

The Almanac

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

MAY 19, 2023 | VOL. 58 NO. 37



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What's going on with Hangar One?

Google's Planetary Ventures offers updates on the Moffett Field landmark

By Malea Martin

Those who frequently drive the stretch of Highway 101 that passes through Mountain View know that Hangar One looks a whole lot different today than it did just one year ago.

After spending the better part of the past decade as a bare, steel skeleton, the massive structure's restoration officially began in May 2022. For members of the community who fought hard to save Hangar One, it was a victory nearly two decades in the making.

"It's a source of pride to everyone in our region," U.S. Rep. Anna Eshoo (D-Menlo Park) said in an April interview at Moffett Field. "It's an identifier — it's an icon for Silicon Valley."

At a May 11 Moffett Field Restoration Advisory Board (RAB) meeting, Google subsidiary Planetary Ventures, the entity responsible for Hangar

One's restoration, offered a rare opportunity for the community to ask questions about the restoration's progress.

The company remained tight-lipped about exactly when the public can expect to see the hangar finished — and what the space will be used for upon completion. But those who fought to have it saved imagine a place where the public can learn about Hangar One's nearly 100-year history.

"The people in the community envision that there would be an interpretive museum, so that when children come to see it they understand what it is, when it was built, why it was built, what was inside of it, what was taking place in the country at that time, why did we need a hangar of this size," Eshoo said. "That's a top priority for me."

See **HANGAR ONE**, page 29



Magali Gauthier

An outer layer begins to form on Hangar One during its renovation process at Moffett Airfield in Mountain View.

Relief as Portola Valley finally passes a housing element

Town still faces threatened lawsuit, controversy over rescinded fire district letter and more

By Angela Swartz

After a groundswell of public support leading up to the decision, the Portola Valley Town Council voted 5-0 to approve its third draft of its state-mandated housing plan on May 10. But the battle over the controversial document isn't over, as the town faces a threatened lawsuit and other accusations from town residents.

The deadline for submitting the housing element was Jan. 31, but after some newer council members expressed concerns over a site identified for housing growth, the vote was pushed back to this month. "Forced to choose between,

on the one hand, adopting a non-optimal housing element, and on the other hand, further prolonging the divisiveness we have long experienced in this process without any certainty of achieving a better and timely result in the future, I reluctantly would support the adoption of the housing element," Council member Judith Hasko said at the meeting.

Around 200 people signed a letter to the Town Council, delivered on May 10, urging members to pass the housing element. Endorsements came from former council members, high school students, town committee and school board members, local business owners and others.

"I'm relieved for all of us," said Planning Director Laura Russell. "It's been a long process."

Town staffers pointed out during the meeting that volunteers and staff spent 143 hours in 41 public meetings about the proposed 2022-31 Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). This latest round includes an obligation to plan for 253 new units compared to just 64 last cycle. The plan adopted on Wednesday includes 291 units.

San Mateo County municipalities have struggled to submit plans to the state that meet the stricter requirements.

"Frankly, it (the housing element) landed in a very different

place from where it started largely because of public input and because a committee of people decided to arrive at a compromise," said Mayor Jeff Aalfs at the meeting. "Everyone has something to be unhappy about. And that means we compromised. You know it's not perfect; it's the best we could do."

Council member Mary Hufty said before the vote that she understood the community had a lot of anxiety about a housing element not being sent to the state by the Jan. 31 deadline but urged them to not be too frantic.

"We're actually in the middle of the pack," she said.

Russell responded that the

town was initially "pretty far ahead," but revisions extended the timeline.

"We started the process earlier than I think any community that I can think of, about February of 2022," Russell said. "And then we had what I termed 'the big pivot' where we went back to the council and got additional feedback, looked at a bunch more options and kind of broaden the scope of the ad hoc housing committee's work because at that time that was very important to community."

At that time, she said, Portola Valley was no longer sort of leading the pack

See **HOUSING ELEMENT**, page 28

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Devin Roberts

Denny Hsu hits a pickleball during play with Winston Chen in Foster City.

Where to play pickleball on the Peninsula

Pickleball's popularity has skyrocketed, with lots of local options

By Margie Cullen

When Mountain View resident Monica Engel Williams' friends suggested they play pickleball while visiting in Arizona, she thought it was a card game. Tennis had been her sport for over 50 years, but once she picked up the pickleball paddle, she couldn't stop playing.

This was in 2013, and when she came back to the Peninsula,

there were only a few pickleball courts available. But Williams was determined to get people playing. After petitioning the Mountain View Parks and Recreation Commission repeatedly, she started putting tape on the tennis courts and offering her services as a teacher free of charge to people walking by. Now, the Palo Alto Pickleball Club has over 900 members, many of whom fill the Mitchell Park courts seven days a week.

Since 2014, pickleball has taken off on the Peninsula — and nationally. Williams is one of over 4.8 million players in the U.S., and it's America's fastest-growing sport, with participation increasing by 40% from 2019-2021 according to USA Pickleball, the national governing body for pickleball in the U.S. It's even going mainstream: Tom Brady and LeBron James are just a

See **PICKLEBALL**, page 34

Settlement clears way for José Andrés restaurant to cook with gas in Palo Alto

City backtracks, allows new building at Stanford mall to use gas despite local all-electric requirement

By Gennady Sheyner

Faced with the threat of a lawsuit, Palo Alto administrators have reversed an earlier decision and will now allow the new restaurant that chef José Andrés plans to open at Stanford Shopping Center to use natural gas.

The restaurant, Zaytinya, is one of three buildings that the mall operator, Simon Property

Group (SPG), is planning to build at the location of the shuttered Macy's men's store. Simon applied for the project in 2019 and received approvals from the city's Architectural Review Board and from planning staff. All of these approved plans included a gas line, which the developer installed in 2021.

The situation got thornier earlier this year when planning staff informed Simon that the

new restaurant building, known as Building EE, would have to be all-electric. The determination was based on the Palo Alto City Council's revision to the building code last year, which included a provision requiring all new buildings to be all-electric. The new law kicked in on Jan. 1, 2023, and city staff had determined that because Simon

See **RESTAURANT**, page 31

Longtime Sacramento critic Lydia Kou announces run for state Assembly

Palo Alto mayor has consistently opposed housing laws

By Gennady Sheyner

Palo Alto Mayor Lydia Kou, a staunch critic of California's approach to encourage more housing, announced on May 15, that she plans to run for the state Assembly.

Kou, a Realtor who has been serving on the Palo Alto City Council since 2016 and is now in her second term, hopes to win a seat in a district currently being represented by Assembly member Marc Berman, another former Palo Alto City Council member, in the 2024 election. The 23rd Assembly District includes Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Mountain View, Atherton, Woodside, Pacifica, Ladera, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills, Portola Valley, Saratoga and Campbell.

Though both are Democrats, Berman and Kou have significant policy differences. While Berman, a Menlo Park resident, has been a reliable vote of support for recent housing bills that have created streamlined and by-right processes for housing developments, Kou has strongly opposed these laws, characterizing them as an attack on local control. In March, she used her "State of the City" speech as a platform to attack recent Sacramento bills such as Senate Bill 9, which allows split lots in single-family zones; SB 10, which creates a process for cities

to build at higher densities in transit-rich areas than underlying zoning would normally allow; and SB 35, which created a streamlined approval process for housing projects in jurisdictions that fail to meet their housing quotas.

She had referred to the methodology used to develop the housing quotas as "highly flawed," called the numbers "widely inflated" and criticized the housing laws for failing to provide "genuine affordable housing." She also blamed "developer-friendly legislators" for raising Regional Housing Needs Allocation targets to "unrealistic levels," to ensure that most cities will fail to meet their targets.

On the local level, Kou has established a reputation as a tough critic of new developments and a stalwart of the Palo Alto council's slow-growth political camp, often referred to as "residentialists." Last week, she was the only council member who voted against adopting the new Housing Element, arguing that the entire process is based on misguided mandates from Sacramento.

"There is little evidence that these Housing Elements ... actually address the high cost of living, the housing affordability

See **KOU**, page 33



Courtesy GH+A Design Studio/city of Palo Alto

This rendering shows the new Building EE at Stanford Shopping Center, which would house Zaytinya and Dumpling Time restaurants.

Public Notices

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME

File No. M-290602

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

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME(S):

4-GOOD FOUNDATION

217 Camino Al Lago

Atherton, CA 94027, San Mateo County

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REGISTRANT'S NAME(S):

THE DAVID AND HEIDI WELCH FOUNDATION

217 Camino Al Lago

Atherton, CA 94027

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This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of San Mateo County on April 24 2023.

(ALM May 12, 19, 26 and Jun 2, 2023)

BOOKKEEPING SERVICES, INC.

CYPRESS CONSTRUCTION & REPAIRS, INC.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File No.: M-294234

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:

1.) Bookkeeping Services, Inc., 2.) Cypress Construction & Repairs, Inc., located at 3000 Sand Hill Road, 1-250 Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s):

DAVID BIDER, INC.

3000 Sand Hill Road, 1-250

Menlo Park, CA 94025

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 May 08 2023.

(ALM May 19, 26, Jun 2 and 9, 2023)

FLEX-IT MEDIA

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File No.: M-294061

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:

1.) Flex-It Media, located at 605 Willow Road STE 213 Menlo Park, CA 94025.

Registered owner(s):

DENNIS TRUMAN LUND

605 Willow Road STE 213

Menlo Park, CA 94025

This business is conducted by: an Individual.

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 April 18 2023.

(ALM May 19, 26, Jun 2 and 9, 2023)

ALPINE OPTOMETRY

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File No.: M-294148

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:

1.) Alpine Optometry, located at 3130 Alpine Road, Suite 220, Portola Valley, CA 94028, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s):

FARIBA LESSANI

1120 Russell Avenue

Los Altos, CA 94028

This business is conducted by: an Individual.

Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 12/14/2010

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on April 27 2023.

(ALM May 5, 12, 19 and 26, 2023)

OCEANA SMOG TEST ONLY CENTER

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File No.: M-294271

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:

1.) Oceana Smog Test Only Center, located at 100 Milagra Drive, Pacifica, CA 94044, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s):

KING CHIU YU

1130 Noriega St

San Francisco, CA 94122

This business is conducted by: an Individual.

Registrant has not yet commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.

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CRUMB CORNER BAKING COMPANY

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File No.: M-293929

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:

1.) Crumb Corner Baking Company, located at 299 Franklin St Unit 457, Redwood City, CA 94063.

Registered owner(s):

CARTER JACK GREEN

299 Franklin St Unit 457

Redwood City, CA 94063

This business is conducted by: an Individual.

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 April 06 2023.

(ALM May 19, 26, Jun 2 and 9, 2023)

CHECK THE CHIP

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File No.: M-294087

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:

1.) CHECK THE CHIP, located at 1139 San Carlos Ave, Suite #305, San Carlos, CA 94070, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s):

CHECK THE CHIP, INC.

2100 Geng Road, Suite 210

Palo Alto, CA 94303

DE

This business is conducted by: a Corporation.

Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 03/10/2023.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on April 20 2023.

(ALM Apr 28, May 5, 12 and 19, 2023)

SUMMIT CONSTRUCTION, MAINTENANCE & REPAIRS, INC.

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

File No.: M-294278

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:

1.) Summit Construction, Maintenance & Repairs, Inc., located at 3000 Sand Hill Road, 1-250, Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s):

DAVID BIDER, INC.

3000 Sand Hill Road, 1-250

Menlo Park, CA 94025

CA

This business is conducted by: a Corporation.

Registrant has not yet commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.

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The Almanac (ISSN 1097-3095 and USPS 459370) is published every Friday by Embarcadero Media, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558. Periodicals Postage Paid at Menlo Park, CA and at additional mailing offices.

Adjudicated a newspaper of general circulation for San Mateo County. The Almanac is delivered to homes in Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside. However, in order to continue delivering you the news you depend on, we encourage you to become a paid subscribing member. Go to AlmanacNews.com/subscribe to start supporting The Almanac today.

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Community speaks out about 'completely unacceptable' M-A student arrest

Commenters didn't mince words about racism and district policies at high school board meeting

By Angela Swartz

Those with ties to the Sequoia Union High School District didn't hold back their thoughts about the recent arrest of a Menlo-Atherton High School student near campus during a May 10, school board meeting.

During the public comment session of the meeting, students told the board that administrators should have more training in how to de-escalate conflicts without involving the police. Over a dozen speakers, including student board trustees, told the board that they were "disgusted" by the videos they saw and said it was "completely unacceptable."

Police have not released footage or the police report from the incident, but students recorded videos of the April 28 arrest in which the Black student was pinned to the ground at a bus stop on Middlefield Road by an Atherton Police Department officer.

"What if it was me who was pinned on the ground?" M-A Black Student Union (BSU) member Epiphany Bass told the school board. "I feel like his (the student's) actions weren't right but his parents could have been called. ... They (the administration) said that was our last resort, even though it really wasn't. ... I don't want to see an event happen like this again."

J.T. Faraji, an organizer from the protest group Tha Hood Squad, told the board that the student arrested had to have a surgery redone because of injuries sustained during the arrest. In one video of the incident, a student said that the student pinned down recently had surgery for a hernia.

Former and current staff members also spoke about the incident and their frustration dealing with racism in America.

"What we are doing here today as Black educators is the same thing my 92-year-old grandmother did," said Jeremy Arey, a paraprofessional at M-A. "The same thing my uncle, who is a freedom fighter with Nelson Mandela, did. Now here we are 100 years later, after (having) experienced traumas in our families for decades

living in America, still doing the same thing, hoping people have empathy and change a school system that has been weaponized against people of color."

Taja Henderson, the district's equity, diversity, and inclusion coach, said the board has the ability to make a statement that anti-Blackness has no place in its schools.

"I stood in a crowd for convocation where Dr. Shawn Harper (a USC professor teaching racial equity in the United States) encouraged us to be a district that collectively acts to create spaces where every student, staff, family member and community members thrives," Henderson said. "My question is: 'How will we work collectively with M-A's BSU in order to do just that?'"

Board President Rich Ginn said that he and other board members are saddened by the events on April 28. He encouraged school staffers to review their practices.

Other student actions taken in response

M-A students staged a walk-out from classes on the morning of May 11 to speak out against police violence. On May 3, the BSU hosted a protest as well. One speaker during the May 10 board meeting noted that board trustees Shawnece Stevenson and Sathvik Nori, an M-A alum, attended the May 3 protest.

A Change.org petition calling for an end to police brutality in the school district has garnered about 650 signatures as of Wednesday, May 17.

The petition outlines requests such as requiring in-person de-escalation training for everyone on campus, hiring an additional counselor to help with de-escalation, increasing hiring and retention of Black school district employees, and clear policies and a job description for the school's student resource officer.

Millbrae Vice Mayor Maurice Goodman urged the board on May 11 to honor students' demands not just with words but action.

"Let us commit to the deconstruction white supremacy and

Menlo Park district teachers receive 5% pay bump

The raise is retroactive to July 1, 2022

By Angela Swartz

Teachers in the Menlo Park City School District (MPCSD) will get a 5% raise, along with a 1% bonus following the school board's unanimous approval of a new contract on May 11.

The raise for the teachers union, called the Menlo Park Education Association, is retroactive to July 1, 2022 in an agreement reached on April 19. Base pay is now \$74,374, up from \$69,708 in the previous contract. Starting next school year, the maximum pay will be \$151,926 (up from \$140,477) in the district, which enrolls about 2,700 students at schools in Atherton and Menlo Park.

"We want to remain competitive," said Superintendent Kristen Gracia during the meeting. "We want to pay our teachers and staff well. We recognize the challenges of the Bay Area, of California, of the teaching profession, working in schools. This goes for all staff, not just teachers. I know a lot of heart went into this on both sides of the table."

The district is eliminating six steps from its teacher salary schedule, which allows teachers to move up in compensation more quickly, with a two-year wait between steps instead of four years. The negotiating



Magali Gauthier

Teacher pay in the Menlo Park City School District will rise to a maximum of nearly \$152,000 next school year.

teams also added one more step at the end to allow the most experienced teachers the chance for a pay increase before maxing out. The new salary schedule is 17 steps, compared to the previous salary schedule which had 22, Gracia said.

District music teacher Rachel Knight, the teachers union bargaining chair, said the agreement was a team effort to "help ease the economic strife facing teachers and other public employees in this area."

"Together we created a compensation package that will help teachers earn more over their careers, help attract new

teachers and retain the amazing teachers we have in MPCSD," Knight told The Almanac on Tuesday, May 16. "This agreement was a team effort to help ease the economic strife facing teachers and other public employees in this area. As we did in 2020 with our COVID MOUs, when we (MPEA and MPCSD) work together we can do great things. We are looking forward to continuing improvement as we look at the whole contract next year."

The COVID MOUs created the protocol and terms the MPCSD and MPEA agreed upon to govern working conditions for

MPEA members in the blended learning model, with stipulations like the district helping provide childcare for unit members with children in kindergarten through fifth grade.

There's also a \$500 increase to the stipend for having a master's degree, from \$2,000 to \$2,500. There's a \$500 increase to the BCLAD (bilingual authorization) stipend from \$3,000 to \$3,500.

In addition to meetings that extend the 7 and 3/4-hour workday for curriculum development and related activities authorized in writing by a site or district administrator, the pay has been increased from \$55 to \$65 per hour.

The district passed a teacher compensation philosophy in 2019 to establish as

"commitment to provide the highest quality education possible, understanding that our ability to recruit, retain, and develop gifted teachers is the single most important factor in accomplishing this goal."

In March, teachers in the Portola Valley School District recently received raises, which brought their base salaries up to \$82,130, with salaries capping out at \$153,886.

Watch a video of the May 11 meeting at vimeo.com/user61916753.

View the MPCSD contract at tinyurl.com/mpcsdcontract2023. ■

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

ARREST

continued from page 6

historical practices and policies that disproportionately impact our children of color," he said.

Background on the incident

Videos, including one shared by the Instagram account @thahoodnews, show two students being handcuffed, and one being held down by officers, at Middlefield Road and Oak Grove Avenue around 3:30 p.m. on April 28.

Atherton Police Cmdr. Dan Larsen said police are conducting an administrative review of the incident. He said police were dispatched to the high school after a student was reported to have pushed a school administrator against a wall and yelled homophobic slurs at him. Police received several 911 calls about the incident in the office, the news bulletin said.

Atherton police said in a May 3, news bulletin that school officials took a water gun away from the student earlier in the

week and he was in the school office asking for the water gun to be returned.

The student's family is being represented by Oakland-based civil rights attorney John Burris, who represented Rodney King in his civil rights lawsuit against the Los Angeles Police Department. Burris told The Almanac that his office is investigating the student's treatment by police and he will be making a recommendation about whether to file a lawsuit soon.

Public Records Act request for arrest information

Last week, The Almanac requested the police report from the incident, but police department officials said on May 16 that they would not release it, as it is exempt from Public Records Act requests because it involves the arrest of a minor. It's also exempt because "required disclosures of information derived from the records about incidents, arrests, and complaints (or requests for assistance to law enforcement) need not ... entail disclosure

of the records themselves," according to police.

Officer body camera footage is also unavailable because the "footage is not related to a critical incident."

Meeting video

Watch the video of the meeting at tinyurl.com/SeqMay10. ■

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

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include:

Theresa "Terri" Lavelle, 75, a Menlo Park resident and longtime supporter of women's causes who was known for her fun-loving personality and love of literature and the cinema, died on May 3.

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

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Courtesy Daniel Lanier

Menlo-Atherton High School students marched through campus May 11 to protest the police incident on April 28, which many viewed as an example of police violence.



Courtesy Daniel Lanier

While Menlo-Atherton High School students walked out of classes on May 11, they held signs and chanted “Black lives matter” and “Hands up; don’t shoot!”

M-A students walk out of classes to protest police brutality

By Angela Swartz

On May 11, Menlo-Atherton High School students gathered on campus at the PAC Café around 11 a.m. for a walkout in response to a student being pinned down and arrested by Atherton police on Middlefield Road in April, according to the M-A Chronicle.

Organized by the student club M-A Protest Organization,

participants walked from the Atherton campus to nearby Burgess Park in Menlo Park, where speakers addressed the crowd. The walkout took place during fourth period.

Students also gathered for a smaller walkout the following day, Friday, May 12, at noon, according to the M-A Protest Organization’s Instagram page. This walkout was open to students from other schools.

For more on the incident

read our story on community response at a recent board meeting.

The student, who was arrested following an alleged confrontation with a member of the school administration, is being represented by notable civil rights attorney John Burris, whose past clients include Rodney King. ■

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



Courtesy Daniel Lanier

“I hope that (the walkout) will show our administration that we want a change and that we will not stop until we get a change,” said student Melanie Osuna Madera during a walkout at Menlo-Atherton High School.

1996 cold case of missing Palo Alto woman resurfaces

FBI, Belmont police descend on home for evidence related to disappearance of Ylva Hagner

By Michelle Iracheta and Avery Luke

FBI crime scene investigators and local law enforcement searched the backyard of a Redwood City home for evidence in connection to the 1996 disappearance of a Palo Alto woman on Wednesday, May 10.

The Belmont Police Department and other local agencies closed off Stulsaft Park to the public in addition to the home on the 3700 block of Farm Hill Boulevard. It’s unclear how the park and the home are connected.

Ylva Hagner went missing on Monday, Oct. 14, 1996, and was reported missing to the Palo Alto police two days

later by friends, according to a Palo Alto Weekly report. Hagner was 42 years old at the time of her disappearance.

According to multiple missing person reports, Hagner lived in Palo Alto and attended Stanford University. According to her family, Hagner had been stalked by a male acquaintance before her disappearance, a missing person report said. She worked as a business-marketing manager for a German-American software company called iXOS.

Shortly after 10 a.m. on May 10, crime scene investigators



Ylva Hagner

could be seen bringing out multiple shovels and tools into the backyard of the Farm Hill home. The FBI told this news organization it is providing forensic support with its evidence response team.

According to county records, Thomas Pressburger owns the deed to the Farm Hill property where investigators were digging. According to the IEEE Database and the Nasa website, Pressburger works in the Robust Software Engineering area at NASA Ames Research Center.

According to an SFGate article from 1997, Pressburger was Hagner’s boyfriend at the time of her disappearance. Police have not named Pressburger as a suspect in the case.

Farm Hill Neighborhood Association President Johanna Rasmussen said the people who have lived in the home had lived there since Hagner’s disappearance and are not active members of the association.

Stulsaft Park, also cordoned off by authorities, is one of the most popular parks in the neighborhood and frequently hosts events, including an Easter egg hunt, where children search the park grounds, Rasmussen said.

Multiple agencies — including San Mateo County District Attorney’s Office and the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Department — are assisting in the investigation. The Redwood City Police

Department provided traffic assistance.

It is unclear what sparked the renewed interest into Hagner’s case. ■

Email Editor Michelle Iracheta at miracheta@rwcpulse.com and Staff Writer Avery Luke at aluke@rwcpulse.com.

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LET’S DISCUSS:

Read the latest local news headlines and talk about the issues on Town Square at AlmanacNews.com

Cities raise concerns about bill that extends streamlined approval for housing

Palo Alto considers joining opposition to Senate Bill 423, which would eliminate sunset date for SB 35

By Gennady Sheyner

With California's legislative season entering a critical juncture, cities are keeping a particularly close eye on Senate Bill 423, a bill that would indefinitely extend an existing law that creates a streamlined approval process for residential projects in cities that fail to meet their housing quotas.

Authored by state Sen. Scott Wiener, D-San Francisco, the bill would remove the sunset date from SB 35, a 2017 law that targets cities that have not met their Regional Housing Needs Allocation obligations. SB 423 has already secured approval from two Senate committees and, like all other Senate bills, faces a deadline of getting out of the upper Legislative chamber by June 2.

SB 35, which was also authored by Wiener, created a streamlined and ministerial process for housing developments that meet objective design standards such as height restrictions and density limits. According to a legislative analysis of the bill, all but 29 of the cities and counties in California are subject to SB 35 because they have failed to generate enough units in one or more income levels to meet

their RHNA goals.

In a recent meeting in front of the Senate Finance and Government Committee, Wiener called SB 35 one of the state's "most successful housing laws." Since the law's adoption, most of the state's 100% affordable housing projects have been subject to SB 35, he said, and the bill has reduced the approval timelines for these projects "from years to months." The

bill and its successor, SB 423, are necessary to address the state's housing shortage.

"California has an outrageous rate of homelessness. We have working class families who are leaving major metropolitan areas or leaving the state entirely, we have young people who aren't seeing the future for themselves in the state," Wiener

See **CONCERNS**, page 31

Actress Linda Cardellini confirmed as grand marshal in Redwood City Fourth of July Parade

By Avery Luke

Actress Linda Cardellini, a Redwood City native, will be the grand marshal of this year's Fourth of July Parade, according to parade organizer Regina Kipp.

Cardellini is known for her role in 'Freaks and Geeks' and Netflix's dark comedy 'Dead

to Me,' alongside Christina Applegate. Cardellini has also starred in films in the Marvel Cinematic Universe, including 'Avengers: Age of Ultron,' 'Avengers: Endgame,' and the Disney+ series 'Hawkeye.'

Redwood City has been the place to be on the Fourth of July since 1939. This year's theme is "All Things Flowers."

The fun starts at 10 a.m. on July 4, when floats will take their places at Brewster Avenue and Winslow Street. The celebration includes a festival, local artists and fireworks at the Port of Redwood City to finish the day of fun with a bang.

The historic Fourth of July Parade, the largest Independence Day parade in

Northern California, is back again for another year of fireworks and fun.

Spectators across the Peninsula see uplifting, patriotic sights and sounds in Redwood City. Floats, horses, bands and local organizations are just some of what the community can expect to see in the fanfare. After the celebration, the arts

and crafts booths and other entertainment will be available for spectators.

Those interested in participating in the 2023 parade can apply using this form on the Peninsula Celebration Association's website. ■

Email Staff Writer Avery Luke at aluke@rwcpcpulse.com.

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Tall, view-blocking weeds are latest highway hazard

Crew shortages, late rains contributing to slow removal of vegetation

By Sue Dremann

Towering weeds and grasses are blocking the line of sight of motorists trying to use freeway on-ramps and off-ramps in Palo Alto, East Palo Alto and throughout Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, a recent tour along U.S. Highway 101 and Interstate 280 shows.

The hazardous conditions are preventing drivers from seeing cars that are on conjoining merge lanes and those speeding past on the highway. The entrance to the U.S. Highway 101 at University Avenue and Donohoe Street in East Palo Alto is one such example.

Two lanes feed onto the on-ramp and merge into speeding freeway traffic, but drivers can't see past the 4-foot-tall wild oat grasses hiding one of the on-ramp lanes and to gauge the speed of approaching cars.

The situation is the same at other local highway entrances and exits. Tall weeds on the Embarcadero Road exit also create a blind spot of cars barreling down the roadway. At the northbound 101 exit onto Embarcadero, a screen of grasses

also blocks views in an already challenging location, where merging drivers must crane necks, looking backwards to see approaching traffic as they try to reach left-turn lanes across two to three lanes of traffic.

On the Interstate 280 at the Page Mill Road off-ramp, an imposing wall of tall weeds is also similarly obscuring drivers' views.

Caltrans is responsible for weed clearance, but local city leaders who've contacted the state agency about the problem said they've heard that Caltrans is short-handed.

East Palo Alto City Manager Melvin Gaines said by email that his city is concerned about multiple safety hazards created by the tall weeds.

"In addition to driver safety, we are concerned about fire risks, particularly if unhoused persons inhabit those areas. Caltrans is responsible for maintaining these areas. I personally am not familiar with how Caltrans monitors the growth of weeds and deploys crews when weeds need to be cut. When the city recognizes a need, our staff submits service tickets to Caltrans," he said.



Sue Dremann

Tall weeds at U.S. Highway 101 on-ramps are obscuring drivers' vision.

He noted that California Department of Transportation crews appeared to be cutting the weeds at the off-ramp onto University Avenue on Wednesday, May 9.

According to a Caltrans website on roadside vegetation control, "tall grass and weeds create serious problems for motorists by decreasing visibility, block traffic signing and reducing sightlines impeding the ability to see oncoming traffic around bends in the road. This can be especially problematic on winding rural or semi-rural routes where cyclists often use the road."

During the summer months, vegetation along the road shoulders turns dry, creating ample fuel for fires. A car bottoming out, a trailer chain dragging on the road — even the friction of roadway rocks hitting other rocks on the shoulder — can send a spark into the dry weeds, igniting

the next wildfire, Caltrans noted.

"Currently, crews are mowing and trimming vegetation across the Bay Area region including Santa Clara County. These past winter storms have created high weeds and grasses along our right of way. Crews are mowing, trimming and weeding on a daily basis but can't do every site simultaneously," Caltrans spokesman Victor Gauthier said in an email.

The agency maintains more than 15,200 miles of highways and freeways throughout the state.

The city of Palo Alto's Public Works Department stated in an email that staff members have heard about vegetation problems along the freeway interchanges from city crews and from city residents. The city submits service requests on the Caltrans website at csr.dot.ca.gov/ and staff has also spoken to Caltrans about the weeds. Caltrans has

communicated to the city that it is short-staffed and rotate crews and prioritize the work, the Public Works Department stated.

"City crews have observed Caltrans crews mowing/trimming vegetation and pruning trees at multiple locations/times since summer to date. Most recently, at the 101 San Antonio exit, Caltrans crews mowed and trimmed vegetation and pruned trees quite heavily," the department stated. "Staff is aware that with the heavy winter rains coupled with the late on-going spring rains has caused excessive regrowth of previously mowed/trimmed weeds and the city is experiencing the same problems. Due to this, we expect for weed eradication to continue through the end of June or early July." ■

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

Elected officials host community meeting on ongoing Hwy. 84 closure

The stretch of roadway has been closed since March

By Angela Swartz

State and local elected leaders will host a community meeting on Friday, May 19, on the ongoing closure of Highway 84 between Portola Road and Fox Hill Road near Woodside and efforts to repair the "severely damaged" road. The road has been since early March because of a 250-foot-wide landslide caused by a winter storm.

State Sen. Josh Becker, D-Menlo Park, Assembly member Marc Berman, D-Menlo Park, San Mateo County Supervisor Ray Mueller, and Woodside Mayor Chris Shaw are inviting community members impacted by the road closure to share their experiences firsthand.

"It has been 10 weeks since the complete closure of Highway 84 near the town of Woodside," Becker said in a statement. "We need better communication from Caltrans as to the status of repairs. I urge them to provide an estimated date on reopening — either temporary or permanent. While I understand the complexity of repairing this 250-foot landslide, this prolonged closure severely affects the residents, businesses and public safety responders."

Shaw noted that Highway 84 is one of the primary east-west routes connecting the coastal communities of San Mateo County to the Peninsula.

Woodside estimates that the average daily traffic count is in excess of 7,000 trips made up of

commutes to jobs and schools, health care and vital services.

"The state highway also serves as a principal evacuation route for natural disasters including earthquakes and fires," Shaw said in a statement. "The importance of a fully-functioning Highway 84 cannot be underestimated."

Caltrans' design and construction team members will be in attendance.

The meeting is set for 2-4 p.m. at Woodside Independence Hall, 2955 Woodside Road in Woodside, and online via Zoom.

More information is at woodsidesidtown.org. ■

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

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Bicyclists can now report '3 foot rule' violations online in San Mateo County

The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office announced bicyclists can now report "3 Foot Rule" violations and other bicycle-related complaints via an online reporting system.

The rule prohibits the driver of a motor vehicle from passing a bicycle in the same direction on a highway at a distance of less than 3 feet between the vehicle and bicycle.

Complaints can be made using the San Mateo County Sheriff's Online Crime Reporting portal at smcsheriff.com.

To be reported, the violations must have occurred in unincorporated parts of the county or the cities the Sheriff's Office serves, including Woodside, Portola Valley, San Carlos, Half Moon Bay and Millbrae.

—Bay City News Service

Menlo Park city emails move to new website

The city of Menlo Park recently changed its website address from menlopark.org to menlopark.gov, which means email address for city officials have also changed. The city's menlopark.gov/contact-us page was blank as of May 17, but City Council members' addresses can be found at menlopark.gov/City-Council. Anyone using a city email address that they've used in the past should note that addresses must now end with menlopark.gov.

San Mateo County hosts evening events in Flood Park

San Mateo County Parks will host an evening event at Flood Park in Menlo Park on Saturday, May 20, at 6 p.m., starting with a "Bike Pump Track Talk" for residents to learn what a pump track is, see early designs for construction at Flood Park and share ideas. From 7 to 8 p.m. residents are invited to use the park's amenities as a raffle is held and at 8 p.m. there will be a showing of the movie "The Emperor's New Groove."

Residents can see the plans for Flood Park's renovations this summer at smcgov.org/parks/realize-flood-park. It's located at 215 Bay Road, Menlo Park.

—Cameron Rebosio



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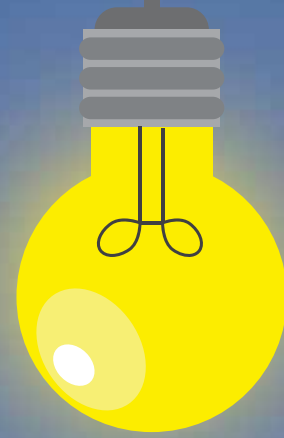
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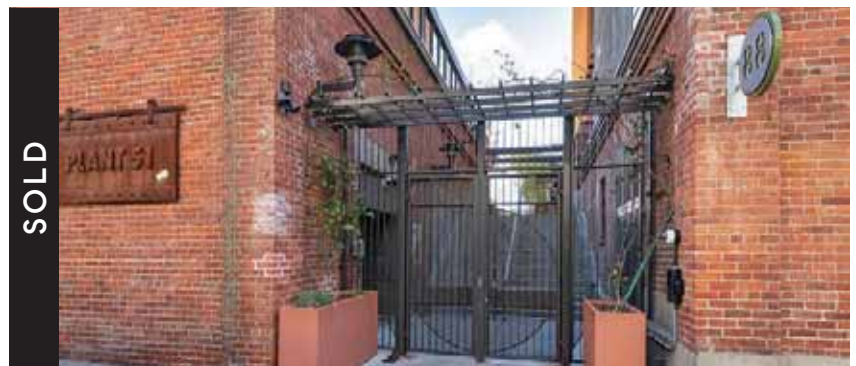


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Artscene

PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCES IN ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

A cinematic season

Film favorites and plenty of dramatic new ideas on tap in theater companies' plans for 2023-24

BY HEATHER ZIMMERMAN

As summer draws closer, local theater companies are one step ahead, unveiling their plans for fall, and in recent weeks announcing their slates of shows for the coming 2023-24 season. The new crop of shows getting underway this fall promises a mix of familiar stories — a number of them drawn from film — along with some newer works, some of which also take inspiration from the big screen and pop culture. Here's what some local companies have on tap for the new season.

Los Altos Stage Company

losaltosstage.org

Los Altos Stage Company has a wide-ranging season that brings together newer works with some classics and film favorites.

Joshua Harmon's **"Significant Other"** (Sept. 7-Oct. 1) looks at the life of young, single Jordan and his group of friends in present-day New York City. As the friends begin marrying and drifting apart, Jordan continues his quest for his own Mr. Right, while not sure what he's looking for.

It's been said that "The best way to spread Christmas cheer is singing loud for all to hear" and no one would know better than Buddy, the cheerful namesake of the Stage Company's holiday show **"Elf, the Musical!"** (Nov. 30-Dec. 24) based on the cult favorite film of the same name.

Kicking off the new year is a 2019 show with an unusual focus, young conservative Catholic intellectuals form its quartet of main characters. With **"Heroes of the Fourth Turning,"** (Jan. 25-Feb. 18) playwright Will Arbery, who himself had such an background, looks at the reunion of four friends who met at a Catholic college and how they reckon with their lives seven years after graduation.

The Thornton Wilder classic celebrating the endurance of the human spirit **"By the Skin of Our Teeth"** (April 11-May 5) takes on a new familiarity in its tale of a long-lived family who have survived several millennia of disasters, only to find that a massive glacier is now headed toward their home.

A stage adaptation of Mel Brooks' perfectly silly horror spoof **"Young Frankenstein"** (or is that



Michael Kruse Craig/Pear Theatre

The Pear Theatre will kick off its 2023-24 season with the farce **"Noises Off."** Seen here are actors Jennifer Chapman, Alex Draa, Charles Woodson Parker, Barbara Heninger and John Stephen King in a past production at The Pear of the classic comic farce **"Present Laughter."**

Frnk-en-steen?) closes out the season (May 30-June 23) with its tale of the heir to the Frankenstein estate trying to navigate his father's monstrous legacy.

The Pear

thepear.org

Going into its 22nd season, The Pear Theatre continues its Pear Pairings format, running two shows with complementary themes in repertory, for several offerings in 2023-24.

The season kicks off with a classic comedy, Michael Frayn's **"Noises Off"** (Sept. 8-Oct. 1), which takes the "door-slamming farce" genre — and little else — very seriously in the tale of an eccentric theater troupe staging a pretty terrible play.

Heading into the holidays, a pairing of dark comedies take us to Shakespearean-inspired alternate universes: Aaron Posner's **"District Merchants,"** looks at the complexities of life in American society through members of Black and Jewish communities living in a time and place that draws elements from Reconstruction-era Washington D.C., as well as Shakespeare's time and our own. Its companion piece, **"William Shakespeare's Land of the Dead"** is a "true" account of a zombie plague in Elizabethan England. The shows run Nov. 17-Dec. 10.

Sarah Ruhl's **"For Peter Pan on her 70th Birthday"** (Feb.

9-March 3) tells of four adult siblings reckoning with life after their father's death.

Spring 2024 sees the pairing (April 19- May 12) of Lloyd Suh's **"The Chinese Lady,"** based on the true story of 14-year-old Afong Moy, who in the early 19th century was put on display as the first Chinese woman in the U.S., and A.R. Gurney's **"Love Letters,"** which follows the lifelong correspondence of two friends briefly turned lovers.

The season closes with Greg Lam's **"Chaplin and Keaton on the Set of Limelight"** (June 28-July 21) based on the true story of the one project in which silent comedy masters Charlie Chaplin and Buster Keaton worked together.



Courtesy David Allen

Tony winner and TheatreWorks veteran James Monroe Iglehart, left, seen here with Alison Ewing, Michelle Jordan and C. Kelly Wright in a past TheatreWorks production of **"It Ain't Nothin' but the Blues,"** will direct **"The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee"** at the company this fall.

Palo Alto Players

paplayers.org

Palo Alto Players has a very cinematic season planned for 2023-24, kicking off Sept. 8-24, with **"Matilda The Musical"** based on both the children's book by Roald Dahl and a film about a unique little girl who has psychokinetic powers who must use her wits, bravery — and yes, maybe her powers — to face down a cruel school headmistress bent on punishing her young charges.

There's nothing like a visit to Oz to remember, just in time for the holidays, that there's really no place like home when beloved musical **"The Wizard of Oz"** takes the stage Nov. 3-19.

Heading into January is a tale perhaps perfectly named for the dead of winter (and set in it, too), **"Misery - The Play"** based on horror master Stephen King's chilling story of a famed author's prolonged and torturous stay with his "number one fan." **"Misery"** runs Jan. 19- Feb. 4.

Next up, with **"The Music Man,"** (April 26-May 12), ultimate huckster Harold Hill stirs up trouble (right here in River City) from absolutely nothing with his bid to convince a small town that buying the instruments, uniforms and all the accoutrements for a boys' band is the only way to stave off juvenile delinquency.

The season closes with Ken Ludwig's adaptation of the classic Agatha Christie mystery **"Murder on the Orient Express"** (June 14-30).

TheatreWorks Silicon Valley

theatreworks.org

Just in time for the most mysterious month, TheatreWorks opens the season with a look into the unsolved mystery around the brief disappearance in 1926 of mystery writer Agatha Christie in the West Coast premiere of Heidi Armbruster's **"Mrs. Christie."** (Oct. 4-29).

Tony Award-winning actor James Monroe Iglehart, well-known to TheatreWorks audiences, helms the quirky musical comedy **"The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee"** (Nov. 29-Dec. 24). In the new year, TheatreWorks Artistic Director Tim Bond, who was a friend of acclaimed playwright August Wilson and is a renowned interpreter of his works, directs Wilson's theatrical memoir **"How I Learned What I Learned"** (Jan. 17-Feb. 11).

A fitting choice for spring is **"Queen,"** (March 6-31) a drama by San Jose-born playwright and filmmaker Madhuri Shekar about PhD candidates and best friends studying the worldwide collapse of honeybees, until a flaw in their research threatens their personal and professional lives.

Mike Lew's **"Tiger Style!"** (April 3-28) takes a big satirical swipe at the fallout of "tiger parenting" in a story of high-achieving siblings.

Founding Artistic Director Robert Kelley returns to TheatreWorks for the world premiere of **"Being Alive: A Sondheim Celebration,"** teaming up with the company's Resident Musical Director William Liberatore to honor the works and legacy of deeply influential composer Stephen Sondheim. Throughout his 50-year tenure at TheatreWorks, Kelley showed a true affinity for the works of Sondheim — the company has staged 21 productions of Sondheim's work, according to a press release. The show, which runs June 5-30, closes the season. ■

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

Worth a Look

San Francisco Scottish Fiddlers

Led by top Scottish fiddler Alasdair Fraser, a group of over 100 fiddlers and other musicians take the stage together for a show that one might call the reel deal. Fraser, a two-time winner of the Scottish National Fiddle Championship, has performed with artists such as The Chieftains, The Waterboys, Itzhak Perlman and his music has been featured on small and big screens, including Ken Burns documentaries and the film "Titanic." He is the founder and music director of the group, the San Francisco Scottish Fiddlers. The group's wide-ranging membership plays a variety of instruments, not only fiddles but harps, flutes, drums, other stringed instruments such as guitars and mandolins, and of course there may also be some bagpipes. The fiddlers' repertoire highlights traditional and newer music from Scotland, plus a large swath of western Europe, from Scandinavia to Spain. Their May 20 performance in Palo Alto is the second in a trio of concerts taking place this weekend around the Bay Area.

May 20, 7 p.m. Spangenberg Theater, 780 Arastradero Road, Palo Alto. Tickets are \$14-\$28. sffiddles.org.



Amy Luper

Acclaimed fiddler Alasdair Fraser leads the San Francisco Scottish Fiddlers in their annual series of three spring concerts this weekend.

Dave Eggers

Dave Eggers is a bestselling author, an editor and a publisher, but his vast catalog of work also includes more than a dozen children's books, most recent among them the picture book "The Eyes and the Impossible." The book tells the story of Johannes, a dog who lives in a big city park, and the whole community of other animals, from seagulls and squirrels to bison, who also call the park home. Johannes is the "Eyes" who keeps

watch over everything that happens in the park, in particular the increasingly suspicious activities of the humans, who seem to be making more incursions into the animals' peaceful home.

May 20, 6:30 p.m. at Kepler's Books, 1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. Guests must purchase a copy of "The Eyes and the Impossible" to enter the signing line; each copy costs \$30.63 plus \$3.81 fee. keplers.com.

Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra

The Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra's (PACO) May 20 concert is not only a season finale, but it also marks a special send-off for PACO's departing music director, Ben Simon, who is stepping down after 20 years leading the youth orchestra. Simon's farewell appearance at PACO's podium will be a two-part program that pays tribute to Simon and looks to the near future. The first half offers a preview of works

that the orchestra will play during its upcoming international tour, with Vivaldi's Concerto for Four Violins in D Major and Florence Price's Five Folksongs in Counterpoint, Nos. 2, 3 and 4. The program's second half features one of Simon's favorite works, Mozart's Sinfonia Concertante for Violin and Viola, with violinist and former PACO concertmaster Robin Sharp as soloist, and fittingly, Haydn's "Farewell Symphony."

May 20, 7:30 p.m. at Saint Mark's Episcopal Church, 600 Colorado Ave, Palo Alto. Admission is free. pacomusic.org.



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Food & Drink

How Menlo Park mainstay

Carpaccio's

is adapting to the times, without changing its menu



Co-owner Sandra Ferer talks about how the restaurant got its start and Peninsula Restaurant Week specials

By Kate Bradshaw

To give you a preview of some of the restaurants participating in our third annual Peninsula Restaurant Week May 19-27, we're speaking to the restaurateurs behind local eateries. This is the second interview in this year's series; the first was a Q&A with Geoffroy Raby, owner of Cuisinett Bistro & Market in downtown San Carlos.

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

Sandra Ferer spent her career working in the mining and explosives industries before retiring into managing Ristorante Carpaccio, a Menlo Park Italian restaurant that she co-owns with her husband Aaron Ferer. During our chat, she paused a number of times to pick up the restaurant phone, warmly greeting regulars and asking people making reservations about the occasions that would be bringing them through the restaurant's doors.

Open five days a week for dinner and takeout lunches, the eatery offers an array of Italian dishes, from branzino to zeppole, including its eponymous carpaccio and pasta carbonara. It also has an extensive drinks menu and well-stocked bar, with wine, more than 50 bourbons and 32 tequila varieties available, plus beer from

Livermore-based brewery Shadow Puppet Brewing Company.

For Restaurant Week, Ristorante Carpaccio is offering a \$25 special: housemade gnocchi served with Bolognese or vodka sauce and Parmesan, plus house salad and minestrone soup.

I spoke with Sandra about keeping a restaurant running through the COVID-19 pandemic, the restaurant's namesake dish, and the outlook for Menlo Park's dining scene. This story has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Peninsula Foodist: Start by telling me, big picture, what's the story of Carpaccio? How did you end up in the restaurant world?

Sandra Ferer: In 1988, my husband sold his business with Budget Rent-a-Car and was looking for restaurants to get into. He found this one (which) had only been here for about three months. My husband came and looked at it, bought it, and it's been here since then, with the same menu since 1988.

I worked in the mining industry my entire career. I worked with Rio Tinto, which is the world's largest mining company, and then I worked with Dyno Nobel, the second-largest explosives company, as vice president of global and strategic accounts. I traveled the world negotiating explosives contracts. When I retired from

the mining industry, I came down here to just understand the restaurant a little better and see what was happening, and the two managers that we had here ultimately retired. The timing was good — about the time they were retiring, COVID hit, and I needed to be here full time. So I made that adjustment, and my husband then came full time as well.

People have been coming here for generations because it's a popular local restaurant and they want to see the same things. About three years after he bought this restaurant, we had it redesigned by Pat Kuleto, a very famous restaurant designer.

The bar is extremely popular. We have the regular seats, and we've had to put in another row with little countertops so that people can sit there. It's just a very, very friendly, very safe bar that people come to. We have many regulars at the bar and in the restaurant celebrating birthdays, anniversaries, graduations. We watch generations of kids grow up and then bring their own kids here. It's just been a restaurant that people feel comfortable in. They see their neighbors here. So we try to keep the restaurant as much the same as possible and yet introduce new concepts that are subtle.

Peninsula Foodist: What are some examples of that?

Sandra Ferer: Our specials; we now focus on a wide variety of fresh fish. We try to make them very healthy. We put healthy sauces on top, not cream sauces and things like you can find on the regular menu. We've got an alley. It's a wonderful extension of the restaurant. COVID was hard on everyone, and we wanted when people came to the restaurant to feel comfortable, so we bought things like white flowers to place on tables that we couldn't serve during the shutdown. We designed the alley in such a way that diners would feel

as comfortable outside as inside.

It's very important for people to come here and be able to enjoy (themselves). They can bring their dogs, they could have a business meeting, they could celebrate an engagement. It's just a place that people enjoy coming to, and (coming) back to over and over again.

Peninsula Foodist: You mentioned how COVID has been really hard on restaurants. Tell me more about your experience.

Sandra Ferer: Those of us that have survived are really looking at modifying our business model.



Above: A calzone from Ristorante Carpaccio in Menlo Park. Top: Ristorante Carpaccio has a wood-burning pizza oven and beers from Shadow Puppet, a brewery based in Livermore. Photos courtesy Christina Schmidhofer Photography.



How do we survive? What do people want? It's a slow recovery at best. We branched out into other areas such as more to-go (food).

We work hard at doing quality control for food. We work very hard on our service. Our front of house staff have been here, many of them for 15, 20, 25 years. They know our customers and they're absolute professionals. In looking at the business model, we're just all looking at what works and what doesn't, and sliding into that lane until it picks back up again, whenever and however that looks.

I don't know that we'll ever go back to pre-COVID dining, so we just have to find the solution now, and the best way to deliver to our customers and potential customers, and attract people to Menlo Park. We need to bring people into Menlo Park to see what's here.

Peninsula Foodist: What was the process like of adding the alley dining area?

Sandra Ferer: The alley came about because during COVID, restaurants were given outside dining spots in parklets. We don't have (parking) spots on Crane Street, so there were no parklets available. We were just trying to put tables on the sidewalk, which didn't work very well.

One of the council members came and said, "Would you be interested in taking part of the alley?" And we said, "Absolutely, yes. When can we do so?"

We greatly appreciate that opportunity. It wasn't a good time to spend money, but we wanted to be sure that our customers felt as good outside as inside, so we made it a beautiful space. It has awnings and European artwork. We have music. We have beautiful new tables and chairs and heaters and planter boxes that are filled with live plants, lemon trees, all kinds of things. It's a space that people feel very comfortable in — they bring their dogs, they bring

their grandchildren. Or it's a great place for a business dinner — we can set it up so that there's lots of privacy. In the evening, when the sun goes down a little bit, it takes on this golden glow out there that is really beautiful. What we found last summer was as the weather got warmer, the reservations would fill up faster on the outside than the inside. People love dining outside.

Peninsula Foodist: We recently did a story about people's favorite dishes on the Peninsula, and one person's favorite was the carpaccio from Carpaccio's. What makes it special?

Sandra Ferer: We hear from people that do travel quite a bit, but have tried it elsewhere, and they come back for this (carpaccio). We have to do that one right.

Peninsula Foodist: Are there any menu items you'd highlight besides the carpaccio?

Sandra Ferer: Our chicken and veal dishes are extremely popular — I bet we have seven different ways of doing chicken and veal. Our fish menu is exceptional. We have fish on a regular menu that's been there forever. Our calamari, chicken and veal are all pounded very thin and the dishes come out exceptional.

We have a wood-burning oven for our pizzas and we've expanded our pizza items. We have some salads that are absolutely wonderful. All of our food is made in house. There are very few exceptions to that. Our tiramisu is absolutely wonderful. We have zeppole, an Italian beignet that we make to order. Our minestrone



Above: Zeppole are served with dipping sauces for dessert. Left: Carpaccio's dining room was designed by Pat Kuleto. Photos courtesy Christina Schmidhofer Photography.

soup is very popular. We have vegan and vegetarian and gluten-free options. We have several to-go and delivery partners so that you can just pick up here at the restaurant yourself at the same price.

Peninsula Foodist: What do you have planned for Restaurant Week?

Sandra Ferer: We did an enticing menu at a good price, better than you would typically get. But mostly, I saw an opportunity for restaurants that have survived COVID to get their names all out there and show who is on the Peninsula still. I think people don't travel as far anymore. There's a lot of to-gos, and so it's good to see what's in easily drivable distances to be able to experience different things.

Peninsula Foodist: How do you feel about the Menlo Park dining scene?

Sandra Ferer: Menlo Park is an area that is reaching out, trying to bring in new residents. There's a lot of new apartments and condos and things being built to attract new people. And we need that — I'm all for it. I think there's about five new restaurants coming in. Any new business that comes into the area brings additional vibrancy. If we can put or keep Menlo Park on the map and in people's minds — which I think this will help do — that's very good for all of us here in Menlo Park.

*Ristorante Carpaccio,
1120 Crane St., Menlo Park;
650-322-1211,
Instagram: @carpaccio_mp.* ■

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Notice of Public Hearing

The Menlo Park City School District will hold two separate public hearings on the proposed Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), with the Budget Overview for Parents cover page, and the proposed Budget for fiscal year 2023-24 on June 1, 2023, at 6:00pm, at the Menlo Park City School District, TERC, 181 Encinal Avenue, Atherton, CA 94027. Copies of the proposed LCAP and Budget are available for review at the District office from May 26 to June 1, 2023, between 8:00am-3:30pm and posted on the District website, www.mpcsd.org. Contact Marites Fermin, mfermin@mpcsd.org, (650) 321-7140, ext. 5614 to request a printed or electronic copy. Public members or stakeholders may request to comment at the public hearing on the proposed LCAP and Budget or any item therein, by following the instructions for public comment found on the District website.

5/19/23

**CNS-3685420#
THE ALMANAC**

HOUSING ELEMENT

continued from page 1

because the town took the time to do those things. “The law says that we were supposed to have completed our housing element by Jan. 31.”

The housing element that passed was mostly unchanged from the draft the council last looked at in March, with some setback changes at the Ladera Church site, authorizing the planning and building director to adjust the timelines for building to extend them and extending program implementation timelines for Dorothy Ford Park and Open Space to be extended to two years from adoption of the housing element.

Updates on threatened lawsuit

At the same meeting, the council reported out of a closed session meeting on Tuesday, May 9, about the lawsuit that’s threatened against the town by the company PublicSafety4PVNow, Inc., led by residents Rusty Day, Bob Turcott and Ron Eastman, according to public documents.

The three are requesting that the Town Council rescind votes to approve environmental studies supporting the town’s housing plan, arguing the review was deficient and did not adequately consider fire safety. The town, in tandem, is working to approve its updated safety element, which is part of the general plan and is intended to reduce the risk of injuries, property damage and displacement from fires, floods, droughts, earthquakes, landslides, climate change and more.

Updates included the fact that Hufty is recusing herself from the discussion because of her relationship with Day — both were members of the Portola Valley Neighbors United (PVNU) board of directors. PVNU is a volunteer-led group founded by Hufty that came out against Stanford University’s plan to develop land along Alpine Road known as the Wedge.

LEHUA GREENMAN



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The council voted 4-0 to approve a so-called tolling agreement, which establishes a deadline for the parties to negotiate before a plaintiff will file suit to enforce legal rights. In this case, it is set for June 11.

The council also voted to appoint a subcommittee of Town Council members Hasko and Craig Taylor to negotiate a potential settlement agreement with PublicSafety4PVNow.

Turcott, Eastman and Day said in a May 10 letter to the town that they came to the conclusion that the community “needs the means to ensure enforcement of the fire safety laws and regulations that the state has adopted to protect” residents.

“Every California town that burned to the ground in a catastrophic wildfire in the last decade thought it was safe,” said Turcott in a statement. “I was alarmed when I learned that Portola Valley intended to ignore its obligations under the California Environmental Quality Act, which was adopted to protect the public. I wanted these issues to be studied by the experts who know, as CEQA requires. As a member of the Housing Element Committee, I repeatedly expressed these concerns. My request for the Committee to review our CEQA analysis was denied. The Fire District has confirmed my concerns — it identified major deficiencies in Portola Valley’s CEQA analysis of wildfire safety.”

Turcott posted a video to YouTube on Wednesday that explains the reason the three formed the company and how residents can pitch in, urging them to donate and join their mailing list.

“For years, our advocacy for effective prevention and fire safe development has fallen on deaf ears,” Turcott said in the letter to the town. “For years, my family and yours have been denied the basic safeguards defined by State laws and regulations.”

Dispute over fire marshal’s letter

On a privately-run social media forum, PVForum, and in letters to the Town Council, some residents accused the town of withholding a letter signed by Woodside Fire Protection District Fire Marshal Don Bullard dated Jan. 4 that was retracted 45 minutes after it was submitted to the town, according to Town Attorney Cara Silver. The town alleged in a draft that the letter was not written by its Bullard, but has the appearance of being “cut and pasted,” based on

the language and style, from writing by members of the public who oppose the housing element. The final version took this allegation out of the exhibit.

In the letter, Bullard said that to his knowledge, the town has not asked the district to assess the impact that the town’s proposed zoning code amendments (like increasing zoning density) would have on public safety, fire operations, fire prevention, wildfire hazards and risk, or its evacuation capacity and capability.

‘(T)he language and style of the draft letter has the appearance of having been cut and pasted from language drafted by other members of the public who have been opposed to the project and do not appear to have been originally drafted by Mr. Bullard himself.’

PORTOLA VALLEY TOWN COUNCIL
EXHIBIT D

“We withdrew the letter because we agreed that getting the housing element in place is critical,” said Fire Chief Rob Linder in a Thursday, May 11, email. “Doing so is very challenging based on new state laws. What we wanted is assurance that the town would address our concerns for the need for fire mitigations related to development in high and very high fire severity zones. The Portola Valley council has assured us those concerns will be addressed in the safety element. We have accepted those commitments.”

The Almanac has also contacted fire district board President Matt Miller for comment.

“His (Bullard’s) letter was not made public,” said Turcott in a May 9 letter to the town. “To our knowledge, it was not distributed to the Town Council or the Planning Commission. If true, that means that the Planning Commission and the Town Council considered (the) proposed housing element and other general plan revisions while being blinded to the fire district’s concerns. ... When a PRA (Public Records Act) request for the fire marshal’s letter was served on the town, the town denied the letter’s existence. It is only because the fire district produced the letter

that the public has become aware of it.”

The Town Council, which passed an exhibit to be attached as an addendum to the housing element, voted 3-0, with Hufty and Hasko abstaining from voting, explaining why the letter is not being included in the housing element.

“Mr. Bullard subsequently withdrew the draft letter and requested that it not be considered part of the record. He and other representatives of the district have since repeatedly reaffirmed since then to town staff both orally and in writing that the draft letter does not accurately reflect the views of either Mr. Bullard or the district.”

Going into the May 10 meeting, Bullard and Linder wrote to the town that “while there have been many difficult discussions between the fire district and the town of Portola Valley on its plan documents, the district is confident that the town will abide by its promise to adopt the 2008 Moritz Map to evaluate new projects (until a newer updated map becomes available), implement and codify the district’s recommended mitigation measures, and ensure the new safety element will be at least as stringent as the current 2010 version.

In 2009, the Town Council opted not to formally adopt a wildfire hazard map prepared by the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection, which showed no “very high” risk areas.

This was in sharp contrast was the map prepared by the Woodside Fire Protection District, which labeled parts of several neighborhoods as at severe risk, including Woodside Highlands, Westridge, Alpine Hills and Portola Valley Ranch.

Cal Fire considered both views and agreed with the district on the danger in the Highlands neighborhood, but not the other areas.

The map was prepared by Ray Moritz, a consultant in mapping fire-prone vegetation, who found that that threats rated “very high” exist in some Portola Valley neighborhoods, and threats deemed “high” exist in many others, based on the proximity and topography of fire-prone forested areas. Moritz’s map largely agrees with the fire district’s map.

“Some individuals have suggested that the district is or has been opposed to the town’s housing plan,” the two wrote. “But the district’s only goal is to work with the town to ensure both the highest standard for fire prevention, public safety, and a rational and practical plan to provide much needed

housing. We continue to work with the Portola Valley team, and will make special efforts to stay in synch and maintain open lines of communication.”

Cease and desist order

During public comment on Wednesday, PVNU President Rita Comes requested the Town Council cease and desist using the PVForum, claiming that it’s violating the Brown Act, California’s open meeting law.

“A quorum of Town Council members has access to the communications on this forum,” said Comes. “And can see the comments of their fellow council members. While many of the town citizens do not have access and are unable to see and participate in this debate.”

All residents of Portola Valley and the Portola Valley School District boundary, as well as local workers and businesses, are invited to be members of the PVForum, according to forum administrators. You can apply for membership to the forum to post in it.

“I don’t agree with Rita’s legal premise that a single council member’s exchange with a member of the public violates the Brown Act,” said Town Attorney Silver. “It’s also not clear why she is singling out the two posts attached to her letter. The cited posts simply provided publicly available information to residents unable to attend council meetings. This is the sort of outreach most residents rely on and appreciate. That said, given the possibilities of unintentional serial Brown Act violations, many city attorneys advise their clients not to post on any social media. This advice is hard to reconcile in today’s world where social media is the most prevalent form of communication and real time exchanges are now common place. As a member of Cal Cities’ Brown Act committee, we have debated these issues extensively. I personally believe the Brown Act should be amended to provide better clarification.”

The town settled a lawsuit over alleged Brown Act violations last summer. At the time, council members denounce legal action, saying it amounted to bullying at taxpayers’ expense. ■

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

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Appellate court rejects Elizabeth Holmes' motion to stay out of prison

By Susan Nash

In a one-page order issued Tuesday afternoon, May 16, the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 9th Circuit denied a motion by Theranos founder and CEO Elizabeth Holmes to stay out

of prison while she appeals her conviction for wire fraud.

The court ruled that Holmes had not raised a "substantial question" regarding the conduct of her trial or shown that any trial errors were likely to result in reversal or a sentence shorter

than the 11-year, three-month prison term handed down by U.S. District Judge Edward Davila.

In January 2022, a jury convicted Holmes of misleading and defrauding investors about the capabilities of Palo Alto-based

Theranos' blood-testing technology. Davila had ordered Holmes to surrender to federal prison authorities on April 27 of this year, but that order was automatically suspended while the higher court decided whether to grant the bail request.

It will be up to Davila to set a new surrender date for Holmes now that her request has been denied. Holmes' appeal, per the 9th Circuit's order, will continue on its original schedule and will likely take several months or a year to be resolved. ■

HANGAR ONE

continued from page 1

Hangar One history

Hangar One was constructed in the early 1930s to house the USS Macon, a massive dirigible operated by the U.S. Navy. The Macon had a short lifespan: It only took flight for a few years before crashing during a storm off Point Sur, California, in 1935.

After the USS Macon met its untimely demise, the military continued to make use of Hangar One for decades to house training aircraft.

Moffett Field Historical Society President Tom Spink was a "25-year-old kid from Kansas" when he first arrived at Moffett Field in 1970 to start his Navy career. Spink quickly became acquainted with Hangar One and its history — as well as some of its fabled quirks.

"When a cold front would pass through, water would condensate on the top, and it would sprinkle inside," Spink said in an interview at the Moffett Field Museum.

In 1994, the Navy transferred

Hangar One to NASA after Moffett Field was decommissioned. But in 2003, NASA discovered that Hangar One's metal skin was leaching a toxin called polychlorinated biphenyls, or PCBs, into the wetlands near Moffett Field. NASA also discovered lead and asbestos in the structure.

"There was an immediate effort to coat it to prevent further leaching. It was largely unsuccessful," said Lenny Siegel, former Mountain View Mayor and longtime advocate for restoring Hangar One.

A few years later, he said, "the Navy proposed to tear it down," prompting Siegel and others to form the Save Hangar One Committee, which fought to not only prevent the demolition of the Hangar, but have it restored.

"There was a great deal of opposition to demolition from diverse sectors of the community," Siegel said. "People who saw it as a landmark of this area; Navy veterans who saw this as a symbol of their service to the country; preservationists."

But the cost of such an immense

undertaking — restoring one of the largest hangars in the world — was beyond what NASA could manage on its own.

"What was worked out was a plan for NASA to lease out in a competitive bid 1,000 acres of Moffett Field," Siegel said. "And whoever leased the 1,000 acres would be responsible for restoring and maintaining Hangar One. ... Google was the only serious contender."

In 2014, NASA selected Google subsidiary Planetary Ventures as the new lessee, meaning the company would also take on the responsibility to rehabilitate the historic Hangar One.

What's next for Hangar One?

When Planetary Ventures started the restoration last year, the company targeted 2025 for the project's completion. Congresswoman Eshoo said in April that she's still confident in that timeline.

"Every time I'm here I see more progress," she said.

But when asked about the 2025

target at the May 11 RAB meeting, restoration project manager Roozbeh Amini-Rad said this year's weather patterns have presented some challenges.

"I think we're still kind of working through that," he said of the project timeline. "We've had some weather issues here recently, so we're still internally trying to finalize those dates."

Despite the exact completion date being up in the air, Amini-Rad said progress is being made every day.

"One major activity that we've been working through on the hangar is the scaffolding," he said, emphasizing "the size and complexity of the scaffolding structure that we've built in there."

Amini-Rad added that metal decking continues to be installed on the west and south sides of the hangar, noting "the difficulty of installing metal decking on a curved structure like this." The decking will eventually be covered by an exterior aluminum paneling system.

"So once the project's finished you'll see kind of an aluminum finish," Amini-Rad said.

Meanwhile, Planetary Ventures must ensure that hazardous toxins don't escape into the environment while the restoration is underway.

"Essentially we have this plastic material that we've wrapped around the exterior of the hangar," Amini-Rad said. "We're kind of going section by section, ... while we're abating it, to keep all the material inside."

When asked what Hangar One might be used for upon completion, and whether a museum is on the table, Amini-Rad said that "right now, the team is focused on restoration, and it's too early to determine the long-term use."

Google declined a request for an interview with Planetary Ventures.

Greg Unangst, chair of the Restoration Advisory Board, said that despite some uncertainty around when the restoration will be finished, he's hopeful for Hangar One's future.

"For years, it just sat there. It looked like nothing was happening. Well, there was a lot going on with the planning, and we saw the result of that yesterday," Unangst told the Voice after the May 11 RAB meeting. "It's an amazing endeavor that they're doing here, on a major structure. So you can see why there's years of planning and detailed engineering that goes on." ■

Email Staff Writer Malea Martin at mmartin@mv-voice.com.

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The Las Lomas Elementary School District will hold two separate public hearings on the proposed Local Control Accountability Plan (LCAP), with the Budget Overview for Parents cover page, and the proposed Budget for fiscal year 2023-24 on June 1, 2023 at 7:00pm, at the Las Lomas School District, 1011 Altschul Avenue, Menlo Park, CA 94025. Copies of the proposed LCAP and Budget are available for review at the District office from May 26 to June 1, 2023, between 10:00am-1:00pm and posted on the District website, www.llesd.org. Contact Mei Chan, mchan@llesd.org, (650) 854-6311 to request a printed or electronic copy. Public members or stakeholders may request to comment at the public hearing on the proposed LCAP and Budget or any item therein, by following the instructions for public comment found on the District website.

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With safety in mind, Menlo Park reduces Middlefield Road to three lanes

Pilot program nixes a vehicle lane as part of city's roadway safety goals

By Cameron Rebosio

The city of Menlo Park and Cal Water are repaving the lanes on Middlefield Road between Ravenswood Avenue and Willow Road, and striping them to become a three-lane road with a turn lane as part of a road safety pilot program.

Middlefield Road in that stretch has been a four-lane road with two lanes going in each direction. The pilot program area starts around Ringwood Avenue and ends around Santa Margarita Avenue, near the Menlo Park Fire Protection District's

administrative offices. Under the pilot program, the street is being reduced to three lanes, with two lanes going in either direction and a turn lane between the two.

The road was repaved as part of a project to replace a water main on Middlefield Road, and the city aims to use the opportunity to further its street safety goals. According to Assistant Public Works Director Hugh Louch, most of the time, Cal Water would only repave the area of road that it worked on, but on Middlefield Road Cal Water elected to repave most of the street, which will not happen again for several years.

Louch said that Menlo Park chose to use the repaving work, which will take place in the next year, to collect and analyze data and public input to form a final striping plan. Residents will have multiple opportunities to provide feedback, including presentations to the Complete Streets Commission and City Council.

The city's website states that the three-lanes configuration will allow Middlefield to maintain roadway capacity, and that separating vehicles traveling at different speeds will increase roadway safety. The city started installing painted pavement markings this month



Andrea Gemmet

Middlefield Road was restriped to reduce the number traffic lanes between Ravenswood and Santa Margarita avenues, near Willow Road in Menlo Park.

to coordinate with the paving work. The project does not include areas of the road where there are already medians installed. The pilot evaluation will occur over the next six

months, and the city anticipates collecting data this fall. ■

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RESTAURANT

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had not submitted a building permit application by that date, the restaurant building would have to comply with the new "reach code."

Simon respectfully disagreed and responded in April with a letter threatening litigation if the city insists on enforcing the rule.

"SPG is confident that the enforcement of the new Reach Code in this context is legally defective and unconstitutional, and SPG is thus prepared to take all actions necessary to enforce its legal rights to employ gas facilities within Building EE," Anna Shimko, an attorney for SPG Group, LLC, wrote to the city.

She also noted that Zaytinya relies on "traditional cooking methods that require gas appliances to achieve its signature, complex flavors."

"Without a gas connection and appliances, Zaytinya would be forced to alter its signature five-star menu, which it is unwilling to do," Shimko wrote. "Zaytinya cannot compromise the caliber of its cuisine and reputation, and if SPG cannot provide gas in Building EE, Zaytinya will likely choose not to locate within the city. This would be an unfortunate loss for the residents of Palo Alto, as well as a compensable loss for which SPG would be forced to seek redress."

The developer followed suit on May 3 by submitting an application for a building

permit for Building EE that included natural gas.

Now, it looks like Zaytinya will be able to use gas after all. The council discussed the city's dispute with the shopping center in a May 8 closed session, and on May 15, Palo Alto city staff backtracked and entered into a settlement that will allow Building EE to use natural gas.

In a statement issued Tuesday, May 16, city staff said that the building is "in a unique situation, where parts of the project were built or under construction when the city's all-electric new construction rule went into effect.

"Due to the yearslong planning effort which started in 2019, three years before the city adopted the all-electric requirement, the city and the mall have

agreed that this one project should be able to proceed with gas service consistent with the long-established project plans," the city's statement reads.

The settlement agreement signed by City Manager Ed Shikada and Steven Fivel, general counsel and secretary for SPG Group, LLC, specifies that the all-electric agreement would only be waived for Building EE and not any of the other structures that are being constructed as part of the redevelopment. In addition to Zaytinya, the building is slated to house the restaurant Dumpling City.

"In all other respects, developer shall be subject to the 2022 California Building Codes with the city's local amendments," the settlement states.

The agreement states that the both parties seek to "resolve the dispute without the need for further legal proceedings and believe this agreement is fair, reasonable, and in the best interests of the parties and the public."

"Developer and city understand that liability for the matters encompassed in developer's April 28, 2023, letter is disputed by the parties and that this agreement is a compromise and shall not be construed as an admission of any fact, claim or allegation of liability or responsibility on the part of the parties, or any of them," the settlement states. ■

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CONCERNS

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said. "We are short millions of homes and we need to, at a minimum, double our housing production and probably beyond that."

SB 35 has a sunset date of Jan. 1, 2026. SB 423 would remove the sunset date and make several modifications to the legislation, including removing an existing exemption for coastal zones, wetlands and protected habitats. The proposed bill would also prohibit local governments from requiring developers to provide studies or other information not relating to the determination of whether the project complies with objective planning standards.

SB 423 has already won

approval from the Senate Finance and Government Committee and the Housing Committee and is set to go in front of the Senate Appropriations Committee on May 15.

While both Senate committees supported the bill, SB 423 is also generating opposition from cities who characterize SB 35 and SB 423 as attacks on local control. Redding, Simi Valley, Thousand Oaks and Fairfield are among cities that have come out against the bill and the League of California Cities has argued that the recent rule changes make it hard for cities to implement their housing plans. Jason Rhine, assistant director for legislative affairs at the League of California Cities, told the committee that the organization is particularly concerned

about the elimination of the sunset provision.

"We believe at most you should extend the sunset, maybe add a few more years and get a good handle on where it's working or not, particularly if this bill passes," Rhine said.

Palo Alto, which has consistently fallen well below RHNA targets when it comes to affordable housing, will have a chance to join the opposition on May 15, when the City Council considers the city's positions on a variety of state bills. In the past, the city has taken an adversarial position toward housing legislation that creates streamlined and by-right processes for residential projects. The city has opposed recent legislation like Senate Bill 9, which enables lot splits to promote duplexes

and triplexes, and Senate Bill 10, which allows cities to build housing at greater densities than would otherwise be allowed in transit-friendly areas. Mayor Lydia Kou cited both bills, as well as SB 35, in her "State of the City" address in March as examples of Sacramento striping away local control.

"What it does do is take away the ability of local government to make local planning decisions about the built environment and it does not give opportunities to residents and neighbors to provide comments and input," Kou said during the address. "That goes against the whole meaning of democracy."

The May 15 meeting will give other council members their first chance to weigh in on SB 423 and other proposed

legislation. The city's current legislative guidelines state that council "supports reasonable housing policies that recognize local autonomy to maintain the local public process and preserve local government's ability to determine land use policies and development standards." And a new report from the city's Sacramento lobbying firm, Townsend Public Affairs, lists the city's status on the bill as "pending opposition."

"Palo Alto has included in the Legislative Guidelines many principles to support local control of land use and this bill contrasts with that," the report states. ■

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Woodside housing element still needs work, state says

By Angela Swartz

State housing officials again sent back Woodside's housing element for revisions, but the latest feedback shows the town has made progress, according to a May 12 letter to the town.

The eight-page letter said that there are still outstanding questions about some suggested housing sites, such as Cañada College, where the town suggested 75 units could be developed. State officials are also requesting additional details on the town's infrastructure needs and analysis of special housing needs, like for farmworkers, in the document the town submitted to the state on March 15.

This letter is much shorter than the state's prior critique sent to Woodside in October, which requested the town address concerns in its first draft of the element submitted in July 2022. There are some sections of the state's letter this month that simply tell the town to refer to previous feedback.

"We are pleased that there are no material objections in the response letter from the state and anticipate resolving the open comments and gaining approval for the state-mandated housing element," said Mayor Chris Shaw in an email.

The town is required to plan for 328 units as part of the 2023-31 Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA). It is a big jump from the previous requirement to plan for 62 units. The latest draft includes 393 units to allow for a buffer. Of those units, 120 are backyard accessory dwelling units (ADUs).



Angela Swartz

Woodside's Raymundo Road property is included on the town's 2023-31 housing plan.

"The revised draft element addresses many statutory requirements; however, revisions will be necessary to substantially comply with state housing element law," according to the letter. "HCD (the state Department of Housing and Community Development) appreciates the hard work and dedication (former Planning Director Jackie Young) and the Woodside housing element team provided."

Specific feedback from the state

Cañada College site: Given that Woodside included the

community college site at 4200 Farm Hill Blvd. during the last housing element cycle, the town must include programs to monitor the progress in development, including rezoning or identifying alternative sites if the development does not proceed as anticipated, according to the state.

Town-owned sites: The element was revised to include plans to accommodate housing on two town-owned sites, one on High Road and one on Raymundo Drive. However, the plans should also clarify whether there are any known barriers to development, including relocation of existing uses, the state notes.

Infrastructure: While the element includes a general discussion of sewer capacity, it must still demonstrate sufficient existing or planned water, sewer and dry utility capacity to accommodate the additional units for the planning period, and add or modify programs to address constraints related to the accessibility of infrastructure on identified housing sites, HCD said.

Environmental constraints: While the element now discusses environmental constraints on identified sites, it should still discuss any other known conditions that preclude development

during the planning period, according to the state. Examples include parcel shape, easements and conditions.

Housing needs: The town must analyze any special housing needs such as for the elderly; people with disabilities; large families; farmworkers; families with female heads of households; and families and people in need of emergency shelter, the letter states.

What happens if a compliant housing element isn't passed on time

The state notes that if a local government fails to adopt a compliant housing element by May 31, which is 120 days after the deadline of Jan. 31, then any site rezoning must be completed no later than Jan. 31, 2024.

Several federal, state, and regional funding programs consider housing element compliance as an eligibility or ranking criteria, according to HCD.

Without a state-approved housing element, the town may not meet housing element requirements for Caltrans, the Strategic Growth Council and HCD's Affordable Housing and Sustainable Communities program, and HCD's Permanent Local Housing Allocation and other funding sources.

More info

Read the full second draft at tinyurl.com/woodsidedraft2. ■

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

KOU

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crisis," she said at the May 8 meeting. "Furthermore, the state bills that rewrote the number of housing units that need to be built are flawed beyond logic," she said.

In her May 15 announcement, Kou said she wants to move to the Assembly to "fight for new approaches to addressing homelessness, crime, affordable housing and the rising cost of living." The top priority on her list would be to stop politicians who she claims are "taking away local democracy by putting developers in charge of land use and silencing local communities." Kou also said she would address homelessness by building more shelters and giving local governments the power to require that people use that shelter, rather than sleep on the streets.

She also wants to see a greater emphasis on mental health and training for individuals as they transition from homelessness. Focusing solely on housing construction in insufficient, she told this publication.

"I really think we need to kind of also invest in mental health part of it and drug treatment ... They have to be mentally on the path in order to be get into training for a job and then work their way to a stable housing," Kou said. "We're just building, building and building and it's not really solving the problem with homelessness."

She also said she supports taking on "career criminals" by making sure there are consequences for individuals who commit repeated thefts and other crime. This may include revisiting Prop. 47, a 2014 initiative that reclassified various drug offenses and other

non-violent crimes from felonies to misdemeanors.

"When something bad happens, we expect police officers to do their jobs. When officers do their jobs and then we turn around and the problem is not addressed and we let the (offenders) go, it's a revolving door," Kou said. "It doesn't help

police officers and it doesn't help the people who are harmed."

Kou also said she would like to curb government spending by reconsidering major projects like the extension of Caltrain to downtown San Francisco.

She told this publication that she is undeterred by the barriers of challenging an incumbent.

"We live in a democratic society, so it's up to the people: If they want to see change, they can elect me. If they want status quo, they can stick with whomever they want," Kou said. ■

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

CRIME BRIEF

Motorcyclist killed in Skyline Boulevard crash identified

A motorcyclist who died in a collision on Skyline Boulevard in San Mateo County has been identified as 58-year-old Eric Hull of Santa Cruz County, authorities said.

The collision was reported about 9:30 a.m. on Saturday, May 13, when Hull was riding a Harley Davidson motorcycle behind a Toyota 4Runner headed southbound on Skyline, which is also known as State Route 35, according to the California Highway Patrol.

The collision happened when Hull attempted to pass the Toyota while the vehicle was turning left into a private driveway, between Page Mill Road and state Highway 9, CHP Officer Art Montiel said.

The motorcycle sideswiped the Toyota, went off the road and hit a tree. Hull died at the scene, authorities said.

He was a resident of Boulder Creek, an unincorporated community in Santa Cruz County.

The CHP said it did not appear that drugs or alcohol contributed to the collision.

—Bay City News Service

Menlo Park community exchanges tips for getting through long power outages

By Cameron Rebosio

Menlo Park residents and city staff gathered on May 11, to brainstorm ways to handle lengthy power outages followed a windy, wet winter that left some areas of the city without power for days.

The Menlo Park group Menlo Park Community Ready (MPC Ready) hosted the community sessions meeting and had 21 attendees, including Menlo Park Fire Protection District Fire Chief Mark Lorenzen, Assistant City Manager Stephen Stolte,

Mayor Jen Wolosin and council members Betsy Nash and Maria Doerr.

Residents offered advice on how they dealt with the outages, from lighting the gas stove with matches to taking hot showers to deal with the cold weather from the storm. Some issues didn't have easy solutions, such as health care equipment that runs on electricity and refrigerators full of groceries that spoiled after the electricity went out.

A presentation showed ways that residents could cope while the power is out, such as using

battery-powered fairy lights to light the house or camping stoves to cook, as well as using sleeping bags to stay warm.

"If we're trying to electrify to save the planet but then the grid goes down ... how do we get our needs met?" asked Nancy Larocca Hedley, vice chair of Menlo Park's Environmental Quality Commission.

One focus of the meeting was the ways that neighbors can help each other during crises, such as one resident who assisted her 90-year-old bedbound neighbors during a multi-day power outage.

Hedley said that her street has a WhatsApp group chat where neighbors can keep each other informed. Lynne Bramlett, an MPC Ready organizer said that neighborhood communication is essential in an emergency.

"There are scholars who study this disaster research showing (that) in a disaster, people are helped by their neighbors," Bramlett said. "The reality is there won't be nearly enough first responders."

Bramlett said that was one of the reasons for the development of MPC Ready, which started in

January 2020. Neighbors initially came together to plan disaster preparedness, but ended up providing community support.

Menlo Park city officials say they're working with MPC Ready and may be collaborating in the future, though it's uncertain what form that may take. Bramlett said they're hoping to partner with the city similar to the way Atherton is working with the local emergency preparedness group ADAPT.

For anyone interested in getting involved in disaster preparedness, Bramlett suggests programs such as Red Cross Ready. ■

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PICKLEBALL

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few athletes investing in Major League Pickleball, and ESPN hosted its first Pickleball Slam featuring tennis stars like Andy Roddick in early April.

The sport dates back to 1965, when a Washington state congressman and a businessman came back from a golf outing and decided to play badminton, according to USA Pickleball. Unable to find a full set of rackets, they improvised using ping-pong paddles and a perforated plastic ball. The name pickleball is "a reference to the thrown-together leftover non-starters in the 'pickle boat' of crew races," according to USA Pickleball.

"It's a friendly, welcoming game," Williams says. Played with a paddle and a plastic ball with holes, it combines elements of tennis, badminton and ping-pong. It can be played indoors or outdoors on a badminton-sized court as doubles or singles. Thanks to its easy-on-the-joints nature, it spans all ages: Williams has taught a 93-year-old man, and she knows an 11-year-old boy who started a pickleball club at his school. In fact, while half

of all serious pickleball players in 2021 were 55 and older, the fastest-growing age category of all pickleball players is under 24, according to the New York Times.

In the Palo Alto Pickleball Club, beginners can come to Mitchell Park in Palo Alto any day of the week. Participants play on 15 outdoor public courts from sunrise to 3 p.m., and eight courts from 3-10 p.m. The club's motto is "Arrive as a stranger and leave as a friend."

"If you're walking by, someone like me will say to you, 'Are you interested in pickleball? Come on in!'" says Williams. She offers complimentary lessons, and volunteers provide clinics Monday through Wednesday from 1-2:15 p.m. Membership rates are \$30 a year for Palo Alto residents and \$60 for nonresidents. (Members over 80 years old are free.) There are also family plans, and you don't need to be a member to play.

Up and down the Peninsula, there are a number of ways to get started with pickleball. When Williams first started this club, she called it the Silicon Valley Pickleball Club because people would travel from all over to play.

But now, there are public clubs like Palo Alto's, private sports clubs like Bay Club, and parks and recreation centers all over the Peninsula offering pickleball. We rounded up some more options for those looking to try it.

Parks and recreation centers

Due to the growing demand for pickleball, many parks and recreation centers have set up pickleball courts of their own.

The city of Menlo Park, for example, offers pickleball at Kelly and Nealon parks. At Nealon Park's court 5, pickleball players can drop in from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. After that, the court is shared with tennis players. No key is needed to access the pickleball court, and paddles and balls are available free of charge at the Menlo Park Library.

Redwood City Parks and Recreation offers 55-minute pickleball lessons for adults, and Sunnyvale has adult and youth pickleball programs for a fee. Cupertino has also started a pickleball trial program on court 2 at Memorial Park, and pickleball reservations can be made on Foster City's Parks and Recreation page. Burlingame's Parks and Recreation page lists where pickleball lines are striped on tennis courts (Washington Tennis court 1 and the Laguna Courts).

Clubs

Like the Palo Alto Pickleball Club, other cities on the Peninsula have their own community-based clubs.

For \$20 a year for residents and \$35 for nonresidents, you can become a member of the Foster City Pickleball Club, which has six permanent courts at Leo J. Ryan Park. The club works together with Foster City's Parks and Recreation



Magali Gauthier

Mingxia Zhang prepares to hit the ball while playing pickleball at Mitchell Park in Palo Alto.

Private clubs

Bay Club, a sports club with locations from San Diego to Oregon, has two spots on the Peninsula: Redwood Shores and Broadway Tennis and Pickleball in Burlingame. Both locations have pickleball and offer "Challenge Clinics," where players can meet and play whether they are a beginner or advanced. Redwood Shores converted one of its tennis courts into four pickleball courts at the end of 2022. Memberships start at \$200 per month. ■

Department to host "Intro to Pickleball," tournaments and other events.

The LGS Recreation Pickleball Club was formed by community members in response to demand for access to pickleball programs in the Los Gatos-Saratoga area. Designed for players of all levels, the club offers clinics and classes along with access to courts and equipment. Play takes place at La Rinconada Park most days of the week, and Tuesdays are for beginners only. Membership is \$45 a year.



Devin Roberts

Played with a paddle and a plastic ball with holes, pickleball combines elements of tennis, badminton and pingpong.



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