Camino Real in Menlo

Park and bring 215 units of much-needed housing to the city, including eight units of affordable housing for local residents."

Berman also highlighted that Stanford agreed to reimburse the city up to \$5 million for bike and pedestrian crosswalk construction costs at Middle Avenue.

Burmeister said that Stanford's \$1.5 million gift, "while generous," was not sufficient to cover the long-term needs of the district. "It's one thing for low-income housing to not pay taxes," he said in an interview. "It's a whole other thing for Stanford to not pay."

When Fermin was asked if she thought the \$2.5 million endowment would be enough to mitigate Middle Plaza's fiscal impact on the district, she said, "I don't think so."

At the time of the negotiations, the \$2.5 million impact estimate was calculated based on the projected 2019 education costs of \$17,000 per student annually. But Fermin said that the steep and increasing cost of

living in Menlo Park is driving prices up every year. "Other districts, they might spend \$15,000 or \$18,000 per student," she said. "We're spending about \$23,000 or \$24,000 per student."

With construction projected to be complete by this spring, Middle Plaza is just a few months out from being ready for residents to move in. Students living there could enroll in the school district as early as next fall.

The burden now falls on the district to create returns on its investment so that the Enrollment Endowment Fund created with the \$2.5 million does not run out. A new school board policy adopted on Jan. 19 directs the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation Endowment Investment Committee to manage the fund's investment. The board's Finance and Audit Committee will make spending decisions for distributions from the fund.

A number of Stanford's other expansion proposals in recent years have been met with less-than-warm welcomes from

neighboring cities. In 2016, Stanford applied for an ambitious General Use Permit that would have added 2.3 million square feet in new academic space, 2,172 new housing units and nearly 10,000 people per day to the main campus. In November 2021, Stanford President Marc Tessier-Lavigne floated the idea of building a ninth residential student neighborhood that would allow enrollment to increase by 25%. Just a month before that, Stanford entered into an option to purchase, renovate and expand into Notre Dame de Namur University in Belmont.

Stanford eventually withdrew its campus GUP application in 2019 after failing to gain Santa Clara County's approval, promising that "a new phase of engagement and dialogue with local communities" was ahead. Today, the deal to buy Notre Dame is still in progress, and in September, Stanford acquired the leasehold on the Oak Creek Apartments on Sand Hill Road

See **FACULTY HOUSING**, page 15



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ABUSE

continued from page 5

learned that making complaints would not prevent the abuse or harassment from happening.

In a statement, San Mateo County said that it is investigating the claims but denied that it was aware of any alleged sexual abuse or suggestion that it failed to take action on complaints filed against Domeniconi.

The county also noted that one incident is alleged to have occurred between 2018

and 2020, but Domeniconi was employed until 2016. Domeniconi died in 2020, according to the county.

Juvenile detainees have numerous ways to report complaints, according to San Mateo County. Criminal complaints are referred to law enforcement for investigation, while allegations of non-criminal misconduct are investigated by internal affairs, the county said.

According to San Mateo County Assistant District Attorney Shin-Mee Chang, all victims of sexual assault

in San Mateo County have access to a full multidisciplinary sexual assault protocol, regardless of their custodial status.

This protocol includes access to a sexual assault counselor, a medical legal examination, a forensic interview and other ancillary services, Chang said, adding that victims can go to the Keller Center with their attorney, where the services are performed.

"The protocol is triggered whenever a suspected sex assault victim is identified," she said. "In other words, the victim need not make a formal report to law enforcement.

"Nor is the onus on the victim to gather any evidence," she added.

Chang said that sexual assault crimes are prosecuted in the county where they occurred, with very few exceptions, and that she has attended several forensic interviews involving children detained at Hillcrest.

But the plaintiffs' allegations suggest systemic failures within the probation department and the county, which allowed the abuse to continue for nearly 30 years.

Additional defendants possible

Goethals said he believes that the litigation process may uncover additional defendants who are employees of the county and were allegedly aware of the complaints against Domeniconi, but who did not conduct investigations

or take any action against him. These individuals may include those who supervised Domeniconi and allowed his behavior to continue, Goethals said.

The San Mateo County Juvenile Justice & Delinquency Prevention Commission, a volunteer-led, county-sanctioned advocacy group committed to preventing youth from entering the juvenile justice system, said it had formed a committee to review policies, practices and procedures at each juvenile detention facility, in a statement regarding the civil complaints filed against the county.

'(The plaintiffs) would like the probation department to do a better job of protecting children so that this never happens again.'

ATTORNEY JOSEPH GOETHALS

According to the statement, the commission said it was unaware of these allegations before the cases were made public and was not informed by the probation department during its monthly meetings or annual inspections. The commission has a memorandum of understanding with the probation department that if incidents such as those in the lawsuits occur, the probation department must notify the commission, according to Johanna Rasmussen, a commissioner.

As for damages, according to Goethals, the plaintiffs are focused on preventing similar abuse from happening in the future.

"None of them are seeking fame or more notoriety," said Goethals. "What they each have expressed to me is that they would like to make sure that this doesn't happen to anyone else."

The plaintiffs' main concern is for the probation department to improve its efforts in protecting children, he said.

"Each of them has expressed to me that they would like the probation department to do a better job of protecting children so that this never happens again," said Goethals.

The lawsuits mark another chapter in the county's long history of sexual misconduct and abuse scandals involving children in juvenile detention.

In 2013, former Chief Probation Officer Stuart Forrest was convicted of possessing child pornography and sentenced to 10 months in jail.

Dr. William Hamilton Ayres, who died in 2016 while in prison, was perhaps San Mateo County's most prolific serial sexual offender who preyed on young juvenile detainees. A former president of the American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Ayres was convicted for inappropriately touching numerous children while working with the county.

Ayres was retained by San Mateo County to evaluate hundreds of cases, including sex offenders, in San Mateo County juvenile court going back to the 1970s and used his position of power to molest young boys during private counseling sessions. ■

Email Editor Michelle Iracheta at miracheta@rwcpulse.com.

Bob Rosenberg

1949 – 2023

Bob was universally described as having a ready smile and happy eyes that made the people around him feel seen and loved. A kind soul who was generous with his time, knowledge, and resources, he was unwaveringly patient and steadfastly positive.

Bob lived with lymphoma for the past five years. He was cancer free when he died of a lung infection at Stanford Hospital on January 16th, 2023. He was brave and courageous throughout numerous treatments, maintaining an incredibly positive attitude and deep faith in his medical team all while sharing his journey through his honest, eloquent writing. He was truly an inspiration.

Born in New Rochelle, New York in 1949, Bob was a graduate of Cheshire Academy and Pace University. He left the bitter winters of New York in 1974 in search of sunshine and love. He found both in California, the very day he arrived in San Francisco, at the Renaissance Faire in Novato whereby fate and fortune he met the love of his life, Claudette Bergman. They married in 1978 and raised two incredible children. Summers were spent in Tahoe with family and dear friends. Spring and Falls were spent making memories in Carmel and Oregon. Winters were spent in basketball gyms!

Nothing brought more joy to Bob than attending his son and daughter's basketball and volleyball games. More recently, he was the number one fan of his grandchildren's basketball and water polo games. He cheered on his granddaughter's team at their CIF NorCal quarterfinal water polo game on November 15th, 2022, which would be his last game to attend.

His sports fandom expanded beyond family pursuits. He and Claudette were Stanford men's and women's basketball, and women's volleyball fans for decades.

Bob founded Gr8work Builders in 1977 and enjoyed a long career as a contractor helping people create their dream homes. He was an active member of P.E.A. and NARI, serving as president for both organizations. He first volunteered as a firefighter in 1974 with the La Honda Fire Brigade and was chief of the L.H.F.B. for sixteen years. He was a construction captain for Rebuilding Together for twenty years. Bob devoted hundreds of hours to these organizations and was awarded the Mid-Pen Media Center's "Local Hero" award in 2019. San Mateo County recognized Bob in 1991 in a resolution honoring him for years of service to the community.

Predeceased by parents, William and Jeanette Rosenberg; sister, Carol Rosenberg; grandson, Quinn Rosenberg; son-in-law, Kevin Gillett; in-laws Claude and Marion Bergman; brother-in-law, Russ Vanderhurst.

Survived and loved by his caring wife, Claudette; sister, Amy Farrell (Chris); brother, Fred Rosenberg (Vicky); son, Shanan (Sarah); daughter, Erin Gillett. Baba to five amazing and beloved grandchildren: Paedrin and Kingsley Gillett, and Walt, Clyde, and Gus Rosenberg. Uncle Bob to six nieces and nephews. He is forever loved by his constant and adoring four-legged companions, Mina and Ziggy.

If you'd like to make a donation in Bob's name, please consider stjude.org, rebuildingtogether.org, or greenfoothills.org. A memorial service and reception will be held on March 31st. For more information visit crippenflynn.com



PAID OBITUARY

Gertrude Marie Goodale

August 15, 1923 – February 24, 2023

Gertrude Marie Goodale, age 99, passed away peacefully on February 24, 2023.

She was born August 15, 1923, in Astoria, Oregon to John and Laura Helstrom.

Gertrude was a fine artist having studied formally in both Oregon and California.

In California, Gertrude met and married Thomas Goodale. They shared a life-long love of dogs—especially cairn terriers and were generous donors to many animal organizations.

Thomas preceded Gertrude in death in 1999.

Gertrude is survived by her niece, Karen Grogan, her nephew-in-law, James Edward Grogan, her great nephew John Edward Grogan, and her cairn terriers, Robbie and Daisy. Additionally, she will be greatly missed by others whose lives she touched deeply—especially Rema, Alec, Gloria, Alma, Amy, Maria, Addy, Mireya, and Jocelyn.

Gertrude and Thomas will rest in Ocean View Cemetery—in her beloved Astoria, Oregon.

PAID OBITUARY

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include **Gertrude Marie Goodale**, 99, a Atherton resident, on Feb. 24; **Nancy Margaret Snideman**, 80, a former Menlo Park resident, on Feb. 18; **Wilbur Erskine Mattison Jr.**, 100, a Menlo Park resident, on Feb. 9; **Helen Sweyer**, 98, a Woodside resident, on Feb. 8; and **Rodger Scott Rickard**, 90, a Woodside resident, on Feb. 8.

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

Grant to help senior-centered nonprofit in Menlo Park expand its reach

By Cameron Rebosio

Menlo Park-based nonprofit Friendly Voices announced receiving its first grant to expand its work connecting isolated seniors with volunteers.

Friendly Voices is a nonprofit run by Menlo Park residents Laura Steuer and Donne Davis that connects seniors without social connections to volunteers who call at least once a week to have conversations. Steuer describes the program as like having a pen pal, but over the phone, creating personal relationships that develop over months when the volunteers and seniors talk.

It recently received a grant from the Walnut Creek-based Joseph & Vera Long Foundation, created by the founders of Long's drug store. The foundation supports five programs, one of which focuses on healthy aging.

When asked, Steuer refused to disclose the grant amount but said it would be used to triple the

number of clients served from 80 to 240 clients.

"We have one client who used to call PG&E every day to have someone to talk to," Steuer said. "Most of us can't really envision what that utter loneliness is like, you know. We had a little piece of the disconnect during COVID, but we knew that that would end."

Friendly Voices began during the COVID-19 pandemic, serving seniors who were isolated in care facilities. However, after visitors were allowed back in, Steuer said the organization saw a more prominent need for human connection for those aging in place. With this shift, there was also a change to primarily serve the Bay Area and greater Northern California, including Menlo Park and Palo Alto.

"The folks living alone were still in dire need (of our services)," Steuer said. "Because COVID went away, everyone said, 'Yes, great. We can be together again, and we can see each other,' but people at home

are isolated ... It didn't really change anything for them. They were lonely before, they were lonely now."

Steuer says that Friendly Voices will use the money to ramp up capacity of the volunteer and client base, taking steps to expand the nonprofit's message and rigorously bring on new volunteers.

She said that after they stopped "jumping up and down and screaming for joy," they felt honored to receive the grant, particularly from a foundation that is centered in the Bay Area.

"It meant an incredible amount of validation," Steuer said. "It meant that the larger world, represented by this foundation, saw our work, read about our work ... and saw its value and its importance."

Prospective volunteers and seniors in need can sign up at friendlyvoices.org. ■

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

Rodger Scott Rickard

August 26, 1932 – February 8, 2023

Rodger Scott Rickard was one of a kind. Born in Cleveland, Ohio on August 26, 1932, he wore many hats throughout his life. He proudly wore a naval aviator hat in Pensacola, Florida in the early '50s and a graduation cap at Springfield College in the late '50s but, in the end, it was his coaching hat that he talked about the most, whether it was sports, young entrepreneurs or non-profit corporations.



Rodger had two loving mothers, Florence Rickard and her sister Hazel. Hay, as she was known, took over the care of Rodger when he was 2 as Florence was hospitalized with tuberculosis. Hay, her husband Elmer "E.L." Groth and their son John, welcomed Rodger into their home and raised him as their own.

One of Rodger's earliest memories was having to stay in at recess to eat graham crackers and drink milk, as his teachers felt he was too skinny and frail to play with his peers outdoors. He devoted the rest of his life to getting out and playing hard, whether it was on the golf course, climbing Mt. Kilimanjaro for his 65th birthday or in the board room - for Rodg there was no line between work and play.

Drive is the word that comes to mind when reflecting on Rodger. First, because he was a lifelong car fanatic with a particular affinity for convertibles, he loved golfing and felt nothing was more satisfying than smacking a long drive down the fairway, and because of his determination and desire to accomplish great things - and he did. He took a sabbatical from his first job as a coach and a teacher at Hawken School in Ohio in 1968 to study at Stanford. He was motivated to choose Stanford because he wanted to come to sunny California and because it had a golf course. The sabbatical study turned into a pursuit of a second MA and a Doctorate in Education. Along the way he coached basketball and tennis at Stanford, always hoping to get a job helping with the soccer team, as he played on the US National team in the '50's. He was a founder of what was to become the University of Phoenix (first known as the Institute for Professional Development in San Jose) but was reluctant to leave California and changed his career path to real estate. He was a successful salesman from day one, but set his sights on owning the company, which he did, and upon selling it in 1997, went on to establish the American Basketball League, a professional women's basketball league which was the precursor to the WNBA. He helped launch the non-profit, the Positive Coaching Alliance, his final hooray was developing a practice basketball hoop which he patented when he was in his eighties. Although he lived out the majority of his adult life in California, he was a lifelong Cleveland Browns fan.

In the sports vernacular, that he loved so well, he was a long ball hitter. Perhaps Rodger's greatest accomplishments were the four home runs he hit when he fathered his son Jon Rickard (wife Dana, children Michael, Jo Marie and Gerrod), his daughters Jenny and JoAnna Rickard and son, Jake Rickard. Along with his children and grandchildren, he is survived by his wife of 42 years, Diane Talbert and his cousin/brother John Groth. It was a long slide into home base but you're safe Rodg - rest in peace.

A Celebration of Rodger's Life will be held Saturday, May 13, at 5:30 p.m. at The Village Hub, 3154 Woodside Rd, Woodside.

In lieu of flowers, please consider making a donation to Positive Coaching Alliance or a charity of your choice.

<https://positivecoach.org>

PAID OBITUARY

FACULTY HOUSING

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in Palo Alto, giving priority to "university affiliates" at the 759-unit residential complex.

Expansion efforts like these have received pushback from local communities that complain that Stanford is icing community members out of housing and adding traffic to roads without paying taxes to support the necessary repairs or upgrades needed for the increased use. Criticism also extends to the university providing no funding for parks, emergency dispatch or first responders.

"It's a bit ironic that one of the top universities in the world cannot support our local schools that educate the children of Stanford employees," San Mateo County's Coalition for Stanford GUP Accountability wrote in an open letter to the university. The group comprises elected representatives and staff members from Atherton, East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Portola Valley, Redwood City, Woodside and San Mateo County.

"What is needed is for Stanford to accept that it has a dual role not only as a global institution on the cutting-edge of research but also as a good neighbor and a regional leader," the letter said. ■

Email Contributor Chloe Shrager at cshrager@stanford.edu

HATE SPEECH

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Principal Karl Losekoot reported the incident to police, according to the report.

"We are encouraged that students who have seen these images have immediately reported their presence and the school has been able to remove them," Losekoot said in an email to students in December. "We need M-A to be a safe space for all students, a place where students and staff can feel respected and supported."

In an email to families, Losekoot said: "We know that antisemitism is on the rise in

the nation, both in terms of smaller scale incidents that occur in a community to a larger public, antisemitic statements made by public figures."

It's not known when the swastikas were drawn and police do not have leads on suspects, according to the report.

Losekoot told The Almanac that the school created a safe space committee of students, staff and parents as a result of the incident. The group has met twice so far and plans to meet twice a month, he said. ■

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



Michelle Le

Swastikas were found on the wall of a bathroom in Menlo-Atherton's G Wing building.

Tesla to open global engineering HQ in Palo Alto

New headquarters is taking over the old Hewlett Packard Enterprise site on Hanover Street

By Sue Dremann

Tesla Motors has announced that it is going to base its global engineering and AI headquarters in Palo Alto at the former Hewlett Packard Enterprise campus, the company said on Feb. 22.

Company CEO Elon Musk and California Gov. Gavin Newsom made the joint

announcement at the now-closed Hewlett Packard Enterprise site located at 3000 Hanover St.

The announcement comes after Musk moved the company's headquarters to Austin, Texas, in 2021, criticizing the state for high taxes, high housing costs, long commutes and limitations in growth, after the first wave of the COVID-19 pandemic caused Alameda

County to order the company to shut down its Fremont plant, halting production.

That same year, Tesla agreed to lease 325,000 square feet of the HP headquarters site at 1501 Page Mill Road, according to the the Registry real-estate news site.

Musk's move of an important segment of his electric-vehicle operation to Palo Alto marked a thawing of his sometimes fractious relationship with the Golden State.

"This is a poetic transition from the company that founded Silicon Valley to Tesla, and we're very excited to make this our global engineering headquarters in California," Musk said.

He didn't indicate how many

jobs would potentially be relocated to Palo Alto.

Musk noted that the company's Fremont manufacturing plant has the highest output of any automotive plant in North America. It will build 600,000 cars or more this year.

"I'm looking forward to an exciting partnership with California ... to transition the world to sustainable energy as quickly as possible," he said.

Newsom noted Tesla got its start in Palo Alto to become the most dominant electric vehicle manufacturer in the state. California is now home to 55 zero-emission-vehicle-related manufacturing companies, more than any other state, he said. California is the largest manufacturing state in the

country and is now the fourth largest economy in the world, he said, with zero-emission-vehicles being a top export.

"California has the number one EV market in the U.S. The future happens here first. As Tesla revolutionized electric vehicles, their new global engineering and AI headquarters in Palo Alto will help create the technology of the future — right here in California," Newsom said.

"It takes visionary leadership and partnership to change the way we produce and consume energy in this state, in this nation and the world," he said. ■

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

Nancy Margaret Pruitt Snideman

October 6, 1942 – February 18, 2023

Nancy Margaret Pruitt Snideman passed away unexpectedly at age 80 on February 18, 2023 in Napa, California.

She was born October 6, 1942 to Maxwell and Margaret Pruitt in Savannah, Georgia. She graduated from St. Vincent Academy, Armstrong College, and UNC Chapel Hill. She married her love, Fritz Snideman, the day before Christmas Eve and spent 46 loving and exciting years with him traveling the world and living in Washington DC, St. Helena CA, Ovando MT, and Menlo Park CA among other places until losing Fritz in 2014. Even after living in California for 55 years, Nancy always maintained a slight Savannah accent from her childhood.

Before starting her family, Nancy began her professional life in social work. Much of her life was devoted to helping others around her. While her children were in elementary school, she volunteered for the schools and worked with children with developmental delays. She also showed great care for those who were elderly and less fortunate, whether it was driving food to the elderly or staying close and connected to those who were sick. Nancy raised her



two deeply loved children, Laura and Christopher, while serving as a gracious host for everyone who came through their door. Especially notable were Christmas Day open houses for all of her cherished friends and neighbors. Nancy had a welcoming way about her, radiated warmth, and nourished all those who she encountered. Most would describe her as the epitome of the strong "steel magnolia," especially later in life. She enjoyed finding beauty in many parts of her life including through tending



her roses, going to the ballet, and reading Celtic benedictions.

Those mourning her loss include her children, Laura and Christopher, and her two older brothers, Dan and Bob, along with their families and numerous cousins and dear friends.

The family extends special thanks to nurse Julie for near miraculous insights and coordination and to the entire team at Aegis Living for helping fill her days with kind care and activities where she was especially excited to be part of the championship trivia team.

Nancy spent much of her life volunteering and donating to organizations serving those in need. In lieu of flowers, please donate blood as donations saved her life several times during cancer treatment decades ago, or share a kindness with a person or charity where you see a need.

A funeral mass will be held on Friday, March 3 at 11:00 am at the St. Helena Catholic Church followed by a remembrance in Savannah in the months to come.

PAID OBITUARY

Eleanor Ross Crary

May 2, 1928 – December 24, 2022

Eleanor Ross Crary, resident of Portola Valley, passed away peacefully on Christmas Eve, at the age of 94, after a lengthy time of failing health.

Eleanor was born in San Francisco on May 2, 1928 to Ruth Carson and Charles J. (Jud) Crary. Her father, a Palo Alto banker, was famed for giving the young Bill Hewlett and Dave Packard their first loan after a brief meeting. A handshake sealed the deal. Her mother, Ruth, was the granddaughter of John D. Daly, well known Peninsula dairy owner and businessman. Eleanor was proud that after the 1906 Earthquake, he delivered milk to the children of San Francisco and opened his ranch to those left homeless. His ranch became Daly City.

The Crary family settled in Palo Alto, then a small college town of 13,000. Eleanor was the youngest of the five Crary children. The family lived in a white colonial house on Coleridge Street, just a block from Walter Hayes School, where Eleanor spent her elementary years before going to Palo Alto High School.

Her summers were spent at the redwood cabin in Woodside that her parents had built on Old Honda Road, back when it was still unpaved. Her childhood summers were a time of great joy and freedom, of riding her horse and swimming in nearby Searsville Lake each day, in lieu of a shower, when the springs ran dry. Those summer days cultivated a lifelong passion for nature, Redwoods, native plants and conservation.

Shortly after graduating from high school, Eleanor followed two of her older sisters, and brother to Europe to join Moral Re-Armament (MRA.) Her beautiful singing voice and musical talent were put to good use directing choruses and performing in musicals. She loved her years abroad, which included stays in Germany, Switzerland, England and Kashmir, just after the India and Pakistan partition. She relished the opportunity to meet and live with friends of diverse nationalities.

In the early 60's, Eleanor returned to Palo Alto,

taking a job at the Stanford bookstore. A colleague, noticing Eleanor's intelligence and love of learning, urged her to go to college. So, in her late thirties, she enrolled at UC Berkeley completing a B.A. in History in 1970 (Phi Beta Kappa) and her M.A. in Library Science in 1971.



She was quickly hired by the Alameda County Public Library system as a library administrator where she enjoyed working for many years until her retirement. There she met her lifelong companion, fellow librarian, Luanne Gilbert. They shared many interests including literature, music, and especially the natural world. Their love of travel took them up and down California, to the south of France, to Baja California and the Southwest — to any place where

wildflowers were in bloom. High in the Berkeley hills, they planted a beautiful sunny garden filled with Mediterranean and California native plants.

Eleanor shared her passion for native plants and her administrative skills by volunteering as a docent at the UC Botanical Garden for 17 years beginning in 1971. She maintained a strong interest in and supported many environmental and social causes. Eleanor loved her fifty years in Berkeley, especially the diversity, the prolific classical music, and the great restaurants.

In 2010, Eleanor moved to the Sequoias in Portola Valley where her sister Jean and husband Dr. Bill Clark, lived. She settled into the peaceful atmosphere of the Sequoias, just four miles from the redwood cabin of her youth.

Eleanor will be remembered by her family and friends for her keen intellect, enthusiasm and often wicked sense of humor.

She is survived by her nephew Bruce Clark and his wife Deborah Clark of Novato, CA; niece Carolyn Clark Clebsch and her husband Bill Clebsch of Boulder, CO; nephews John and Kent Nowell of London, UK; nine grand-nieces and nephews; and twelve great-grand nieces and nephews.

PAID OBITUARY



Courtesy Eleanor Raab

Alice's Restaurant surrounded by snow covered trees in Woodside on Feb. 23.

SNOW

continued from page 1

the National Weather Service. About 14 inches of snow were reported on Mount Hamilton east of San Jose as of 2 p.m. Feb. 24, the highest amount in the region, while 11 inches were reported in the Los Gatos area. In the North Bay, 9 inches fell in Calistoga and 8 inches in Angwin. In San Mateo County, about 6 inches fell in the Portola Valley area and 3 inches fell in the Orinda

area of the East Bay.

Weather service meteorologist Brooke Bingaman said the last notable day of snowfall in the Bay Area came in February 2011. That day saw more snow at lower elevations, while last Friday's snow accumulated more at higher elevations, she said.

State Highway 17 between San Jose and Santa Cruz, state Highway 29 in Napa County and state Highway 128 in Sonoma County were among the highways shut down because of the winter weather.

Storm-related impacts continued to affect Bay Area traffic and BART on Monday afternoon, Feb. 27, with some roads flooded by heavy rains or closed due to snow.

El Camino Real in Palo Alto was closed in both directions due to flooding at the University Avenue underpass, police said about 12:30 p.m. on Feb. 27. Previously one lane was open in each direction. ■

Email Editor Andrea Gemmet at editor@almanacnews.com.



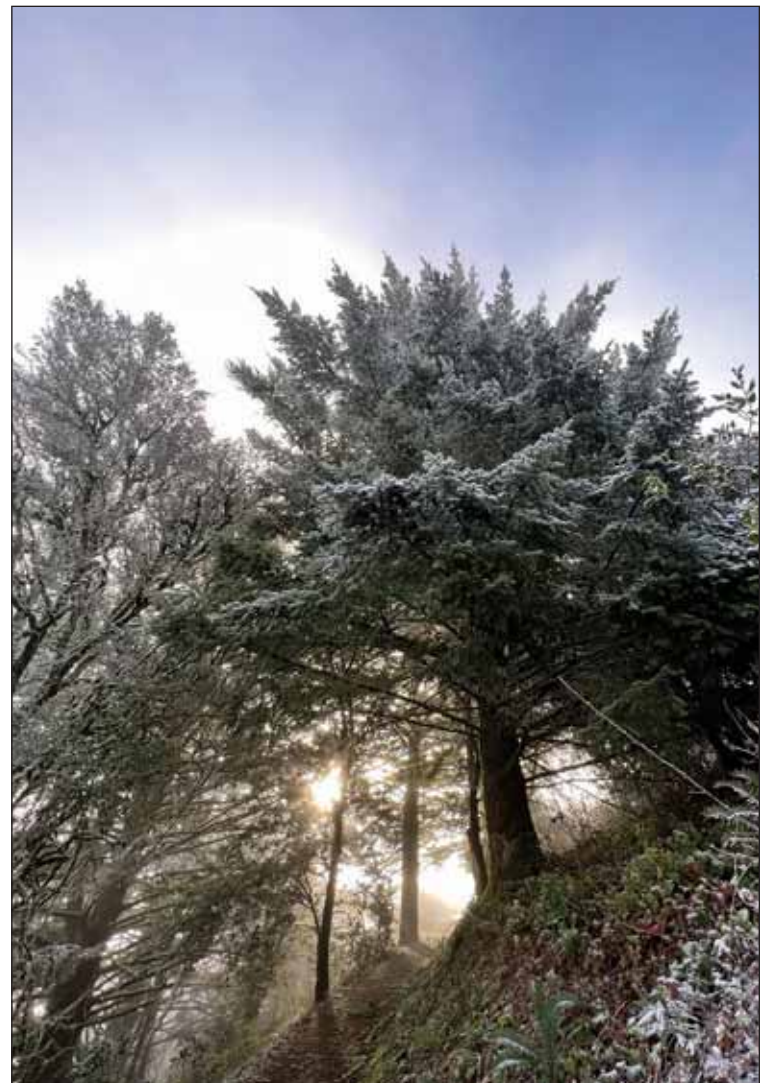
Courtesy Alton Hartzell

Alton Hartzell, 13, of Portola Valley gets in some turns at Russian Ridge Open Space Preserve on Feb. 24.



Courtesy Eleanor Raab

A bench covered in snow in Windy Hill Open Space Preserve in Portola Valley on Feb. 23.



Courtesy Eleanor Raab

Trees in Windy Hill Open Space Preserve covered in snow in Portola Valley on Feb. 23.

TRIAL

continued from page 1

“The body’s in the basement,” Wolke allegedly said. “I have a mental problem. I very seriously killed that woman.”

Defense attorney Connie O’Brien said that Wolke believed by committing sins such as murder, he would be able to join the 1% of elite, wealthy people who he thought stay young forever. He allegedly stumbled upon Hughes Anderson in the house at which point he heard an auditory hallucination saying, “Don’t bitch

out. Just do it, do it.”

O’Brien argued that Wolke’s intent was not to kill, but to join the so-called 1%.

Wolke also allegedly told the defense investigator that he would not have committed the murder if he had found a man or a couple inside the home, according to Povah.

Testimony from a defense witness also painted a picture of a man who viewed women



Francis Wolke

as inferior and was obsessed with his computer programming work.

Wolke’s former friend Daniel Girshovich testified for the defense on Thursday, Feb. 23, saying Wolke had extreme views on society that caused Girshovich to hesitate before introducing him to his friends, according to the testimony.

Girshovich described Wolke as “eccentric, arrogant, stubborn, an extreme outlier,” due to his hostile behavior and his views on modern society. He described how Wolke would approach his interactions with other people in a hostile manner, and would often insult or anger others or not realize that they weren’t following his train of thought.

Girshovich described Wolke’s views on women as “generally negative” and said that it would be in line with Wolke’s character to say he thought women were less intelligent than men. Wolke also allegedly said that the 1950s and 1960s were better, referring to the integration of women into the workforce, but also to all modern inclusion, which he referred to as “societal rot.” Wolke apparently viewed most people as inferior to himself, he said.

Girshovich, who works at a tech startup in Berlin, said he met Wolke at a party in the South Bay for cryptocurrency in 2014, when Wolke was going by the false name Gabriel Ladel. Wolke was homeless at the time, and according to Girshovich’s testimony, he moved in to sleep on Girshovich’s floor that same night. The two lived together for six months.

Girshovich said Wolke was working on an operating system that would give users more control over their computers if they were willing to put in the work to understand it. According to Girshovich, Wolke spent all of his time on the project, rarely stopping to sleep or eat and sometimes staying up for days at a time.

“There was very little else he did with his time,” Girshovich said.

While working on his operating system, Girshovich testified that Wolke was isolated and had an erratic sleep schedule, sometimes drinking five to eight cups of coffee a day.

Wolke refused to get a job as it would be a “distraction to his project,” and after Girshovich left and moved in with other roommates, Wolke would sleep in hammocks in front yards or sleep in cafes during the day and work in them at night.

He described Wolke as paranoid, believing that Microsoft saw him as a threat and wanted to kill him. Wolke also had extreme views on cyber security and took unusual steps to ensure cyber protection.

According to Girshovich, Wolke was “generally pretty removed from societal systems” and had no form of identification or a bank account because “you don’t need a bank account if you don’t have any money,” he said.

Girshovich said he became aware of Wolke’s methamphetamine use in 2017, which Wolke claimed made him more focused and able to work for longer periods of time.

Wolke once visited

Girshovich at his residence, called Embassy House, and stayed for a while. Embassy House was home to 15 people with shared interests, but not specific to software or tech, according to Girshovich. While there, Wolke stayed awake for four to five days straight using methamphetamine, then began speaking incoherently and moving objects around rooms, Girshovich testified. Wolke destroyed two rooms in the house, after which he was removed.

In 2017, Wolke broke his leg falling off of a building on Stanford University’s campus that he was trying to scale, according to Girshovich, but he told doctors that he fell while being chased. Wolke did not go to the hospital of his own volition but was taken there after he was found crawling through the streets with his broken leg.

While at the hospital, Wolke would “point at evidence of (the doctors’) incompetence” and refer to female doctors using crude and profane insults.

Following Wolke’s return to Cincinnati to stay with his family, Girshovich and Wolke only had two phone calls, but Girshovich describes Wolke as having highly ambitious expectations of his computer operating system, and as a highly intelligent and gifted computer programmer.

The jury had not returned a verdict in the murder trial as of The Almanac’s Wednesday press deadline. ■

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

Public Notices

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME

The following person(s) has/have abandoned the use of the fictitious business name(s). The information given below is as it appeared on the Fictitious Business Name Statement that was filed at the County Clerk-Recorder’s Office.

ZEN-SATION
File No.: M-278101
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Zen-Sation, located at 86 A 88Th St. Daly City, CA 94015, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
JUANA CORDERO
1655 Sweetwood Drive,
Daly City, CA 94015
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 08/09/2018
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 25 2023.
(ALM Feb 10, 17, 24 and Mar 3, 2023)

UNIQUE SPLENDOR YOGA THERAPY & COACHING
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-293342
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Unique Splendor Yoga Therapy & Coaching, located at 300 Davey Glen Road, CA, 94002.
Registered owner(s):
ADRIANA BUENAVENTURA
300 Davey Glen Road, #3423
Belmont, CA, 94002
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on N/A.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 02, 2023.
(ALM Mar 3, 10, 17 and 24, 2023)

MAISON MEDICAL GROUP
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-293440
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Maison Medical Group, located at 150 Portola Rd Ste A, Portola Valley, CA, 94028.
Registered owner(s):
DR. NEDA N. PAKDAMAN
205 De Anza Blvd #4
San Mateo, CA, 94402
CA
This business is conducted by: a Corporation.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 01/01/2023
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 13 2023.
(ALM Mar 3, 10, 17 and 24, 2023)

CONNIE’S SLEEPY MUNCHKINS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-293438
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Connie’s Sleepy Munchkins, located at 2442 Gloria Way East Palo Alto CA. 94303, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
CONSUELO GOMEZ-OLGUIN
2442 Gloria Way
East Palo Alto CA. 94303
CA

This business is conducted by: A Limited Liability Company.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 02/13/2023.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 13 2023.
(ALM Feb 24, Mar 3, 10 and 17, 2023)

LAXMI HOSPITALITY LLC
LA QUINTA SAN FRANCISCO AIRPORT NORTH FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-293276
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Laxmi Hospitality LLC, 2.) La Quinta San Francisco Airport North, located at 20 Airport Blvd South San Francisco CA 94080, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
LAXMI HOSPITALITY LLC
1011 S Atlantic Ave Compton CA 90221
Compton CA 90221
CA
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 01/26/2023
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 26 2023.
(ALM Feb 24, Mar 3, 10 and 17, 2023)

GIFTED SUPPORT SERVICES
GIFTED SUPPORT CENTER
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-293460
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Gifted Support Services, 2.) Gifted Support Center, located at 205 E 3rd Ave, Suite 201, San Mateo, CA 94401, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
GIFTED SUPPORT PSYCHOLOGICAL SERVICES INC
205 E 3rd Ave, Suite 201
San Mateo, CA 94401
CA
This business is conducted by: a Corporation.
Registrant has not yet commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 15 2023.
(ALM Feb 24, Mar 3, 10 and 17, 2023)

CHASE ACE HARDWARE
PACIFIC MANOR ACE
PACIFIC MANOR HARDWARE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-293420
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Chase Ace Hardware, 2.) Pacific Manor Ace, 3.) Pacific Manor Hardware, located at 451 Oceana Blvd., Pacifica, CA 94044, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
D & D VENTURE GROUP, INC
329 N Almenar Dr
Greenbrae, CA 94904
CA
This business is conducted by: a Corporation.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 01/01/2023
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 10 2023.
(ALM Feb 24, Mar 3, 10 and 17, 2023)

To place a legal notice visit
AlmanacNews.com/legal_notices/

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

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for Saturday, March 5, but was postponed due to the weather. As they have since 2004, participants will pull the invasive weed from public lands and rights-of-way.

Conditions are best during the rainy season for pulling the weed out. Once the ground becomes dry, it’s nearly impossible to yank it out of the ground, according to the town. It’s crucial to

pull out the roots of the plants, because cutting it off just makes it much harder to remove and it re-sprouts with an even stronger root, according to the town.

Participants are advised to bring water and gloves and wear long sleeves and close-toed shoes. Tools and refreshments will be provided.

The event will be rescheduled if it rains, according to organizers.

Those interested in attending can meet at the Historic Schoolhouse, 765 Portola Road, at 9 a.m. Work will finish by noon.

School, 900 Portola Road in Portola Valley.

Classes in Woodside take place on Wednesdays at 2:40 p.m. and 3:10 p.m. on Thursdays.

Classes in Portola Valley are on Mondays at 1:15 p.m. for 4 to 20-year-olds; 2:20 p.m. for 4 to 13-year-olds; and 3:15 p.m. for Ormondale and Corte Madera school students.

Classes are 60 minutes long and private lessons are also available.

Register at shaziajangartstudio.com/classes or email shaziajangartstudio@gmail.com.

LEHUA GREENMAN

“What lies behind us and what lies before us are tiny matters compared to what lies within us.”

650.245.1845 COMPASS

Art classes for children in Woodside and Portola Valley

Art classes for children ages 4 to 13 years have begun in Woodside and Portola Valley.

Shazia Jang Art Studio is hosting the classes at The Village Hub, 3154 Woodside Road in Woodside, and The Windmill

Alpine Strikers Football Club

Alpine Strikers FC is offering spring soccer programs beginning Feb. 20. Classes are open to kids ages 3 to 6. Go to alpinestrikers.org for more information.

—Angela Swartz

CHILD CARE

continued from page 7

child care needs by city.

“This study gives us the data we need to both understand the scope of the problem and take action to address the critical shortage in child care spaces for the children of San Mateo County,” said San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools Nancy Magee in a statement. For next steps, Magee said the county is already pulling together stakeholders to find ways to expand the child care workforce, and is appealing to local, state, and federal elected officials and philanthropic partners to increase investment in child care.

Child care services, by the numbers

There are a total of 1,009 providers in the county: 525 at-home day cares and 484 child



Magali Gauthier

Preschool teacher Tatiana Villalba watches her student, Dora, draw in the Spanish immersion program at Lower Laurel School in Atherton on Dec. 6.

care centers, with a total of 41,347 spaces.

Since 2017 there was a loss of 163 child care providers, or a 14% reduction. In total, there was a loss of 885 infant spaces (23% loss), 489 preschool spaces (3% loss), and an addition of

3,193 school age spaces (19% increase). This equates to an overall increase of 5% in total spaces over the last five years.

“At one point we thought we might lose half of the child care supply,” Kinahan said. “Happily it wasn’t as bad as we feared; a

lot of that was the county gave several million dollars in support grants, the state provided stipends to licensed childcare programs. Without that, we would have seen a much greater loss.”

For subsidized child care, only 4% of the demand is being met for infants in the county, compared to 52% for preschool and 21% for school-age children.

Workforce supply issues

The study found that a shortage of child care workers is the key factor for the shortage in child care slots. In 2022, there would have needed to be an additional 2,800 care providers to meet demand.

Low pay has made it difficult to fill these positions. Wages range from \$20 per hour for teacher aides to \$31 per hour for program directors. To meet the county’s living wage of \$36 to \$52 per hour, child care

employee wages would need to increase 65 to 127%, or up to \$207 million annually.

Looking ahead

There are 27 new child care projects planned with 237 infant and 825 preschool spaces, for a total of 1,062 new child care openings for infants to 4-year-olds in the county. There are no known school age projects at this time.

This year, the state budget is funding transitional kindergarten (TK), including \$690 million in per-pupil TK funding for the 2023-24 school year and \$165 million in additional TK staff for next school year.

Read the full study at smcoe.org/about/child-care-partnership-council/needs-assessment.html. ■

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

TAX EXEMPTIONS

continued from page 10

president and chief external relations officer, said in an interview that the university’s chief aim in initiating the legal action is to obtain clarity on state laws that are currently under dispute. Shell said that the university respects the fact that Santa Clara County officials are following the law as they interpret it. This interpretation, however, doesn’t take into consideration the

long-term retained interest that Stanford has in its housing subdivision, where the property owner purchases the home and not the ground.

“Reasonable minds can disagree, and we think we have a reasonable-mind disagreement here,” Shell said.

Making sure that faculty are able to purchase homes and live on campus is critical to Stanford’s vision for education, he said. Under founder Leland Stanford’s leadership, the university “envisioned a

vibrant community with students and faculty all living and learning together.”

“We had a faculty residential area since the university was founded,” Shell said. “This is critically important to the mission of Stanford because it is part of our history and it is part of what we continue to do daily, with that interactivity between faculty and students.”

The university’s complaint states that the “college interest” exemption that Stanford is seeking is no different from

the housing benefits that public universities throughout California have received.

“A college’s use of its property to house its faculty and staff has long been recognized by the California courts as ‘use exclusively for education purposes,’” the complaint states. “Stanford’s use of its college interest in the property as faculty and senior staff housing is reasonably necessary for the fulfillment of a generally recognized function of a complete modern college

as it fosters a residential university campus with a strong intellectual community, protects Stanford’s long-term success by ensuring on-campus housing is maintained for future generations of faculty, and provides housing that is more affordable for faculty which is necessary to support Stanford’s faculty recruitment and retention.” ■

Email Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner at gsheyner@paweekly.com.

POWER OUTAGES

continued from page 5

board met on Feb. 23 at Belle Helle Elementary School in Menlo Park because power was out at the district office. Power was back on at the district office Feb. 24, but the internet was still down.

“I’m disappointed in PG&E for not even mentioning East Palo Alto,” she said. “... We are serving the needs of the most vulnerable, and for them to be able to eat at our schools and to be able to have heat and power at our schools is so important and I’m disappointed our schools were not prioritized.”

Heavy winds and stormy weather caused significant outages across the Peninsula, with tens of thousands of customers losing power over the course of the week. PG&E shut down U.S. Highway 101 between Marsh and Willow roads for about two and a half hours on Thursday, Feb. 23 to restore power to the community.

PG&E said in a statement at the time that fallen trees

had caused damage to power lines, and that it would “not be possible” to restore power without stopping traffic on Highway 101. The freeway was fully closed between the Willow and Marsh roads exits for about two and a half hours Thursday afternoon, Feb. 23, causing a massive traffic jam while the repair work was being done.

San Mateo County was the hardest hit county in the Bay Area from last week’s storms, with power outages affecting nearly 1 in 3 people in the county, over 60,000 customers, according to an email the city of Menlo Park sent to residents.

Varghese Bloom said it is unacceptable that crews weren’t sent to East Palo Alto until late Wednesday night, Feb. 22, leaving some without power for 48 hours.

“We will be looking for answers and looking for transparency because the way we were treated was disrespectful and it’s not OK,” she said.

Latu called the treatment

“crimes against our kids.”

Varghese Bloom acknowledged Latu for reaching out to elected officials at the city, county and state levels and delivering blankets, gift cards and power packs to residents.

Superintendent Gina Sudaria said the community “has not been served and addressed in the immediacy” it deserves.

The Almanac reached out to PG&E for a response to district officials’ comments on the utility company’s treatment of East Palo Alto but did not get a response by its Wednesday press deadline.

Eger said the district is exploring leveraging state and federal funds to add power walls to each of its schools in

case of emergencies. Eger said solar panels are now installed at each school, which should help in case of power grid disruptions, but there are no plans to install generators at schools. ■

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

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113 Estrada Dr	\$2,100,000	750 Lincoln Avenue	\$4,988,000
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2456 Porterfield Court	\$2,988,000	SAN CARLOS	
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Artscene

PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCES IN ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Atherton duo offers art classes, workshops through The Joy of Drawing

Nonprofit emphasizes that anyone can learn to draw

By Grace Doerfler

For Anne Syer, taking art classes through The Joy of Drawing was a bright spot in life when the pandemic began in 2020.

Syer, 81, of Davis, began learning to draw in online classes with art teacher Caroline Mustard as a COVID-era distraction, an antidote to the isolation and loneliness of the lockdowns.

"It was the blessing of that whole time for me," Syer said. "It kept me sane, to have something wonderful to look forward to."

She's stayed active in drawing classes from the Atherton-based nonprofit ever since, attending a mix of online classes and in-person sketch walks.

The Joy of Drawing is run by Caroline Mustard and Katy Lea, two women who grew up and attended art school in Britain. They are now committed to spreading their love of art through online classes and in-person events around the Peninsula.

For Mustard, it comes as no surprise that students find community and purpose in art classes.

"Drawing is more than just

a technical skill," she said. "It's a way to connect, to be in the moment, and it's very meditative."

She and her cofounder Lea said their classes are meant to be accessible to anyone, regardless of experience.

"It doesn't matter who you are," Mustard said. "Our method of teaching, we say, no pressure, no judgment — just joy."

Mustard has been teaching online art classes for 10 years, showing her students how to use both art apps on iPads and how to draw with conventional paper and pencils. She and Lea started The Joy of Drawing together in 2018.

Mustard said that many of her students still opt for online classes even as pandemic restrictions have waned: Zoom enables her to show students techniques up close, even more so than in a conventional art studio.

Students from across the United States, as well as several other countries, participate in the online classes. Each month, Mustard and Lea pick a theme for a free drawing workshop hosted on Zoom: abstract drawing one month, portraits another.

Lea said that she and Mustard have drawn on their own art



Courtesy The Joy of Drawing

A drawing created by Caroline Mustard during a sketch walk.

school training to develop their teaching philosophy.

"We don't assume anything," Lea said, describing how classes start with the fundamentals of how to properly hold a pencil.

Lea said part of The Joy of Drawing's mission is to help students feel capable of drawing outside of class and trying unfamiliar subjects and techniques for their art.

"If you can keep up that practice and draw everything, and look and see and get that

excitement about having five minutes at a train station, you can just pick up your pencil and start drawing," she said.

Syer said she's proud of the new things she has tried in the classes.

"Before, I never thought I could draw a person, or I never thought I could draw a horse," she said. "I mean, I would have said, 'I don't do that.' But then she (Mustard) gets you started and pretty soon you think, 'I can do that.'"

Sketch walks, one of The Joy of Drawing's in-person offerings, give students a chance to practice sketching in everyday life. They meet at locations around the Bay Area, like a local park or Stanford's art museum, and receive a drawing project to complete during the excursion. Attendees spend the morning sketching, then meet up afterward to share their work and get to know each other over lunch.

See **JOY OF DRAWING**, page 21



Courtesy The Joy of Drawing

Katy Lea, left, and Caroline Mustard founded Atherton-based art school the Joy of Drawing.



Courtesy The Joy of Drawing

The Joy of Drawing co-founder Caroline Mustard works on a piece.

'Simply Sinatra' revives annual benefit concert tradition

For about 20 years, up until the pandemic, Los Altos residents Steve and Nancy Gill and their daughter, Anne, have hosted annual fundraising concerts for LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Steve Gill, a veteran Bay Area actor and singer who founded Menlo School's Fine Arts program, organizes and performs in the shows, which also draw on the talents of former students and colleagues.

This year, after a pandemic hiatus, the Gills' benefit concert returns to the stage with "Simply Sinatra: The Loneliness of the Long Distant Singer," featuring Steve Gill and actor,

director and choreographer Alex Perez. The concert takes place March 4, 7:30 p.m. at the Menlo School.

The show is a "bio-concert," highlighting not only Sinatra's music but the life of the legendary crooner. Gill and Perez are familiar faces on Bay Area stages, having performed with local companies that include Theatretworks and San Jose Stage Company.

Over the years, the Gills' performances have raised about \$145,000 for the Enchanted Hills Camp, run by LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, according to a press release about the concert. The

Napa-based camp offers a session for visually impaired adults who have other disabilities — a rare program for people with multiple disabilities. Anne Gill attended the camp after becoming blind and disabled in a car accident in the late 1990s. Steve and Nancy Gill founded the benefit concerts to help support the program.

"Simply Sinatra" takes place March 4 at Menlo School's Martin Family Hall, 50 Valparaiso Ave., Atherton. Requested donation is \$20. Those planning to attend are asked to contact Nancy Gill at 650-948-4648 or gillnancy@gmail.com. ■

—Heather Zimmerman



Courtesy the Gill family

Alex Perez, left, and Steve Gill perform "Simply Sinatra," a benefit concert for LightHouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired, on March 4 at Menlo School in Atherton.

JOY OF DRAWING

continued from page 20

Syer said she loves going on the group's sketch walks. "It makes you so happy you can't believe it," she said.

The Joy of Drawing is now evolving to offer more in-person opportunities for local art enthusiasts: Mustard and Lea recently made their organization

a nonprofit, so that people who are interested in drawing but might not be able to afford classes can take part.

The pair said they intend to focus on local libraries for new partnerships. They recently hosted a free Valentine's Day art workshop at the Atherton Library, and they hope to branch out into Palo Alto and East Palo Alto libraries as well, as

well as other towns around the Peninsula.

Local libraries have also begun stocking Mustard and Lea's book, "The Joy of Drawing: A Beginner's Manual," which they wrote together during the pandemic. The book contains QR codes for readers to scan, so that they can follow along and try a variety of sketching exercises as they go. There's a video that goes

with each chapter, too.

As for the group classes, Lea said it's "magical" to see the students growing in confidence and encouraging each other.

"Community is a huge part," she said. "Because everyone encourages each other and it's just so lovely and magical — it really is."


"We love what we do," Mustard said.


Syer, for one, said she'll remain a loyal student in Mustard's classes.

"As long as she teaches classes," she said, "I'll be taking them."

For more information, visit thejoyofdrawing.org. ■

Email Editorial Intern Grace Doerfler at gdoerfler@almanacnews.com.





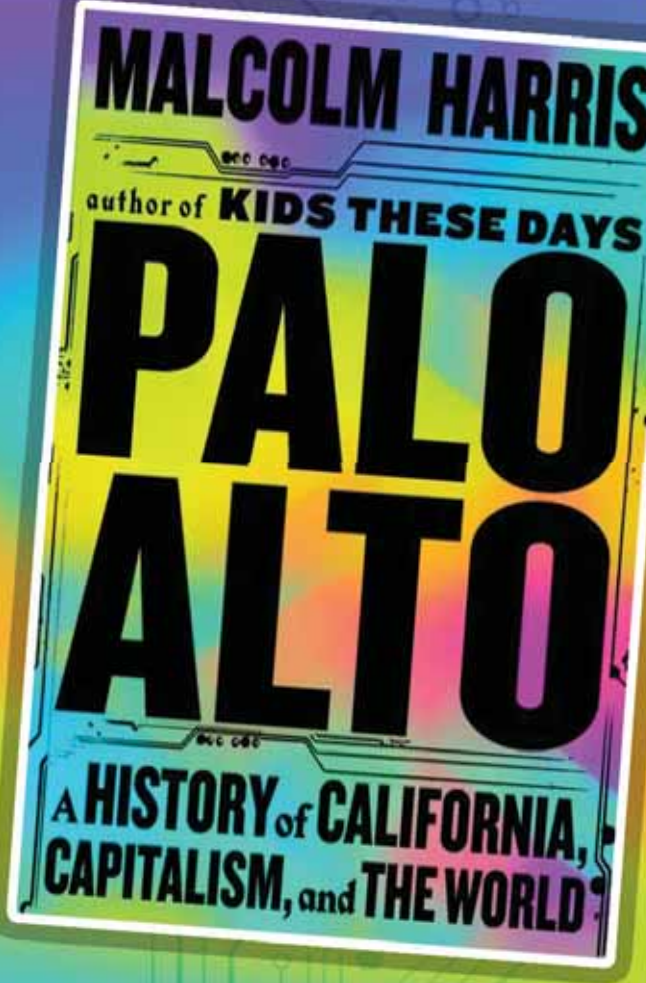
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MARCH 16th

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PHOTO: JULIA BURKE

Food & Drink

New eateries opening around the Peninsula

An ube cafe lands in Mountain View, Gin Bar opens in Sunnyvale and a ramen restaurant draws long lines in San Mateo

By Kate Bradshaw and Julia Brown

Mountain View is home to the newest outpost of Cafe 86, an ube-focused restaurant chain that serves a wide variety of desserts and drinks featuring the popular purple sweet potato native to the Philippines. Down the road in Sunnyvale, Gin Bar has opened at the AC Hotel Sunnyvale Moffett Park with more than 150 bottles of the spirit and a special “History of Gin” menu. And in San Mateo, Kate Bradshaw tried a new restaurant specializing in brothless ramen that’s drawing lines down the block.

A new ube-focused cafe lands in Mountain View

Cafe 86, an ube-focused restaurant chain, is continuing its expansion northward from Southern California and Las Vegas. Its second Bay Area location (after Union City) recently opened in Mountain View, and its third, slated for Daly City, is on the way.

The purple sweet potato native to the Philippines experienced a resurgence in popularity during the pandemic, according to a Forbes article calling ube the “uber ingredient of 2023.”

Established in 2014, the cafe’s tagline of “ube nerds” rings true in its menu, highlighting the vegetable in a wide array of desserts and drinks, including ube truffles, ube butter bars, ube leche flan cupcakes, Halo Halo bread pudding with ube ice cream, ube

crinkle cookies, ube milkshakes and ube lattes. Haho Halo is a Filipino dessert made with crushed ice, evaporated or coconut milk and a mix of ingredients including ube jam, sweetened beans, coconut, flan and ube ice cream.

The menu also includes an assortment of sandwiches, teas, blended drinks and churros, mochi dough caramelized in butter and coated with cinnamon sugar and caramel drizzle.

Cafe 86, 738 Villa St., Mountain View; 909-465-0886, cafe-86.com, Instagram: @cafe_86.

Kajiken brothless ramen in San Mateo draws a line down the block

After hearing that there was a new restaurant in San Mateo offering aburasoba, a brothless style of ramen, I made plans with a friend to test it out.

I had heard it was popular, but even I hadn’t expected to see the line reaching down the block when I arrived just after the opening time on a recent Saturday.

Kajiken, which opened Feb. 8, offers a type of ramen served with housemade aburasoba noodles flavored with oils and sauces rather than broth. The menu includes nine preset aburasoba combinations featuring various pork preparations and a roast beef one, plus a vegetarian mushroom aburasoba. Customers can also

customize their bowl with a set of 18 additional toppings, from green onions and bamboo shoots to plum or curry powder.

Kajiken also has a Baltimore location and a number of others in Japan, Singapore and China.

By the time we had worked our way up to the front of the line, we had been waiting about 70 minutes. But once we were at the front of the line, the staff operated with friendliness and efficiency. Seated at a bar with a window view into the noodle rolling machine, the two of us ordered iced oolong tea along with the pork aburasoba and the mushroom aburasoba, respectively, each requesting the add-ons of crispy onions and a soft-boiled egg. We also split an order of takoyaki, a set of fried spherical dumplings made with batter and octopus bites, offering a crispy exterior and a chewy and soft interior.

The mushroom aburasoba came with both shimeji and king trumpet mushrooms, spinach, tofu and red onions. Following the advice of the server to mix the noodles thoroughly, I took my first bite and was delighted with the way the slightly chewy texture of the fresh noodles blended with the oils and sauces.

We more than made up for lost time by practically inhaling our generous noodle portions to make room for the next customers behind us. Looking back, we agreed that had the weather been as chilly during our wait then as it’s been this week, we might not have made it to the front of the line, but that the wait was worth it for the new experience of trying a different style of ramen.

No reservations are accepted, and Kajiken is open Wednesdays through Mondays 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5 to 9 p.m.

Kajiken, 112 South B. St., San Mateo, kajikenusa.com; Instagram: @kajikenusa.

—Kate Bradshaw

Gin Bar debuts at Sunnyvale hotel

A new gin-focused cocktail bar has opened in the AC Hotel Sunnyvale Moffett Park.

The aptly named Gin Bar has



Courtesy TETRA Hotel

Above: The Clover Club cocktail at Gin Bar includes gin, dry vermouth, lemon, raspberry, sugar and egg white. Below: The pork aburasoba at Kajiken in San Mateo, served with crispy onions and an egg as add-ons.



Kate Bradshaw

a collection of more than 150 bottles of the spirit that focuses on unique small-batch producers from around the state and world, according to a recent press release. AC Hotel Sunnyvale Moffett Park opened early last year and shares the property with TETRA.

The bar features a special menu called the “History of Gin,” which offers 12 cocktails arranged by the year of their debut from the gimlet in 1867 to the gin basil smash in 2008. Each of these cocktails includes Sipsmith London Dry Gin.

A full menu of wines by the glass and classic cocktails is also available. Guests can dine from the AC Lounge’s tapas menu, which includes items such as tortilla española and meatball cazuela with romesco, manchego cheese and toast. During happy hour from 5-7 p.m. daily, a selection of beer, wine and cocktails

are half off. Gin Bar is open every day from 5-11 p.m.

The new bar joins AC Kitchen, TETRA’s Nokori Japanese whisky bar, Coffee Manufactory and Adrestia restaurant as the fifth dining destination at the hotel property. ■

Gin Bar, 1235 Bordeaux Drive, Sunnyvale; 408-734-3700, Instagram: @achotelmoffettpark.

—Julia Brown

Dig into food news. Follow the Peninsula Foodist on Instagram @peninsulafoodist and subscribe to the newsletter at almanacnews.com/express/foodist to get insights on the latest openings and closings, learn what the Foodist is excited about eating, read exclusive interviews and keep up on the trends affecting local restaurants.



Kate Bradshaw

A line of customers stretches down the block on a recent Saturday to eat at Kajiken, an aburasoba restaurant in San Mateo.



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