

The Almanac

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

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To get frequently absent kids back in school, you need to understand why they aren't coming

Researchers say a variety of solutions are needed to tackle the many reasons for missing class

By Angela Swartz

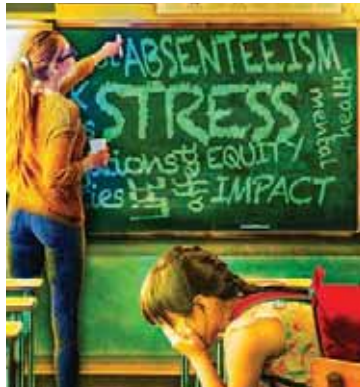
When it comes to understanding the complex reasons why some students are chronically absent, “every absence has its own story,” said Todd Rogers, a behavioral scientist at Harvard University.

He spoke about the problem of chronic absenteeism, when children miss at least 10% of the school year, in an interview with the Harvard Graduate School of Education’s Harvard EdCast publication in 2019.

Even before the pandemic hit, and student absences surged across the country, the state and in San Mateo County, Rogers was fascinated with the topic of chronic absences and sought to find ways to improve student attendance. This is because he knows that missing school has dramatic impacts on students in the long term.

Schools in the Ravenswood

See **ABSENTEEISM**, page 18



This is the third of three stories in a series exploring why chronic absenteeism has spiked in East Palo Alto and Menlo Park’s Belle Haven neighborhood. The series was produced as a project for the USC Annenberg Center for Health Journalism’s 2023 California Health Equity Fellowship with the support of EdSource editor Dymna Ugwu-Oju. Read the Spanish translation of this series on [AlmanacNews.com](https://www.almanacnews.com) or at tinyurl.com/ausente-spanish.



Backpacks hang outside a classroom at Los Robles-Ronald McNair Academy in East Palo Alto in 2022.

Magali Gauthier

Those blue USPS mailboxes? Don't leave your mail in them

Multiple reports of mail theft from curbside collection boxes have been reported in Menlo Park

By Cameron Rebosio

Amid reports of checks stolen from a mailbox outside a West Menlo Park post office, the United States Postal Inspection Service is recommending people avoid leaving outgoing mail in curbside boxes.

In 2022, the United States Postal Inspection Service (USPIS), the law enforcement branch of the United States Postal Service, logged 1,124 mail theft cases reported nationwide. Locally, several Menlo Park residents have said that checks mailed from a West Menlo Park curbside box

have gone missing or been stolen.

United States Postal Inspector Matthew Norfleet recommended that people send out their mail from inside a U.S. Post Office location, telling *The Almanac* that mail should not be left unattended in outside mailboxes any longer than necessary.

“There’s no such thing as a mailbox that can’t be broken into,” Norfleet said. “It’s not a bank vault, right? It’s just like a temporary convenient place for your mail to be for a short time.”

Following *The Almanac*’s April 7 story on a mail theft incident in West Menlo Park, multiple

residents reached out with stories of checks mailed on weekends being stolen.

One of the residents, Robert Grant, said that he had left eight checks in mailboxes located outside of the Avy Avenue branch post office over a weekend. After reading about the experience of another resident whose checks went astray, he followed up to see if they’d reached their destinations. Grant said he discovered none of them had been received.

At first, he said only canceled and reissued the checks, but then one of them turned up on a black market site on the

darknet. A check was being sold with Grant’s bank information clearly listed, so he had to close his account and open a new one, causing a whole new host of issues with his reissued checks.

Since that happened, Grant said that he has only mailed checks from inside the post office.

“It’s not clear to me that those blue boxes are safe anymore to use,” he said.

While the blue USPS mailboxes are targeted by thieves, Norfleet emphasized that they aren’t the only place where thieves can get their hands on residents’ mail.

“Right now we have a huge, huge problem with letter carriers being robbed at gunpoint for their for their arrow keys, which is what we call the keys to use to access the mailboxes,” Norfleet said.

To protect their mail, Norfleet encouraged residents to leave sensitive mail inside a post office branch and to report incidents to the USPIS so that inspectors know where to focus their efforts. Go to uspis.gov or call 877-876-2455. ■

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

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- Coverage of Business and the Economy
- Coverage of Youth and Education
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- Feature Photo
- Feature Story
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- Inside Page Layout & Design
- Investigative Reporting
- Land-Use Reporting
- News Photo
- Newsletter
- Open - Investigative Reporting
- Profile Story
- Video Journalism

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An inquiry into the accidental death of an electrical worker, finding significant culpability on the part of Palo Alto. The level of well-documented detail was exceptional, especially given the lack of cooperation from a range of rejected sources. Meticulous work.

— First Place, Investigative Reporting

Comprehensive. Balanced and readable article that fully explains, with well-chosen quotes, the reasons for the city's and the business owners' views on a development of interest to residents.

— Second Place, Coverage of Business and The Economy

Great story, well told. This piece had RHNA numbers explained, NIMBYism on parade, attorneys and former elected official behaving badly — just great work.

— First Place, Coverage of Local Government

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The **Almanac**

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Registration is now open: PaloAltoOnline.com/moonlight_run

The Palo Alto Weekly Moonlight Run & Walk is a benefit event for local nonprofits supporting kids and families.



Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY



Courtesy Caltrans

One lane of Highway 84 in Woodside reopened on Thursday, July 27, 2023. The two-lane route, which has been closed due to landslide damage since March, is set to fully reopen in late October.

Surprise! Highway 84 in Woodside reopens ahead of schedule

One lane of traffic is open after monthslong closure following landslide

By Malea Martin

One lane of Highway 84 in Woodside is now reopened to traffic, Caltrans announced July 27, ending the full closure that interrupted commuters and beachgoers for months, with detours creating traffic congestion on nearby roads.

The surprise announcement came less than one week after Caltrans announced that the partial reopening would take place by 8 a.m. on Monday, July 31.

But with just one lane reopened on the conventional

two-lane highway, it will be a few more months before the flow of traffic is back to normal. Caltrans expects both lanes to be open sometime in October.

The section of Highway 84 between Foxhill and Portola roads was closed to all traffic on March 9 when a landslide damaged around 250 feet of roadway.

Woodside Town Council member Ned Fluett said after a meeting with Caltrans earlier this week that there will be traffic lights controlling the flow of traffic through the area that's limited to one lane. There will also be push buttons for cyclists installed at the lights to give

them extra time to get through, he wrote on PVForum, the private online social network for Portola Valley residents.

According to Caltrans' latest update, crews are still working on repairing the slope, constructing a retaining wall, reconstructing the roadway, implementing erosion control and repairing drainage systems along the damaged section of highway. The state agency said it will continue to offer regular updates on the work's progress through October. ■

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

Amid noise complaints, Woodside council limits where Menlo Country Club can hold events

The country club's legal counsel argued the ruling isn't within the council's right

By Malea Martin

The Woodside Town Council ruled that Menlo Country Club will no longer be allowed to hold planned events on a portion of its property, following complaints from nearby neighbors who say it gets so rowdy that they feel like they're living "in an amphitheater."

The situation is the latest in a longstanding feud over noise between neighbors and the country club. This time, the area of contention is a shaded lawn area on the south side of the property that was supposedly designed as a place for kids to get respite from the sun. Instead, neighbors say, it's being used for noisy gatherings.

"Kids laying the shade looks a lot like 100 people sitting at tables having dinner," said Kevin Greenwood, who lives with his partner Debbie Mendelson on Sheridan Way, a stone's throw from the country club.

Menlo Country Club's lawyer Alex Merritt declined a request for comment, though he told the Woodside Town Council members at the July 25 meeting that he doesn't believe it's within their legal right to bar the club from using its property in this way.

Amplifying tensions

Greenwood and Mendelson say they've had to contend with

the noise from the country club for decades. But in 2019, tensions escalated when the country club received approval to tear down and renovate its main clubhouse and pool house — a revamp that neighbors anticipated would attract even louder events, and more of them. Mendelson and Greenwood ended up joining forces with neighbor Dave Burow, a former Town Council member, to appeal the approval, demanding hard limits on how loud the club's events could get.

In response to the appeals, the Town Council at the time upheld the Woodside Planning Commission's approval, but added a list of 15 conditions, including that amplified sound could not exceed 65 decibels during club events.

Over the years, Greenwood said he and Mendelson have learned how to adjust their lives to work around their noisy neighbor.

"We knew that Labor Day, Fourth of July, Memorial Day — those were not good days to be home if you wanted quiet," Greenwood told Town Council at its July 25 meeting. "You could plan your life accordingly, whether it's a dinner on your deck, or having people down by the pool, you weren't concerned about hellacious noise coming from down below."

But recently, "that's changed,"

See **COUNTRY CLUB**, page 10

Unions and local tech companies spar over proposed statewide autonomous trucking ban

By Samantha Stevens

A battle is brewing over the future of self-driving trucks in California, and local tech companies are keeping a close watch on Sacramento as it weighs major changes to the industry.

Just last week, the city of Mountain View hosted its Technology Showcase that dove

into the latest self-driving trucking technology. But hanging over the event were lingering concerns over a bill, making its way through the state Legislature, that is looking to halt those ambitious ideas in their tracks.

Earlier this month, the California Senate Transportation Committee unanimously passed a bill,

Assembly Bill 316, that would prohibit autonomous vehicles (AV) weighing more than 10,000 pounds from operating on the state's roads without a human operator. The bill, receiving bipartisan support, is now headed to the state Senate for a vote.

While it's relatively commonplace to spot driverless cars cruising around town with cameras on the roof and no driver

in the pilot seat, these aren't the vehicles this bill is aiming to curb. More specifically, proponents of the bill are trying to keep large autonomous trucks without a driver off California roads for at least five years while a safety record is collected.

The potential ban is ripe with contention between union groups backing the bill and AV companies in opposition,

many of which are headquartered here in Mountain View, such as Waymo, Tesla, Aurora Innovation and Kodiak. Mountain View's Chamber of Commerce has also opposed the bill.

The International Brotherhood of Teamsters, the union in support of AB 316, said

See **TRUCKING**, page 12

Public Notices

ARTFUL WALLS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-294773
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Artful Walls, located at 3 Grove Court, Portola Valley, CA 94028, San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
CRYSTAL LINN CIANCUTTI
3 Grove Court
Portola Valley, CA 94028
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 July 13 2023.
(ALM Jul 21, 28, Aug 4 and 11, 2023)

SHIPLEY ESTATE MANAGEMENT
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-294920
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) Shipley Estate Management, located at 3435 Alameda De Las Polgas, Menlo Park, CA 94062, San Mateo County. Mailing Address: 2995 Woodside Rd #400-403 Woodside, CA 94062.
Registered owner(s):
TODD M SHIPLEY
3435 Alameda De Las Polgas, Menlo Park, CA 94062
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 07/01/2005
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 28 2023.
(ALM Aug 4, 11, 18 and 25, 2023)

CTG SALON
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-294698
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) CTG Salon, located at 1176 Valota Road, Redwood City, CA 94061.
Registered owner(s):
DAMN YOUR EYES LLC
1176 Valota Road
Redwood City, CA 94061
CA
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 10/15/2013
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 29 2023.
(ALM Jul 14, 21, 28 and Aug 4, 2023)

SABORES DEL PERU
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-294815
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) SABORES DEL PERU, located at 1986 Euclid Avenue, Apt 3, East Palo Alto, CA, 94303, San Mateo County
Registered owner(s):
FABIOLA ADRIANA IBERICO PALMER
1986 Euclid Avenue, Apt 3, East Palo Alto, CA, 94303
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 07/10/2017
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 18 2023.
(ALM Aug 4, 11, 18 and 25, 2023)

THE SAAVY TRAVELER
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-294830
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) The Saavy Traveler, located at 238 Carmel Ave El Granada, CA 94018, San Mateo County. Mailing Address: PO BOX 2632, El Granada, CA 94018
Registered owner(s):
NICOLE LOURENCO
238 Carmel Ave

El Granada, Ca 94018
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 July 19 2023.
(ALM Jul 28, Aug 4, 11 and 18, 2023)

LA COCINA DE ANGY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-294896
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) LA COCINA DE ANGY, located at 109 FLORIDA AVE SAN BRUNO, CA 94066.
Registered owner(s):
ANGELICA ROMERO GUTIERREZ
109 FLORIDA AVE SAN BRUNO, CA 94066
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 July 26 2023.
(ALM Aug 4, 11, 18 and 25, 2023)

COUSCOUS MOGADOR
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-294874
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) COUSCOUS MOGADOR, located at 104 GILBERT AVENUE MENLO PARK CA 94025.
Registered owner(s):
FATEHA ID BOUBRIK
12 PALM CIRCLE ROAD
WOODSIDE, CA 94062
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 July 24 2023.
(ALM Aug 4, 11, 18 and 25, 2023)

LRFA, LLC
NOSTERRA INVESTMENTS, LLC
4-GOOD VENTURES, LLC
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-294657
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) LRFA, LLC, 2.) NosTerra Investments, LLC, 3.) 4-Good Ventures, LLC, located at 217 Camino Al Lago, Atherton, CA 94027, San Mateo County
Registered owner(s):
WFI INVESTMENTS, LLC
217 Camino Al Lago
Atherton, CA 94027
Delaware
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.
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 June 26 2023.
(ALM Jul 14, 21, 28 and Aug 4, 2023)

SOLIVANA WELLNESS SPA
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: M-294752
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) SoliVana Wellness Spa, located at 1922 El Camino Real, Redwood City, CA, 94063. San Mateo County.
Registered owner(s):
INNER LIGHT WELLNESS LLC
1401 21ST STREET SUITE R
SACRAMENTO, CA 95811-5226
CA
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.
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 July 10 2023.
(ALM Jul 21, 28, Aug 4 and 11, 2023)

Established 1965

The Almanac

Serving Menlo Park,
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To request delivery, or stop delivery, of The Almanac in zip code 94025, 94027, 94028 and the Woodside portion of 94062, call 854-2626.



One woman dies, one hospitalized in North Fair Oaks stabbing

Suspect arrested in what sheriff's deputies call a domestic violence incident

By Andrea Gemmet

San Mateo County Sheriff's Deputies arrested a Redwood City man covered in blood after two women were stabbed, one fatally, at a home in the 3200 block of Fair Oaks Avenue in unincorporated North Fair Oaks early Sunday morning.

A woman called 911, screaming for help and saying someone was trying to kill her, at 12:30 a.m. on July 30, according to Sgt. Javier Acosta of the Sheriff's Office. Deputies found a man "visibly covered in blood" outside the residence, he said in a statement. Inside, deputies found two women with multiple stab wounds. They were taken to Stanford Hospital, where one died of her injuries and the other is in stable condition, Acosta said.

The suspect, identified as Jose Uriarte-Martinez, 44, of Redwood City, was taken into custody. He is being held in suspicion of murder, attempted murder and child endangerment, among other charges, at the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office Maguire Correctional Facility in Redwood City, on no bail status.

Deputies believe the attack was domestic violence-related and there is no further threat

to the community, Acosta said. "The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office has responded by providing crucial resources and support services to the affected family and individuals impacted by this tragic event," he said in the statement.

There is help available to anyone in a dangerous situation. The National Domestic Violence Hotline is at 1-800-799-7233, and locally, there's the San Mateo County Domestic Hotline at 650-312-8515 for immediate assistance and support.

The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office collaborates with Community Overcoming Relationship Abuse (C.O.R.A.), which offers 24/7 support and can be reached at 1-800-300-1080.

The Sheriff's Office is asking anyone with information related to the incident to come forward and call or email Detective Baggetta at 650-740-9149 and baggetta@smcgov.org, or Detective Piper at 650-363-4062 and Jpiper@smcgov.org, or via the San Mateo County Anonymous Tip Line at 1-800-547-2700. ■

Email Editor Andrea Gemmet at agemmet@almanacnews.com.

CRIME BRIEF

Suspect sought in fatal hit-and-run

East Palo Alto police are looking for one or more suspects who were involved in a hit-and-run collision that resulted a man's death on Kavanaugh Drive on Friday evening, according to the police.

The collision occurred at about 10:30 p.m. on the 1400 block of Kavanaugh, according to a news release from the East Palo Alto Police Department.

The victim was identified by police and family members as 26-year-old East Palo Alto resident D'andre "Doc" Stamper.

Stamper may have been crossing the street when he was hit, East Palo Alto Police Cmdr. David Carson said.

Police have located some video and are trying to determine what kind of car hit Stamper, Carson said Aug. 2.

"His family, friends and community were blessed by his heart of generosity, humor, and love," a GoFundMe page raising money for Stamper's funeral and other expenses said. "To know Doc is to know joy."

Stamper dedicated himself "to positive, supportive, and expressive communities as he grappled with ideals like social reform, liberation, and transformative poetic expression," the page said.

As of Wednesday afternoon, people had donated more than \$12,700 to help with expenses at the page on GoFundMe.com.

Police are urging anyone who may have witnessed the incident or who has information about the collision to contact the department by sending an anonymous email to epa@tipnow.org, sending an anonymous text to 650-409-6792 or leaving an anonymous voicemail at 650-409-6792.

—Gennady Sheyner

County plans traffic-calming project for Santa Cruz Avenue and Alameda de las Pulgas in West Menlo

Work on lane reductions and wider sidewalks to start next summer

By Cameron Rebosio

Significant changes are coming to the Y-shaped intersection of Santa Cruz Avenue and Alameda de las Pulgas in West Menlo Park.

Referred to in documents as “the Y,” the intersection in unincorporated San Mateo County near Sand Hill Road is where Santa Cruz Avenue merges with Alameda de las Pulgas. San Mateo County staff has been working since January 2017 on a project to improve safety for

pedestrians, including widened sidewalks and a raised median around the bike lane. As part of the design, crossings will be repainted with high-visibility ladder crosswalks.

At a community meeting on April 18 with the San Mateo County Public Works department some residents expressed consternation over reducing the intersection to only one lane in each direction on Alameda de las Pulgas.

One resident, identifying himself as Tom E., submitted a written

comment saying that if the lane reduction was done, Alameda de las Pulgas, which translates to Avenue of the Fleas, would have to be renamed Alameda de las Caracoles (Avenue of the Snails).

County staff said that the lane reduction and narrower lanes are intended to have a traffic-calming effect on the road, and members of the Department of Public Works said that they believe the roads will see lower speeds, which one resident claimed currently reach up to 70 mph. County staffers said they plan

to monitor the speeds of cars in the area. The zone between Sand Hill Road, Sharon Road and Avy Avenue is being considered for a speed limit of 25 mph.

The department of Public Works conducted a Green Infrastructure Feasibility Analysis of the roads, and determined that it was not possible to add greenery to the medians due to underground utilities located in the corridor.

The project includes new traffic signals at the Y intersection, aligned so that drivers can more

easily identify which light controls their lane — something that’s been a point of confusion for drivers at the complex intersection. County staff is also considering installing shields or blinders on the traffic lights to increase the clarity.

The county plans to begin construction on the project next summer. ■

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

Portola Valley’s housing element doesn’t meet state standards

Town will need to take “significant and robust actions” to get the document up to par

By Malea Martin

Portola Valley had a bumpy road to passing its housing element in May, a moment met with relief but also uncertainty about whether the plan would measure up to state standards. The town got its answer last week: Not quite.

In a July 25 letter from the Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD), state officials said that while Portola Valley’s housing element addresses many of the requirements, “revisions will be necessary to substantially comply with State Housing Element Law.”

In other words, it’s back to the drawing board for the town’s planning department.

Every eight years per state law, every city and town in California must update its housing element documents to prove how they’ll meet housing standards set by Sacramento. Each jurisdiction must create a sites inventory, or a list of properties that could reasonably be developed into housing in the

next eight years, in order to meet the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), the number of net new housing units required.

But fulfilling the RHNA is only half the battle: As part of the housing element process, cities and towns must also create programs that incentivize the development of affordable housing, or as the state dubs it, “affirmatively further fair housing.” This is where HCD says Portola Valley continues to fall short.

While the state acknowledged ways the town’s housing element has improved since the last round of feedback, HCD said Portola Valley “must include a commitment to adjusting projected assumptions if the number of units and affordability do not actualize during the planning period.”

HCD noted that the town relies on accessory dwelling units, or ADUs, to meet its affordable housing requirements. ADUs are a type of housing that can be added to a home’s backyard without having

to rezone the lot, making them a more realistic option for housing growth in a small town like Portola Valley, where the majority of land is zoned for single-family dwellings.

But HCD said that if the town’s projected ADU growth doesn’t pan out, it needs to have a stronger back-up plan.

“If actual production and affordability of ADUs is far from anticipated trends, then the element must commit to amending the housing element, identifying additional sites, and rezoning within a timely manner,” the July 25 letter stated.

Portola Valley’s housing element includes The Sequoias retirement community and Christ Church on its sites inventory to fulfill its housing quota. While HCD said the latest draft successfully committed to establishing development standards for these sites, “the element still needs to include programs committing to monitoring the effectiveness of these efforts and stronger incentives to promote affordability.”

The town also relies on the future development of the Dorothy Ford Park and Open Space site to meet its lower-income housing quotas: The

town-owned land is expected to accommodate about half of the affordable units that Portola Valley is required get built in the next eight years.

“The element needs to include significant actions to facilitate and encourage development on this site,” HCD’s letter stated, including a schedule to facilitate its development.

“Actions should include outreach with developers, issuing requests for proposals, incentives, fee waivers, priority processing and financial assistance,” HCD added.

Portola Valley is among the highest resourced jurisdictions in the area, the state concluded, “a stark contrast to the rest of

the region.” In order to comply with state law, the town will need to take “significant and robust actions” to promote fair housing in the next draft of its element.

“The element must be revised to include quantified metrics (beyond the RHNA), programs focused on housing mobility and increased housing opportunities and affordability.”

The town is slated to discuss HCD’s feedback at its next Town Council meeting on Aug. 9. ■

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



Michelle Le

California housing officials told Portola Valley that its state-mandated housing element has fallen short.

LEHUA GREENMAN



“Life is about accepting the challenges along the way, choosing to keep moving forward, and savoring the journey.”

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REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman

Anticipate What Buyers Need



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Robert T.

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

California moves to silence Stanford researchers who got state data to study education issues

By John Fensterwald / EdSource

The California Department of Education has threatened to sue two prominent Stanford University education professors to prevent them from testifying in a lawsuit against the department — actions the American Civil Liberties Union of Southern California calls an attempt to muzzle them.

The ACLU, in turn, is threatening a lawsuit of its own — against CDE for infringing their and other researchers' First Amendment rights.

Observers say the dispute has the potential to limit who conducts education research in California and what they are able to study because CDE controls the sharing of data that is not available to the public.

At issue is a restriction that CDE requires researchers to sign as a condition for their gaining access to nonpublic K-12 data. The clause, which CDE is interpreting broadly, prohibits the researcher from participating in any litigation against the department, even in cases unrelated to the research they were doing through CDE.

"It keeps education researchers from weighing in on the side of parties who are adverse to the California Department of Education. So it's really skewing the information and expertise that can come into courts," said Alyssa Morones, an ACLU attorney involved with the case. "Individuals and students seeking to vindicate their rights no longer will have access to these education experts, and the court can no longer hear what they have to say."

Court brief: State failed to lead academic recovery

Professors Sean Reardon and Thomas Dee had signed separate and unrelated data-partnership agreements with the department, and both were asked by attorneys in an ongoing lawsuit, *Cayla J. v. State of California*, to testify on behalf of students filing the case. The lawsuit, against the California Department of Education, the State Board of Education and State Superintendent of Public Instruction Tony Thurmond, charges the state with failing to prevent the deep learning loss imposed by the pandemic on low-income students and other high-needs students.

Reardon, who had co-authored landmark nationwide research on pandemic learning,



Veronica Weber

Students sit outside the Cecil H. Green library at Stanford University in 2016.

said he would have considered providing expert testimony. But warned this month by CDE that he'd be breaching his contract, Reardon declined — even though his learning loss research did not involve the data obtained through his agreement with CDE.

Dee, a professor at the Graduate School of Education at Stanford, agreed to serve as an expert witness for the plaintiffs in the *Cayla J.* case on the effects of Covid-19 on enrollment, chronic absenteeism and student engagement in California. This month, he was one of a half-dozen nationally prominent education professors who filed briefs in the case.

In it, Dee cited data on enrollment declines and chronic absenteeism. He concluded, "Because of both its comprehensive data systems and its powerful fiscal and operational capacities, the state of California is in a unique position to provide leadership in better understanding and meeting the serious challenges of academic recovery. However, to date, the state has not clearly demonstrated such leadership, instead emphasizing responses by local school districts."

CDE moved against Dee even though the data contract he had signed on behalf of a Stanford program was for research unrelated to the *Cayla J.* case.

On Feb. 24, after CDE discovered that Dee had filed the brief, the department warned Dee that he had violated the contract he had signed in February 2022 as the chief investigator for the John W. Gardner Center for Youth and Their Communities at Stanford. As a result, the letter said, CDE was suspending the data partnership and demanding that Dee "mitigate further damage."

The department would consider seeking an injunction to prevent him from participating in the *Cayla J.* case along with a \$50,000 fine.

"Also, be aware," wrote Cindy Kazanis, the director of CDE's Analysis, Measurement, and Accountability Reporting Division, "that your actions have adversely impacted your working relationship with CDE, and your response to this letter is critically important to existing and future collaborations between us." The letter was copied to Stanford.

The contract that Dee signed with CDE is to examine how the California School Dashboard was affecting alternative schools serving those at risk of dropping out and those with motivation and behavior issues. He said he signed the contract in his capacity as faculty director of the Gardner Center, but had not actually looked at any of the data.

Dee said he relied on publicly available data in writing his brief for the *Cayla J.* case. He declined to comment further on the case.

The dispute is now in the courts. The plaintiffs' attorneys in *Cayla J.*, the public interest law firm Public Counsel and Morrison and Foerster, a San Francisco-based law firm doing pro bono work, are asking a Superior Court judge to allow Dee's participation in this case and protect him from CDE's penalties — but only in this particular lawsuit. A hearing is scheduled early next week in Alameda County Superior Court.

The ACLU filed a brief on Feb. 27 supporting Dee's participation in the *Cayla J.* case. But meanwhile, it took the first steps toward a larger lawsuit to eliminate CDE's litigation prohibition.

'What are state officials afraid of?'

Michael Jacobs, an attorney with Morrison and Foerster, said he was disappointed that the state would attempt to block education experts from giving their expertise. "The futures of the least advantaged schoolchildren in California are at issue. The data these experts utilized are all public."

"What are state officials afraid of?" Jacobs said. "That their performance in running the school system during the pandemic in fact aggravated the achievement gap? That notwithstanding their protestations, they haven't done enough to address that problem?"

CDE declined to comment on the need for the litigation ban in data contracts or its threats and actions against Dee or Reardon. Researchers told EdSource they were unaware of similar prohibitions in other states, but EdSource could not verify that.

In a July 7 letter, the ACLU gave the department 10 days to expunge the restriction from all contracts with researchers. In a one-sentence defense a week later, Len Garfinkel, general counsel for CDE, stated, "In our view, the Department's data protection agreements are compliant with law."

ACLU hasn't revealed when it might take its next step.

ACLU's focus was a separate five-year research contract that the department signed in 2018 and updated in 2020 with the Learning Policy Institute, a Palo Alto-based nonprofit education research organization.

The next-to-the-last clause in the 11-page document, titled "Interests adverse to the California Department of Education," states that as long as the contract is in effect, "LPI's employees, executives, and other representatives shall not voluntarily testify for, consult with, or advise a party in conjunction with any mediation, arbitration, litigation, or other similar legal proceeding where LPI knows that party is adverse to the CDE, the State Superintendent of Public Instruction or the State Board of Education."

In addition, if anyone covered by the contract does become involved in litigation, CDE can immediately revoke the contract and demand all the data be returned or destroyed. LPI and signers of the agreement would be subject to a fine. That's the same wording as in Dee's contract through the Gardner Center.

Linda Darling-Hammond among contract signers

Reardon, professor of poverty and inequality in education at the Stanford Graduate School of Education as well as a senior research fellow at LPI, signed that contract, along with 15 others, mainly LPI employees and researchers. Signing as the principal investigator was Linda Darling-Hammond, LPI's president and CEO. She also is the president of the state board and an adviser to Gov. Gavin Newsom. She signed the original agreement a year before Newsom nominated her to the state board.

The ACLU, acting on its own, asserted the provision is clearly unconstitutional. A government can set restrictions for granting access to nonpublic data for research purposes, but not to limit a researcher's First Amendment right of free speech, it said in its nine-page letter to the department.

What's "even 'more blatant and more egregious,'" the ACLU wrote, citing a 2015 U.S. Supreme Court decision, is the department's "viewpoint discrimination." The contract doesn't ban an education researcher from testifying for the department in a lawsuit; it just can't testify against it.

"Viewpoint discrimination is poison to a free society," U.S. Supreme Court Justice Samuel Alito wrote in a different high court opinion in a 2019 case that the ACLU also cited in its letter.

Morones, who wrote the ACLU letter, said the prohibition is far more broad than the government needs to protect its data. As shown by the department's response in the *Cayla J.* lawsuit, the department could apply the provision to thwart LPI and anyone who signed the contract from participating in any litigation against the department, the state board and the state superintendent, Thurmond, she said.

The Education Recovery Scorecard, the learning loss research that Reardon co-authored, relies on publicly available data from California and 39 other states, and, Reardon said, does not use any data provided to the LPI for its research project. Reardon's project with LPI is focused on the pre-pandemic success of English learners in California from 2006 to 20-19.

Inspired by new ethnic studies class, a student-designed mural is taking shape at Menlo-Atherton High School

By Michaela Seah

A new mural at Menlo-Atherton High School is set to be finished just in time for the start of the new school year.

Sophomore Celine Chien designed the mural to commemorate M-A's new ethnic studies class that was added as a required course for all freshmen last year.

Chien won the competition for the mural design in 2021, which was decided by class vote.

"I think my painting is more than just a mural," she said, "but also a symbol of our school taking steps in the right direction, with the establishment of the ethnic studies course."

The mural is in the process of being painted by artist and M-A alum Jose Castro in the school's K-wing.

Chien's design incorporates the diverse range of heritages and histories present in the Bay Area. The top of the mural, Chien said, "points to the future" by displaying M-A students standing together as a community.



Courtesy Celine Chien

Winning sketch for the new mural at Menlo-Atherton High School by Celine Chien.

"It's a symbol of hope that our school will finally be able to reach the day where we can really recognize strength and

diversity," Chien said.

While she thinks there is lots of room for improvement at M-A, Chien said she hopes that

the mural can inspire a better future through the history it depicts.

"M-A has a huge history of

racial tension, with the school basically feeding in from some of the most different zip codes in the area, socio-economically and also racially," said Chien.

"One thing that ethnic studies taught me was to look at my own history, that was one thing going into the mural that I really wanted to incorporate," she said. "How can I incorporate my own history and how can I make sure that other people's voices are represented?"

Castro, who graduated M-A in 2009, estimates he will be done painting the mural in time for the start of the school year later this month.

"It's always good to reconnect with my community," Castro said. "To be able to do this now at my old high school was definitely a check off my bucket list, to be giving back and inspiring the youth and involving others." ■

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SamTrans extends free Ride Plus service through October

On-demand ride service operates in East Palo Alto and Menlo Park's Belle Haven

By Michaela Seah

The curb-to-curb service which debuted in East Palo Alto, Belle Haven and Half Moon Bay in June is now extending its free rides through the end of October. When it rolled out, riders were set to be charged, at the same rate as regular bus fare, after July 31.

The service is similar to apps such as Uber or Lyft where users can book a curb-to-curb ride to destinations within the service area using the Ride Plus app or via a phone call.

Over 1,000 passengers have used the Ride Plus service for free, with SamTrans representatives saying they consider the free promotional period a success.

"Our numbers are steadily increasing and when we go out to the community, many people are aware of the new service," said

Mahmoud Abunie, SamTrans' public affairs specialist.

According to numbers provided by Abunie, there were 66 riders on average last week in the East Palo Alto zone.

When asked why SamTrans has decided to extend the promotional period, Abunie said the transit agency wants more people to experience Ride Plus to ease the community into the service.

Starting Nov. 1, the fares for Ride Plus will be charged and can be paid for with the Clipper app or bus passes. For adults without a Clipper account, bus fares are \$2.25, with discounted prices for seniors and youth as low as \$1 via Clipper.

For more information visit SamTrans.com. ■

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COUNTRY CLUB

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Greenwood said, namely due to a lawn area located on the south side of the club's pool.

"It was never stated during the planning process, the appeals process, the Town Council meetings — no one ever stated, 'We're going to have an entertainment area south of the pool,'" Greenwood said.

Woodside Planning Director Sage Schaan explained at the council's July 25 meeting that after the 2019 appeal was resolved and construction began, the Menlo Country Club proposed adding a shade structure over the south lawn area to its plans, just a few dozen yards from Mendelson's backyard.

"The planning department determined that it was a minor enough improvement to provide additional shade during the day," Schaan said, and the planning director at the time approved the change without requiring the

project to go through another public hearing.

The project was completed in October 2021, with a requirement that it come back to the planning commission for review in a year to determine whether Menlo Country Club was complying with the decibel limit and the other conditions. After a few months' delay to gather more information, the planning commission held the one-year review in April.

During the hearing, planning commissioners raised concerns about the behind-the-scenes addition of the shade structure to the project after it had already gone through the public hearing process. Commissioner Marilyn Voelke opined that such a change should have been reviewed by the planning commission, and noted that the country club has since added unpermitted electrification to the structure.

When asked how the lawn and structure is used, Club Manager

Steven Gonzalez told commissioners it's primarily for children to seek shade during the day, according to meeting minutes.

Mendelson had a different perspective to share. She told commissioners during the April hearing that there's often groups of about 100 people sitting at tables under the shade structure having dinner or enjoying a barbecue, which causes significant noise that she can hear from her home up the hill.

Despite concerns about the structure, the commission determined that Menlo Country Club was still operating in compliance with its conditional use permit, as long as it removed the electricity installed without a permit in the shade structure.

Neighbors take action

Within days of the planning commission's April decision, Mendelson filed an appeal, arguing that the shade structure was not a minor adjustment, was

never discussed publicly prior to construction and should not have been authorized.

In its response, Menlo Country Club representatives maintained that the purpose of the planning commission's one-year review was to determine whether the club was in compliance with its operational conditions, "none of which address or regulate the (shade) structure."

Mendelson's appeal came before the Woodside Town Council at its July 25 meeting, and town staff recommended that council reject the appeal and uphold the planning department's decision.

While the council generally agreed that the club is technically in compliance with its operational conditions, multiple council members were troubled by what they dubbed "mission creep" of the club's shaded lawn area: That the originally intended use of the space doesn't match what neighbors say is actually happening.

"We approved this plan that had the lawn, but this structure kind of came out over the last couple years without us looking at it, without the appellants looking at it," said Council member Ned Fluet. "... I do think that is something that was not part of our original look in 2019, and I think it does require some limitations."

Town Attorney Jean Savaree told council that from her legal perspective, she believes it's within the town's right to impose a condition that Menlo Country Club only use the lawn for its originally intended purpose.

"I think you have the authority to say that when the conditional use permit was looked at, this was to be a lawn," Savaree said. "It's OK to have a shade structure on a lawn, just like a tree would provide shade, but that's what that is to be used for — shade."

Merritt, the club's legal

counsel, didn't agree. He argued that because the club's original use permit doesn't impose conditions on the shade structure, the council doesn't have a right to make this call without a formal review process.

"When you're talking about taking out the lawn area, that's going to disrupt all of the events," Merritt said. "They've always used that area for tables and outdoor events. ... They have a wedding coming up in a couple weeks that they're going to have to cancel."

The council ultimately followed the directive from town staff to deny the appeal, but decided to add three conditions on the country club: First, that the shade structure only be used for providing shade, with no tables, chairs or dining in that area; second, that the club remove the unpermitted electricity within the shade structure; and third, that a device be placed at Mendelson's property line to gauge the decibel levels coming from the country club, and that the data be monitored by town staff, rather than by the country club, as it is currently. In six months, staff will report back to council whether or not the decibel limits are exceeded.

The council unanimously supported the motion.

"To our friends at the Menlo Country Club, you've heard some pretty serious criticism at this Town Council tonight," said Council member Paul Goeld before the vote was cast. "Even if the appeal is denied, this Town Council may very well revisit this conditional use permit, and the Menlo Country Club may not like what this council comes up with. So I would encourage them to take whatever measures they can to have respect and at least honor these agreements in spirit with our neighbors." ■

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



Courtesy Google Maps
The pool behind Debbie Mendelson's home on Sheridan Way is circled in blue. The shade structure on Menlo Country Club's property is circled in red.



222 OAK COURT MENLO PARK



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TRUCKING

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this bill marks a triumph for public safety and truck drivers, whose jobs may be on the line.

“(AV trucks) are a greedy corporation’s dream. The only thing they love more than underpaying workers is to get rid of workers entirely,” said Jason Rabinowitz, president of Teamsters Joint Council 7. “... If they were honest about just wanting to be able to test this technology and make it work, they would support this legislation because they would want a human operator in there to ensure safety, but they don’t care about safety. They’re trying to make a buck by running these vehicles without a human driver.”

The AV industry claims they can make roads safer by eliminating human error from the equation. According to the U.S. Department of Transportation, nearly 5,000 Americans die in truck-related crashes each year. Between 2009 and 2021 the country saw a 71% rise in truck crash fatalities, with the leading cause being driver fatigue.

“What we’ll see with the adoption of this technology is smoother supply chains at lower costs, while saving lives on the road. Autonomous trucks don’t drink and drive, they don’t check their phones when they’re driving, they don’t drive distracted and they don’t have a bad day,” said

Dan Goff, head of external affairs at Kodiak, a driverless long-haul truck company headquartered in Mountain View.

But some long-haul truck drivers like Mike Di Bene don’t buy it.

Di Bene, who has been driving trucks for 29 years, said autonomous vehicles can’t interpret road conditions, like poor weather conditions or distracted drivers, as well as humans can.

“The most important thing you can have with the vehicle next to you is eye contact to communicate what you’re doing,” Di Bene said. “Eye contact will save your life.”

Under a Standing General Order, car companies are required to report crashes involving advanced driver assistance systems that cause private property damage on public roads. While there have been no major crashes involving driverless trucks, legislators and Teamsters maintain that there isn’t enough data to demonstrate it’s a good idea to allow driverless trucks to barrel down California highways.

A study published by non-partisan research group Rand Corp found autonomous vehicles likely need to drive hundreds of billions of miles to demonstrate their reliability in terms of fatalities and injuries. Data collected by the Autonomous Vehicle Industry Association, which advocates for and represents leading AV companies, shows that AVs have

driven more than 44 million miles on U.S. public roads.

Kodiak’s trucks have driven 2 million miles on public roads, Goff said. Waymo, an autonomous vehicle company and a subsidiary of Alphabet, has a fleet that has driven over 20 million miles total, according to their website.

Di Bene said statistics boasted by autonomous trucking companies are “very conveniently cherry-picked,” because there’s not enough public data available to compare the dangers imposed by human operators versus self-driving trucks.

“These vehicles that they’re pushing are not legally able to be driven on our roads because they have not been proven to be safe. So it’s convenient to point at humans when (AV trucks) don’t have a track record yet,” Di Bene said.

Legislators want more time to study the technology’s safety. Assembly member Laura Friedman (D-Glendale), the head of the Assembly’s transportation committee, said the state Department of Motor Vehicles has so badly mishandled the driverless car industry — citing reports of robotaxis causing car jams, blocking emergency vehicles and fleeing from police — that she doesn’t want to make the same mistakes with big rigs this time around.

“The DMV has not done a

great job at regulating this space,” Friedman said.

The Department of Motor Vehicles is tasked with issuing permits to all types of AVs, assuming the vehicles adhere to regulations. But legislators want to halt the DMV’s ability to grant those permits to long-haul trucks because of how disappointed they’ve been with the DMV’s deployment of driverless cars in the state.

“A lot of people have this sense that all of this is happening in an unregulated environment or unregulated fashion and simply the opposite is true,” Goff said. AB 316 “adds another layer of political control over a process that has been managed by experts and professionals very diligently,” he said.

Companies in the autonomous vehicle industry have been working hand-in-hand with the Department of Motor Vehicles for over five years to develop rules and regulations for the deployment of AV trucks, Goff said.

How will jobs fare with self-driving trucks?

Beyond safety concerns, proponents of the bill worry that the new technology will eliminate jobs — even those beyond trucking.

“It’s easy to maybe say, ‘Well, you know, Mike’s worried about protecting his job.’ You know, that is a small part of it. But this technology will eventually be pushed to everything with wheels — from truck drivers taking cargo interstate, to bus drivers, to package delivery vehicles,” Di Bene said. “This has the ability to get rid of hundreds of thousands of jobs, coast to coast. And these are hard-working American families trying to put food on the table.”

But Goff said concerns about job loss caused by AV trucks are “misplaced” because there are less long-haul truck drivers than ever before.

The American Trucking Association reports that the country is facing a record truck driver shortage, and it doesn’t look like those numbers will recover anytime soon. The shortage of drivers, which was around 78,000 in 2022, will likely double by 2031. The AV industry says that the driver shortage, combined with an aging average truck driver age of 46 years, will mitigate job loss.

Many AV companies use a “transfer hub” model, in which long driving routes are broken up between an automated truck and a human operator. The idea is to designate less complex highway driving — typically in desolate southern states — to automated trucks, leaving the more complex urban segment of the route to human drivers.

Those inside the AV industry say truck drivers could still find work close to home on short-haul routes or with logistics jobs at transfer hubs. However, a study notes that short-haul routes are unlikely to compensate for the loss in long-haul route wages.

“Our technology is really focused on long-haul driving. There are people who love long-haul driving. But, frankly, there aren’t a ton of them and there are fewer and fewer. Being a long-haul truck driver is a difficult and dangerous job that keeps people away from their families for sometimes days, weeks, months at a time,” Goff said.

Worries swirl over companies leaving California

With limits on self-driving truck technology proposed specifically in California, AV companies argue that the regulations would harm the state’s ability to compete.

“(The bill) will impact the operations of this emerging technology out of California with negative repercussions for California supply chains, consumers and the entire goods movement industry,” Goff said.

Currently, many AV trucking companies, like Kodiak and Aurora Innovation, test trucks out-of-state, in places like Arizona or Texas, where autonomous trucks are allowed to operate on public roads without a human operator.

“Today, most states allow our team to deploy our autonomous trucks and deliver value to our freight customers. In California, however, autonomous trucks are currently prohibited on public roads. This means we can’t bring the benefits of our self-driving technology to businesses and consumers here in our home state. We hope to see California leaders take action to welcome this homegrown technology and prioritize safety on our roads,” Sydnee Journal, senior manager of government relations at Aurora Innovations, said in an email to the Mountain View Voice.

Assemblywoman Cecilia Aguiar-Curry (D-Winters), co-author of the bill, isn’t concerned by companies threatening to take business out of state, despite worries of a “tech exodus” trend seen since COVID-19.

“It’s easy for people to threaten to leave,” said Assemblywoman Cecilia Aguiar-Curry (D-Winters), co-author of the bill. “People aren’t going to leave because of this,” she said, noting the rich pool of technology talent clustered in Silicon Valley. ■

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Lizzy Myers

Atherton’s National Night Out brings the fun to Holbrook-Palmer Park

Atherton police hosted a National Night Out event at Holbrook-Palmer Park on Tuesday, Aug. 1, with a variety of fun things to do. Featuring inflatable slides and bounce houses, sugary treats and an array of emergency vehicles, children climbed inside a vintage patrol car, posed for photos on a police motorcycle and collected flashlights and reflective bracelets. Alongside officers from the Atherton Police Department and California Highway Patrol, there was a bright orange fox mascot teaching attendees how to dial 911 in emergencies and members of the Menlo Park Fire Protection District giving drone demonstrations. Between the face painting and temporary tattoos — not to mention little faces wearing the telltale signs of cotton candy and ice cream — many left the event in a more colorful state than when they’d arrived.



YOUR NEW HOME AWAITS

3 OLIVER COURT
MENLO PARK



\$2,488,000 | 3 Bd | 2.5 Bth
3OliverCt.com

861 NEWELL PLACE
PALO ALTO



\$3,988,000 | 4 Bd | 3 Bth
861Newell.com

848 NASH ROAD
LOS ALTOS



\$6,738,000 | 5 Bd | 4.5 Bth
848NashRd.com

1726 FULTON STREET
PALO ALTO



\$5,988,000 | 4 Bd | 3.5 Bth
1726Fulton.com

95 WISTERIA WAY
ATHERTON



\$6,488,000 | 5 Bd | 4 Bth
95Wisteria.com

360 EVERETT AVE #5A
PALO ALTO



\$2,498,000 | 3 Bd | 3 Bth
360Everett.com

222 OAK COURT
MENLO PARK



\$1,988,000 | 4 Bd | 2 Bth
222Oak.com

121 PARK AVENUE
PALO ALTO



\$4,488,000 | 5 Bd | 4.5 Bth
121ParkAve.com

10888 MAGDALENA ROAD
LOS ALTOS HILLS



\$6,988,000 | 5 Bd | 5 Bth
10888MagdalenaRd.com

50 CRESCENT DRIVE
PALO ALTO



\$11,988,000 | 5 Bd | 4.5 Bth
50CrescentDr.com

3887 LA SELVA DRIVE
PALO ALTO



\$3,288,000 | 4 Bd | 3 Bth
3887LaSelva.com

1120 MAY BROWN AVENUE
MENLO PARK



\$3,988,000 | 3 Bd | 3 Bth
1120MayBrown.com

1932 EMERSON STREET
PALO ALTO



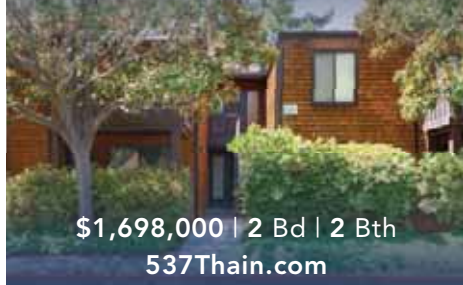
\$11,650,000 | 6 Bd | 6 Bth
1932EmersonStreet.com

303 ATHERTON AVENUE
ATHERTON



\$15,488,000 | 7 Bd | 8.5 Bth
303AthertonAve.com

537 THAIN WAY
PALO ALTO



\$1,698,000 | 2 Bd | 2 Bth
537Thain.com

300 SAND HILL CIR. #103
MENLO PARK



\$1,998,000 | 4 Bd | 3 Bth
300SandHillCir.com

89 ALEJANDRA AVENUE
ATHERTON



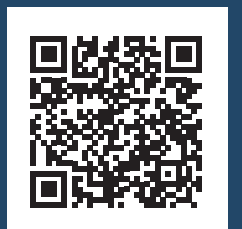
\$10,988,000 | 42,600 Sq. Ft. Lot
89Alejandra.com

532 CHANNING AVE #202
PALO ALTO



\$2,398,000 | 3 Bd | 2.5 Bth
532Channing.com

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Bay Area restaurants Limón and Il Fornaio expand to Mountain View

By Samantha Stevens

Last week was big for the Mountain View food scene, with two new restaurants, Limón and Il Fornaio, celebrating their respective openings in the city. Both restaurants have multiple Bay Area locations.

The back-to-back opening events both featured ribbon-cutting ceremonies by Mountain View Mayor Alison Hicks.

Limón brings Peruvian cuisine to Mountain View

Limón, a family-owned Peruvian restaurant chain, hosted a ribbon cutting on Thursday, July 27 to celebrate its sixth local establishment, at the intersection of California and Castro street.

Owned and operated by Castillo brothers — Martin, Antonio and Eduardo — Limón has been bringing a slice of Peru's rich culinary heritage to the Bay Area for over two decades.

"There's a big influence from the actual heritage of the family,"

said Ben Meyer, general manager of Limón Mountain View.

The newly unveiled Limón location features a modern interior and a menu that offers "upscale, casual, sharing dining," Myers said.

Guests familiar with Limón can still find their favorites on the restaurant's menu, including the signature truffle mac n' cheese and a traditional Peruvian lomo saltado, a stir-fry combining strips of marinated sirloin and french fries. Some newer menu items to look forward to include more extensive seafood platters and crispy pork belly chaufa, a Peruvian fried rice.

With this new location, Antonio Castillo said he and the team considered, "How can we evolve? How can we improve?"

The grand opening attracted some local Peruvians dignitaries, including the Consul General of Peru Juan Miguel Miranda and Miss Perú Universe 2023 Camila Escribens.



Michelle Le

Fettuccine hangs dry in the kitchen of the Palo Alto Il Fornaio. Il Fornaio opened a new location in Mountain View in July.

Il Fornaio expands to San Antonio

Up the road from Limón, at The Village at San Antonio Center, Il Fornaio celebrated its own grand opening on Friday, July 28 with a ribbon cutting, music and appetizers.

Il Fornaio is a chain of 20 Italian-themed fine dining restaurants primarily located in

California, with Bay Area locations in Palo Alto, Burlingame and Santa Clara.

The first Il Fornaio retail bakeries opened in San Francisco in 1981, and since then, the brand has blossomed. The new location is at 545 San Antonio Road, Suite 31.

All kitchens are "supervised and guided by Sicilian native

Executive Chef Roberto Gerbino, using multi-generational family recipes and preparations that Italians have mastered over centuries of making great cuisine," the restaurant said in a statement. ■

*Email Editorial Intern
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WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS SUMMARY OF ORDINANCE 13-2023 DISTRICT FIRE PREVENTION CODE

At its regular meeting of July 25, 2023, the Woodside Fire Protection District Board of Directors enacted the following ordinance:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT ADOPTING THE 2022 CALIFORNIA FIRE CODE (BASED ON THE 2021 EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL FIRE CODE), INCLUDING APPENDICES B, BB, C, CC, D, L AND P ONLY, WITH LOCAL AMENDMENTS, ADOPTING THE 2021 EDITION OF THE INTERNATIONAL WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE CODE, INCLUDING APPENDICES A THROUGH D ONLY, ADOPTING FINDINGS SUPPORTING THE LOCAL AMENDMENTS, ADOPTING A FINDING THAT THE ORDINANCE IS EXEMPT FROM REVIEW UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT, AND REPEALING ORDINANCE NO. 12.

AYES: Directors Matt Miller, Randy Holthaus, and Patrick Cain

NOES: None

ABSENT: None

The Ordinance is also identified as Fire Code Ordinance 13-2023.

SUMMARY OF THE ORDINANCE: Every three years, new editions of the state building codes are published. The new codes and local amendments reflect changes in technology, fire safety techniques, and the building industry. These codes became the minimum standards for the State of California on January 1, 2023. The Ordinance also reflects local amendments with more restrictive building standards reasonably necessary because of local climactic, geological, or topographical conditions. By adopting the Ordinance, the Woodside Fire Protection District is enforcing a code that is consistent with state regulations. Under state law, after the first reading of the title of the Ordinance, which occurred on June 13, 2023, the District held a public hearing on July 25, 2023 before the Ordinance was adopted (Government Code § 50022.3).

The Ordinance is effective upon the expiration of 30 days from its adoption, except that the Ordinance shall not be effective within a municipality within the District until it is ratified by that municipality's governing body, and shall not be effective within the unincorporated areas that are part of the District until it is ratified by the Board of Supervisors of the County of San Mateo.

CEQA DETERMINATION: The Board of Directors adopted a finding that the Ordinance was exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

A FULL AND COMPLETE COPY OF THE ORDINANCE IS AVAILABLE ON-LINE AT WWW.WOODSIDEFIRE.ORG AND A CERTIFIED COPY OF THE FULL AND COMPLETE TEXT OF THE ORDINANCE IS AVAILABLE AT THE WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT OFFICE, 808 PORTOLA ROAD, PORTOLA VALLEY, CA 94028.

Run Date: August 4, 2023

 embarcadero media

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Palo Alto police: Suspect nabbed after wave of residential burglaries

Police believe 23-year-old Santa Clara resident was involved in at least five residential burglaries

By Gennady Sheyner

A Santa Clara resident who police believe took part in a recent wave of residential burglaries in Palo Alto and other Bay Area cities is now facing charges in connection with the months-long crime spree, Palo Alto Police Department announced in a news release Tuesday afternoon.

The 23-year old suspect is believed to be behind at least five burglaries that took place in Palo Alto between last October and May, police said. Detectives also believe he is connected to three additional incidents in San Jose and one in Fremont, according to the announcement.

Palo Alto police obtained an arrest warrant on July 20 that charged Cesar Carmona with five felony counts of residential burglary. He was in custody at the time, having been arrested that same day by the

Santa Clara Police Department for unrelated charges. Police served the arrest warrant on July 25, according to the announcement.

On July 27, the Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office charged him with seven counts of burglary, four counts of attempted burglary and four counts of vandalism, all felonies.

In Palo Alto, the rash of burglaries began in October and generally involved suspects breaking into unoccupied homes during dinnertime by shattering glass doors in the rear yards. By Nov. 9, police reported that they had 11 such cases, all of them involving suspects who broke into unoccupied homes and began to rummage through rooms, apparently looking for jewelry and safes to steal.

Police said at that time that they believed a single burglary crew, consisting of between two and four suspects, was behind

multiple cases. Police dubbed them the "Dinnertime Home Burglary Crew."

A review of surveillance footage from some of the burglaries led the police to believe that the suspects were Hispanic males in their 20s. They typically wore hooded sweatshirts, face coverings and gloves, police said.

In one intrusion, which occurred in early November, burglars reportedly stole a locked gun safe with nine firearms inside it from a home on Louis Road. Two others occurred on the same day and on the same block of Briarwood Way in late October. In at least two cases, the burglars got away in a gray sedan. In at least two others, they took off in a white SUV, according to the police.

Carmona was charged in connection with five Palo Alto burglaries that spanned from Oct. 22 to May 2. These included burglaries that occurred on the 700 block of Rosewood

Drive (Oct. 22); on the 4200 block of Briarwood Way (Oct. 28); on the 3600 block of Ramona Street (Feb. 16); on the 700 block of Talisman Court (March 22) and on the 1400 block of Byron St. (May 2).

Police are continuing to investigate the identity of other suspects, as well as the possibility that Carmona is responsible for additional burglaries, according to the announcement.

Anyone with information about this incident is asked to call the department 24-hour dispatch center at 650-329-2413. Anonymous tips can be e-mailed to paloalto@tipnow.org or sent via text message or voicemail to 650-383-8984. ■

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

Suzanne Roche

June 30, 1926 – July 20, 2023

Sue passed away peacefully in her sleep on July 20, 2023 at 97 years. She was a native San Franciscan born on June 30, 1926 where she attended Lowell High School and City College of San Francisco.

During her teenage years, she was a junior California tennis champion winning numerous tournaments throughout the West Coast, including the USTA National Hardcourt Championship with her sister, Bea.

After working as an office manager in the construction industry, Sue raised her oldest children in the City before moving to Menlo Park to raise her youngest. Many of her fondest memories were restarting her tennis career at the Olympic Club in Lakeside, then spent many years at Alpine Hills Swim and Tennis Club in Portola Valley.

She enjoyed tennis, cooking, reading, walking, gardening, current events and all things sports. She faithfully attended church throughout her life with St. William Catholic Parish in Los Altos her most recent place of worship.

Sue loved her family and had many wonderful friends from all phases of her life that she kept in touch with after moving to San Diego five years ago. She was known for being a vibrant, funny and positive person, always celebrating achievements and birthdays.

She leaves behind three children, Bill (Penny), Kathy (Casey), Corey (Michael), six grandchildren, Tom, Daniel (Chamee), Jackie (Matt), Chelsea (Scott), Haley (Mike) and Steven and one great-grandchild (Luke).

Private family services will be held.

Memorial donations are suggested to either Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford or Shriners Hospitals for Children.

PAID OBITUARY



Stanford hosts open house at new Middle Plaza complex in Menlo Park

Development on El Camino Real features faculty housing, retail and office space, and a public plaza

By Michaela Seah

Dozens of people attended the Stanford University's open house of its new faculty housing on El Camino Real in Menlo Park on July 29. The event featured face painting and ice cream tacos as well as a tour of the apartment complex.

Out of the 215 units, eight one-bedroom units are reserved as affordable housing for Menlo Park residents who were picked by lottery, while the rest are for Stanford faculty. Leasing for the apartments

began in May. Middle Plaza also features retail and office space, and a plaza with tables that is open to the public.

The eight affordable units are due to a requirement to have below-market-rate units that are managed by Menlo Park, with the priority for those who meet income limits and are currently working or residing in Menlo Park, according to Whitney McNair, Stanford's Faculty Staff Housing Senior Associate.

"The area has a real housing need, so we wanted to bring a substantial amount

of housing," said Steve Elliot, Stanford's Senior Managing Director of real estate development.

Rent ranges from \$2,791 to \$4,134 for one-bedroom apartments and from \$4,108 to \$5,466 for two-bedroom apartments according to the Middle Plaza website.

Gisele Rodriguez da Silva, a visiting scholar to Stanford University from Brazil, moved into Middle Plaza with her family in early July.

"I have a lot of space and everything is new, the people are friendly and I like it here a lot," she said.

Longtime Menlo Park resident Kenneth Mah said he is happy with Middle Plaza's apartment complex, but has concerns about the retail space, which will include high-end watchmakers and a flagship store of Stephen Silver Jewelry.

"I thought it was built with the intention of being a community amenity," Mah said. "But that does not seem to be the model of their leasing of the commercial space." ■

Email Editorial Intern
Michaela Seah at mseah@almanacnews.com.



Michaela Seah

Stanford University hosted an open house on July 28 at its new Middle Plaza development on El Camino Real in Menlo Park.

Employment

The Almanac offers employment advertising.

The deadline is Sunday at 11:59 pm.

Visit AlmanacNews.com/employment_ads/.

For assistance email LegalNotices@AlmanacNews.com.

Cordell William Hull

September 12, 1933 – December 26, 2022

Cordell William Hull, 89 of Atherton, California died peacefully at home on December 26, 2022 surrounded by his family. He was born September 12, 1933 in Dayton, Ohio to Murel and Julia Hull. After graduating high school, he was self-supporting, working various jobs to pay for his many subsequent academic achievements. He received his Bachelor's of Science in Civil Engineering with honors from the



University of Dayton before moving to Boston to attend graduate school at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, receiving a Master's of Science in Civil Engineering in 1957. It was during this time that on a blind date he met Susan, his devoted wife of 65 years, marrying at her grandmother's home in Woburn, Massachusetts in 1958. He served as a combat engineer in the U.S. Army, obtaining the rank of Captain. With Susan's help, Cordell continued his education and received his law degree from Harvard Law School, Cum Laude, in 1962.

Cordell's career achievements were equally as impressive as his academic pedigree. Upon graduating from law school, he joined the Cincinnati, Ohio law firm of Taft Stettinius & Hollister and subsequently left to join one of its clients, the engineering and construction company C&I Girdler, first as an in-house attorney and then as President of C&I Girdler International, based initially in the Bahamas and then in Brussels. In 1970 Cordell joined the engineering and construction firm Bechtel Group, Inc. based in San Francisco. Cordell left Bechtel in 1973 to become President of American Express Company's newly formed merchant banking operation in London, American Express International Development Company. After successfully establishing the American Express unit, Cordell returned to Bechtel in the mid 1970's where he continued to work for many decades. Cordell's scope of responsibilities during his career at Bechtel spanned from running major divisions to executive responsibility for core Bechtel Group activities including finance, legal and insurance, treasury and controller operations, internal audit and chairing Bechtel's Audit and Finance Committee. He retired from Bechtel as Executive Vice President and a member of the Board of Directors. Other Bechtel positions included Chairman of Bechtel Enterprises, President of Bechtel Power, Chief Financial Officer of the Bechtel Group, President of Bechtel Financing Services, and Director and member of the Executive Committee of the Fremont Group, a Bechtel-related investment company.

During and following his tenure at Bechtel, Cordell served on numerous boards, including as a director for Gilead Sciences, Inc., chairman of the Advisory Board of the Export-Import Bank of the United States, director at the Federal Reserve Bank of San Francisco, director at Stanford Research Institute, chairman of the International Engineering and Construction Industries Council and a member of the Services Policy Advisory Committee to the Office of the United States Trade Representative. Following his retirement from Bechtel, Cordell co-founded Energy Asset Management, LLC and later founded and served as Senior Managing Director of InfrastructureWorld, Inc.

Cordell will be remembered not only as an accomplished scholar and business leader but also for his keen mind, unwavering ethics and abundant generosity. In addition to his business endeavors, Cordell was an avid traveler, reader, self-taught sailor, and devoted grandfather. He is survived by his wife Susan, son Bradford (Mary), daughter Pamela (John), son Andrew, his brother Murel Hull, sister Joyce Downs, and eight grandchildren.

PAID OBITUARY

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Applications open for Parks and Recreation Commission

Menlo Park's Parks and Recreation commission is accepting online applications in both Spanish and English until 5 p.m. Friday, Aug. 18. The commission meets on every fourth Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. For more information or to access the application, go to menlopark.gov.

Enrollment opens for city of Menlo Park classes

Enrollment in city-sponsored fall classes, ranging from sports, art, technology and more, is now open to Menlo Park residents of all ages. Enrollment for non-residents starts at 10 a.m. on Aug. 7. More information can be found in the Menlo Park online activity guide at menlopark.gov.

—Michaela Seah

New program for overdue bridge toll violations

Those with overdue payments from toll violations on Bay Area bridges can now take advantage of new programs designed to make paying off late fees easier, said the Metropolitan Transportation Commission.

Bay Area FasTrak now offers payment plan programs open to any low-income residents who have received toll violations on bridges or express lanes. Those who qualify for the program can have their violation penalties waived and pay off any remaining balance of at least \$100 with a payment plan, according to a MTC press release.

Additionally, the Bay Area Toll Authority now offers one-time full or partial penalty waivers through September 2024, which are open to anyone regardless of income level.

These programs are not limited to Bay Area residents, but anyone with penalties or fees related to toll violations. Those interested in the programs can mail a paper application to the MTC at P.O. Box 316, Concord, 94522, send a fax to 844-554-6084 or apply at their website at bayareatollpaymentplan.org.

—Bay City News Service

Portola Valley hosts clean up day for residents

The Town of Portola Valley in partnership with GreenWaste Recovery is hosting a clean up day this Saturday exclusively for Portola Valley residents.

The Aug. 5 event, held from 8 to 11 a.m. at the Portola Valley Town Center, will allow residents to discard items that are typically challenging to dispose of, such as furniture, appliances, concrete, demolition debris, TVs and more. The full list of accepted items can be found on GreenWaste's website.

The town noted that household hazardous waste, such as batteries, oil and paint, is not allowed at the clean up day. To learn how to dispose of these types of materials, residents can call 650-732-6200.

—Malea Martin

Flood Park playground closed

The San Mateo County Parks Department announced on Twitter that the playground at Flood Park in Menlo Park is closed following a routine inspection that determined some equipment required replacement. The parks department said that it will tweet on its account @SMCParks when the playground is reopened.

—Cameron Rebosio

Jane Withers Fox

November 23, 1926 – June 3, 2023

Our dear Mother passed away peacefully on June 3, at age 96. Jane was born and raised in Denver Colorado, by the late Matilda B. and Dr. Sanford M. Withers. She attended Lindenwood College for 1 semester before marrying Lt. Shirl Fox, of Salt Lake City, Utah, in June of 1945. After Shirl finished his WWII military service, Jane and Shirl lived in Salt Lake City while Shirl finished his undergraduate degree. The couple then moved to San Francisco, where Shirl attended dental school, and Jane worked to support them. Jane and Shirl moved to the Peninsula to work and start a family. As the children matured Jane went to work as an administrative professional. She worked in the medical library at the Veteran's Hospital in Palo Alto until her retirement.



Shirl passed away in 1981, and Jane married Bill Hunt in 1987. Jane and Bill enjoyed traveling together, especially visiting her daughters and grandchildren living on the east coast. They lived in Menlo Park until they moved to the Eskaton Senior Living Community in 2014. Bill passed away in 2018. Jane remained at Eskaton until her death.

Jane was a lifelong volunteer. Among her many activities, she served as a "Pink Lady" at Bay Area hospitals and helped in her daughter's schools. She was active in the Camp Fire Girls program, as a leader and subsequently on the Board of the San Francisco Council of Camp Fire Girls. After her retirement, she served on the Altar Guild at Holy Trinity Church in Menlo Park, and with Bill, as a Docent at the Filoli Center in Woodside.

Jane's hobbies included cooking, gardening, sewing and knitting for herself and her family, and making needlepoint art.

Jane is survived by her daughters Sue Gaston (Jim) of Carmichael, CA, Louise Fox of San Francisco (Mats Andersson), and Kate Fox (Jack Smith) of Davidsonville, Md., and her sister-in-law Linda Fox of Salt Lake City. She also is survived by grandchildren Jenny Gaston, Brian Gaston (Holly), Julia, Charlie and Robert Smith; two great grandchildren, many nieces and nephews and their children, and her companion, Gene Schrepel.

A memorial service will be held at Trinity Church in Menlo Park at 1:00 pm on August 19. Burial of her and Shirl's ashes will be in the memorial garden at Trinity after the service, followed by reception in celebration of life.

The family asks that in lieu of flowers, donations be made in her name to the Trinity Church Alter Guild, 330 Ravenswood Avenue, Menlo Park, Ca, 94025 (<https://www.trinitymenlopark.org/page/give>), or to Filoli Center, 86 Cañada Road, Woodside, CA 94062 (<https://filoli.org/support/ways-to-give/>).

PAID OBITUARY

RESEARCHERS

continued from page 8

Researchers rely on partnership agreements

Researchers seek agreements with the department to access nonpublic data, especially student-level data that detail the demographic information and the performance records over time of California's 5.8 million students but without any names or identifying information. That data is the gold standard for accurate research. A partnership contract details the department's commitments and researchers' responsibilities, including strong assurances they will have security protections in place to protect students' privacy and anonymity.

The dispute does not involve the disclosure of any student-level information.

Maria Clayton, the director of communications for CDE, said the agreement "is standard language that CDE has used for years in these types of data-sharing agreements."

Reardon said in an email, "It's perfectly appropriate - even necessary - that CDE or

any state agency ensure student privacy and factual correctness when the state's data is used by external researchers. It is unclear to me, however, how restricting researchers' freedom to testify in a lawsuit, even an unrelated one, serves the interests of California's students."

"The restriction does not make research better," he added, "and does nothing that I can see to protect student privacy. It may limit which researchers are willing or able to work with the state, leaving the state without access to some of the best researchers; and it may limit the effectiveness of litigation that might benefit California's students."

No restrictions on what researchers can publish

The contract does not impose any restrictions on researchers' ability to independently report what they learn from the data.

Patrick Shields, the executive director of LPI, said the department doesn't interfere in how researchers report on their findings. And since LPI is a research organization that does not engage in litigation, it is not affected by the restriction not to testify against the state.

"We don't feel restrictions on portraying data as it is. There have been no internal discussions (with the department) that we can't say this or that," he said.

But researchers seek access to analyze data without knowing what they will discover. LPI's contract with the department, which it calls the California Equity Project, covers a range of topics that have already generated and will produce dozens of studies on teacher shortages, teacher and administrator professional development, homeless students, English learners, foster youths and K-12

achievement and funding gaps.

Studies using a wide swath of data could lead to legislation, or it could also prompt advocacy organizations like Public Counsel and the ACLU to pursue remedies through the courts to fix flaws in state laws or address poor student performance or inequities in funding.

ACLU argues that preventing researchers from sharing their expertise with the plaintiffs would be prior restraint and deny the public a full and fair presentation of the issues.

For this and other reasons,

David Plank, the retired executive of Policy Analysis for California Education or PACE, a collaborative research and policy organization based at Stanford and several other universities, said he "would never have signed a contract in which we agreed to protect the interests or reputation of the agency with which we would have signed."

To do so, he said, would be "contrary to the fundamental norms of academic research." ■

This story was originally published by EdSource.

Jack Holloway

July 10, 1945 – July 9, 2023

Pioneer in Artificial Intelligence Research, Jack Holloway, a computer scientist, entrepreneur, and sailor from Atherton, California, died at Stanford Hospital on July 9, 2023 after a long battle with Parkinson's Disease. He was 77.

Jack was born in Winchester, Massachusetts. His enthusiasm and passion for learning, discovery and science was evident from a young age. In high school, he was selected as a national scholar by the Westinghouse Science Talent Search. Jack attended MIT and while there, joined Dr. Marvin Minsky's Artificial Intelligence Laboratory. One of the most respected "hackers" in the lab, he mentored a team of other remarkable computer scientists.

As a member of the AI lab, he explored how to endow machines with perception and intelligence. As an early pioneer in the development of AI, he logged many breakthroughs in chip design, CAD system design and computer animation. At MIT, he was a leading proponent of LISP computer language and one of the architects of the first LISP machines. Following his time at MIT, Jack was involved with a number of companies, including as co-founder of Symbolics.

In 1996, he co-founded Epigram, a computer networking company with Ed Frank. Epigram was acquired by Broadcom in 1999. As CTO of Epigram, and CTO of the home networking division of Broadcom, Jack provided leadership in creating 10Mbps phone line networking at Epigram, and 54 Mbps 802.11g WiFi at Broadcom. Indeed, that "WiFi" has become synonymous with "Internet" is due in no small part to Jack's vision.

Jack was an avid sailor who loved nothing better than to be on the water, winning races or cruising off the coast of New England. He enjoyed photography and capturing magical moments of travels with his family and friends on all points across the globe.

Leaving to cherish his memory is his beloved wife, Anne, with whom he shared 32 years of love and companionship and their son Michael; his son Nathaniel and his brother Peter Holloway and a host of friends and colleagues.

As we mourn Jack's loss, we celebrate his remarkable life and accomplishments. Jack will be remembered for not only his technical brilliance but also his wonderful sense of humor and deep love and commitment to family and friends. He will remain in our hearts as a rare and remarkable man who graced our lives with his kindness.

A celebration of Jack's life will be planned for a future date. Jack and Anne have a special commitment to the Michael J. Fox Foundation for its work in Parkinson's research. In lieu of flowers, contributions to the Michael J. Fox Foundation would be gratefully appreciated.

<https://give.michaeljfox.org/give/421686/#!/donation/checkout>



Gerald Walker Smith

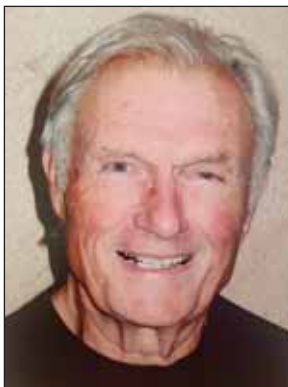
July 23, 1930 – July 21, 2023

Gerald Walker Smith (Jerry), beloved husband of Joyce Hanna Smith, died peacefully at home in Atherton, surrounded by his family.

Born in Annapolis, Maryland, Jerry received his undergraduate degree at Stanford University, where he played varsity water polo. After completing his MBA at Stanford and working at IBM and Bechtel Corporation, Jerry studied for three years at the Pacific School of Religion, an interdenominational seminary in Berkeley, California. During the course of his studies, his experience at an internship where he counseled inmates at San Quentin Prison led him to decide to pursue a career in counseling. After completing his doctorate in psychology from the University of Pennsylvania, Jerry held a practice in San Mateo County, counseling clients for over 60 years. The author of two books, *Couples Therapy* and *Hidden Meanings*, Jerry also led workshops for couples at the Esalen Institute in Big Sur, California for over 50 years. Jerry's talk show *Talk it Over* aired more than 250 programs on Channel 5 and the Westinghouse Network during the 1970s. Jerry also worked with San Mateo County Mental Services offering pastoral counseling consultations to clergymen, and served as a conflict management consultant at local businesses.

Jerry cherished his nearly 40-year relationship with his wife Joyce and had a deep commitment to his children and grandchildren. Authentically curious and caring about others, Jerry truly enjoyed connecting with the people he came across in his day-to-day life and cultivated many long and deep friendships. Jerry was an avid golfer and open-water swimmer, completing many Golden Gate Bridge and Alcatraz swims, and was actively involved in the South End Rowing Club in San Francisco.

A spirited, authentic, and caring man who truly engaged with the people around him, Jerry will be keenly missed. He is survived by his wife Joyce Hanna Smith, his sons Andy Smith and Martin Smith, his daughters-in-law Ellery Smith and Pat Toth-Smith, his stepdaughters Kristine Hanna and Katie Dickson and son-in-law Tom Dickson, his sister-in-law Sheridan Adams, his brother-in-law Jeff Kitzes, his sister Gaye Johnson, and his six grandchildren Quinn, Cole, Alia, Ally, Sam, and Ben. A service will be held in Atherton for family and close friends.



PAID OBITUARY

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ABSENTEEISM

continued from page 1

area report strikingly high rates of chronically absent students, which are out of line with neighboring, wealthier schools, and higher than state averages. The first part of The Almanac’s investigation into chronic absenteeism, when students miss 10% or more of class in a school year, explores its causes and consequences. The second story focuses on how struggles with mental health have affected student attendance.

Rogers partnered with University of California at Berkeley public policy researcher Avi Feller to conduct a study among K-5 students across 10 San Mateo County school districts during the 2015-16 school year.

Rogers connected with San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools Nancy Magee through Hedy Chang of the research group Attendance Works in 2014. Magee found his research interesting.

“I met with Todd and we hit it off,” Magee said in an email. “On behalf of The Big Lift we launched into a very large, countywide attendance research project called Attendance Matters that concluded in late 2016 with an 8% reduction in absences and a 15% reduction in chronic absences countywide,” she said, referring to the county’s Big Lift initiative to increase the percentage of students reading proficiently by third grade.

The result was the 2018 paper, “Reducing Student Absenteeism in the Early Grades by Targeting Parental Beliefs.” Researchers found parents tend to mistakenly underestimate how many days their children miss by a factor of two. Parents also assumed the absences would have a short-term impact, like missing a lesson or failing a test, as opposed to long term consequences, like being held back a grade or failing a class.



Veronica Weber

Colorful murals adorn the entrance to Costaño School of the Arts in East Palo Alto.

Researchers sent mailers to families that emphasize the value of regular school attendance in the early grades and report how many days their child has been absent.

“This light-touch, low-cost intervention should not replace more intensive attendance-focused efforts, such as attendance officers, social workers, and mentors,” they wrote. “We acknowledge that many factors contributing to poor attendance, such as poverty and family instability, cannot be solved by a mail-based intervention.”

Unless schools put resources into digging into the details of a family’s life and help to address the structural challenges that families face, more general interventions that increase motivation to get the kid to school are effective and cheaper, Rogers told Harvard EdCast.

Research inspires chronic absenteeism startup

Wanting to put his research to work, Rogers co-founded Everyday Labs, which addresses chronic absenteeism in schools.

The startup served all grade levels in the Ravenswood City School District during the 2021-22 school year through San Mateo County’s Big Lift.

The company provided a platform that allowed Ravenswood officials to look at attendance data and figure out how to get those students back to class. The tool shows which days of the week a student is missing or the reason why the student missed class. It also sent text messages to families with information on their students’ attendance as well as connections to a chatbot with resources.

The district declined to allow Everyday Labs to release data on the reasons for absences with The Almanac.

Ravenswood Superintendent Gina Sudaria said the district is now using its own platform, Panorama, which is similar to Everyday Labs’ system.

Ravenswood still uses Everyday Labs’ letters to families, which compare a student’s attendance to the average number of absences in a class. It also lists resources such as contact information for the school’s counselor and tips suggesting things like packing lunch the night before.

EveryDay Labs CEO Emily Bailard said overall this past

school year, about 60-70% of its California students who receive an Everyday Labs intervention improve their attendance rate. Some 20% improve their attendance enough that they’re no longer considered chronically absent.

During the 2021-22 school year, about 10-15% of California families that received interventions through Everyday Labs texted the company’s family support bot or team. When the chatbot asks questions about barriers to getting to school, the top three reasons were physical and mental health issues, followed by food and housing insecurity, Bailard said. Transportation was a distant fourth.

In the 2022-23 school year, there was a big increase in questions related to mental health and fewer about physical health, Bailard said.

COVID-19 questions made up fewer than 3% of overall questions, while wellness made up 15%, she said.

Ravenswood making systemic changes

Jennifer Gravem, executive director of educational services with Ravenswood City School District, told its school board in March that she’s excited that the

‘This light-touch, low-cost intervention should not replace more intensive attendance-focused efforts, such as attendance officers, social workers, and mentors. We acknowledge that many factors contributing to poor attendance, such as poverty and family instability, cannot be solved by a mail-based intervention.’

TODD ROGERS AND AVI FELLER, RESEARCHERS

district is changing the way it conducts its school attendance reviews with parents. In late May, the district hosted its first resource fair instead of its usual one-on-one meetings with parents about absences.

“I started dreading those meetings and I said to myself, ‘Why am I doing this in a punitive way?’” she said.

At the fair, Gravem talked to families about the impact of missing school. Children who are chronically absent in preschool, kindergarten and first grade are much less likely to read at grade level by the third grade, according to U.S. Department of Education data. Students who cannot read at grade level by the end of third grade are four times more likely than proficient readers to drop out of high school, according to the Department of Education.

She also shared services like mental health providers that can help combat absenteeism. Staff provided forms for people to report if they are struggling with housing or food insecurity and want to be connected with a parent outreach coordinator.

Alex, who works in the Ravenswood district but asked to not be named, said that she thinks the district could do more to address chronic absenteeism. She said in the past, parents missed district calls regarding their child’s attendance because they were made during the workday. A newer texting service is helping



Magali Gauthier

Ravenswood City School District Superintendent Gina Sudaria at a school board meeting in East Palo Alto on Dec. 6, 2019.



Courtesy Everyday Labs

Emily Bailard, CEO of Everyday Labs.



Courtesy Jennifer Gravem

Ravenswood City School District Executive Director of Educational Services Jennifer Gravem.

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improve the communication between both sides, she said.

“There’s not much support given (to families) other than reaching out to the parents,” she said.

Ravenswood Superintendent Sudaria said that “school districts have been asked to lift so much more in society than they traditionally have. We are always working to do more to support children and families.” The district does try to call families at a variety of times and does home visits in extreme cases when it can’t reach a family, she said.

Alex said that adjusting the bus routes could help students who need to be driven to their bus stop because they don’t live close by.

The school district already has a number of measures in place to help students get to school. Sudaria said there are ample bus stops over 25 across the district to ensure that each student lives within walking distance, she said. The district provides free bus service and is constantly realigning bus stops to meet the needs of students, she said. The district declined to share a map of bus stops with The Almanac, citing student privacy.

This past year the district also provided free SamTrans passes to all middle school students and coordinated with the county transit service to add options to students who miss the bus.

SamTrans launched a new microtransit service in June in Menlo Park’s Belle Haven neighborhood and East Palo Alto that allows riders to book a ride through the Ride Plus app or through a phone call, and is priced the same as a bus ticket.

For the 2023-24 school year,



Veronica Weber

Colorful murals adorn the entrance to Costano School of the Arts in East Palo Alto.

the district is partnering with the nonprofit City Year to provide a before-school program to make it easier for parents to drop their students off earlier. This, coupled with its longstanding after-school program, will help the district work toward its goal of being open from 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m, Sudaria said.

The state has recently enacted legislation that promotes the importance of occasional mental health days to reduce longer-term absences.

State legislation that passed in 2021 ensures that absences for mental health issues are considered excused. Another 2021 law requires local educational agencies and charter schools to include mental health content in their middle and high school health education courses. The California Department of

Education must also develop a plan to expand mental health instruction in public schools by January 2024.

In May, Menlo Park nonprofits Community Equity Collaborative (CEC) and SafeSpace put together resources on mental health days. CEC advises students to take occasional mental health days when they feel burned out, don’t have enough energy, or won’t be able to mentally handle the school day. CEC notes that these days are not for avoiding issues that can be addressed at school or catching up on schoolwork.

CEC member Heather Hopkins said that many people don’t know about the change in law.

“It seems like kind of a bad time to be promoting it, but on the other hand there is a major

health crisis (involving mental health),” she explained.

More health resources could be coming to community members soon. The Ravenswood district is exploring the option of adding a health clinic on a corner of the Belle Haven Elementary School in Menlo Park, which is undergoing renovations.

The district found 51% of those surveyed supported putting a health clinic there. In early June, the school board decided to pursue a partnership with the Ravenswood Family Health Network to develop the site.

What’s helping schools improve attendance

Student attendance has improved this past school year at East Palo Alto Academy (EPAA), a charter high school



Courtesy Amika Guillaume

East Palo Alto Academy Principal Amika Guillaume.

that Stanford University started in 2001 to help students of color become first-generation college students in the U.S., said EPAA Principal Amika Guillaume.

She said that during the pandemic the school’s average daily attendance numbers were “shockingly low.” In March, the school saw numbers inch back up to 84% to 87%, but they’re not quite hitting the 90th percentile pre-pandemic numbers, she said.

Guillaume credits EPAA’s advisory classes of 17 to 19 students, which meet every weekday afternoon for two years, with creating a familial environment.

She said the school is also flexible with students struggling to get to class, like onboarding them back with a partial schedule.

“We ask: ‘How do we help them get through this?’” Guillaume said. ■

Email Staff Writer

Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com.



Michaela Seah

SamTrans debuts its new Ride Plus microtransit service at a preview event at the EPACENTER in East Palo Alto in June.

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include:

Minnie Woods, 83, a former Menlo Park resident and volunteer for the March of Dimes and United Way who trained as a nurse and spent much of her career working in hospices, convalescent homes and VA hospitals, on May 23.

Suzanne Roche, 97, a former Menlo Park resident who was born in San Francisco, faithfully attended church at St. William Catholic Parish in Los Altos and enjoyed playing tennis at Alpine Hills Swim and Tennis Club in Portola Valley, on July 20.

Ryan Starnes, 29, who attended Palo Alto public schools and graduated from Palo Alto Preparatory School,

was a passionate sports fan who followed the San Francisco Giants, 49ers and Florida Gators, and had a love of music and animals, on June 3.

James Nichols, 87, a long-time special education teacher in the Palo Alto Unified School District who worked at Gunn and Palo Alto high schools, acted in many Sunnyvale Community Players productions, played ukulele and was a parrot enthusiast who owned as many as eight birds at one time, on June 27.

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

Why high-income homeowners should convert to all-electric

By Rob Hogue

GUEST OPINION

Carbon emissions attributed to homes and buildings are roughly 30% of emissions that contribute to climate change. A significant amount of these emissions comes from combustion of natural gas used for space heating, water heating, and cooking.

Changing to appliances that run on electricity instead of natural gas would significantly reduce carbon emitted from buildings. Furthermore,

electric heat pumps used for space heating, air conditioning, and hot water are very energy efficient.

Although costs for these electric appliances at present are generally higher than for natural gas appliances, the costs will come down as the volume increases. Due to three-to four times higher energy efficiency with heat pumps, it's likely that switching to electric appliances will

lower monthly utility bills over time.

Accordingly, it's incumbent upon higher-income homeowners to transition to electrical appliances as their natural gas appliances wear out. When homes are converted to all-electricity, the added volume of electrical appliances will lower their costs and make them more affordable for lower-income households.

We've seen this pattern before when the first adopters of electric lighting were the wealthy of New York City at

the turn of the 19th century. As the general public saw the benefits of electrical lighting, they were motivated to also switch over to electricity, further lowering the costs of this new and better technology. The growing volume of electrical lighting initiated the growth of power plants, transmission lines, and the availability of electricity to millions of Americans.

In a similar process, once the bulk of homes become all-electric, Americans will realize the benefits of higher efficiency

appliances, better control of energy use, cleaner indoor air, and a sizable decline in carbon emissions. And don't forget the jobs that will be created and sustained as we transition to a more climate-friendly economy. ■

Rob Hogue is a retired mechanical engineer living in Menlo Park and a working member of the Citizen's Climate Lobby, the Peninsula Interfaith Climate Action group, and the Earth Care Team at Valley Presbyterian Church in Portola Valley.

LETTERS

Our readers write

Sunset Magazine site wrong for 'megacomplex'

Menlo Park, a small bedroom community of some 30,000

people, prized by residents for its "village character," is fast becoming an endangered species. Using the poison pill known as builders' remedy designed by California's feckless legislature, a Texas developer plans to erect multiple sky-high mega-complexes on the site of Sunset Magazine's storied gardens and beautifully

maintained headquarters.

Oisín Heneghan's new real estate firm "N17", plans to turn Menlo Park into Manhattan — and that's only slightly hyperbolic. He actually hired the architect of the One World Trade Center in New York City, the seventh tallest building in the world, to design this gargantuan misfit for our suburb!

Sunset Magazine has only one-story buildings. Heneghan, along with the architect firm Skidmore, Owings and Merrill — the World Trade Center guys — is proposing a 28-story 328-foot-high behemoth smack in the middle of Menlo Park, along with two others: a 22-story building, and a 15-story building housing labs doing "research" (one wonders exactly what this entails).

Did no one tell Mr. Heneghan that Menlo Park has nowhere near the infrastructure to support a 90,000 square-foot hotel and 280,000 square feet of office space, or that we already have too many offices, many of which are lying vacant? Or that this development would destroy the lovely Linfield Oaks neighborhood of single-family homes?

Texas is a big state, Mr. Heneghan. Surely you can find a suitable location there for your ambitious skyscraper project.

*Cherie Zaslowsky
Oak Lane, Menlo Park*

PG&E plan for solar panels fee raises questions

When I installed solar panels in 2001, the fixed charge to be connected to the grid was a little less than \$5 per month. In 2015, PG&E decided that that wasn't enough, and doubled it to a little less than \$10 per month, where it stands today.

Now the utility is proposing to increase the fee to be connected to the grid to \$15 for the poor, \$30 for the lower middle class, \$51 for the moderately wealthy and \$92 for those families considered rich. These figures raise some questions. What is the true cost to be connected to the grid, and how is it calculated?

If the changes are intended to

be revenue neutral to the utility, what will be the charge per kilowatt-hour, or is this just a scheme to increase PG&E's revenue? How would these changes affect the payback for solar systems?

It seems possible that some customers would pay more in fixed fees than for consumption, like we do for our water bills. How does this encourage conservation?

*Robert Cronin
Marmona Drive, Menlo Park*

What is a home?

I read in the July 21 issue of The Almanac that state Sen. Scott Weiner is proposing to cover the coast's Half Moon Bay area with housing ("How California's housing crisis could weaken its coastal protections" by Ben Christopher).

Instead of covering California with MORE housing and adding to the disastrous effects of global warming and addressing the symptoms of the disease, why not heal/cure the disease? Get to the origin, the root, the foundation of the problem and destroy it once and for all?

Would it not be better to consciously and constantly be reminding ourselves and acknowledging what HOME spiritually represents? A short list would be: Peace, tranquility, harmony, beauty, gratitude, calmness, compassion, joy, happiness, safety, shelter, strength, vitality, encouragement, completeness, wholeness, purity, cleanliness, tidiness, perfection, health, integrity, honesty, gentleness. As we consciously hold these thoughts in our mind, we will experience them in our daily lives.

*Jackie Leonard-Dimmick
Walnut Avenue, Atherton*

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PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCES IN ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

System upgrades

From garages to spaceships, a new exhibition explores the evolution of Silicon Valley architecture

By Heather Zimmerman

No doubt, Silicon Valley has a global reputation, and it's complicated. That worldwide fame is matched perhaps only by the disbelief of visitors wondering why the valley doesn't have more to show, architecturally speaking, for all its storied innovation and riches.

"A couple years ago, I was photographing the HP Garage, which is on Addison Street (in Palo Alto), a quiet, suburban street, but there's a historic marker in front. While I was photographing, there was a couple — I think they were from Finland — visiting this area. And they asked me, 'Where is Silicon Valley? We don't know where to find it,'" recalled photographer Richard Adler.

It may not have an obvious center, but Silicon Valley does have unique architecture — though much like the unseen products of the valley itself, from the algorithms that power A.I.s down to the old-school chips that gave the place its name, you may not always know it's there.

Whether that's a feature or a bug is up to the viewer of "Building the Future: A Visual History of the Architecture of Silicon Valley," a new exhibition at the Los Altos History Museum that opened Aug. 3 featuring Adler's photographs of valley architecture. But either way, the show makes the case that there is a "there" here when it comes to the area's visual identity.

In addition to photographs of 13 different sites, the exhibition features curated artifacts related to the buildings, as well as architectural sketches.

Adler spent the last four years photographing a variety of the valley's tech campuses, as well as some iconic historical sites, such as the Hewlett Packard Garage and Moffett Field's Hangar One. He was inspired to start the project in 2019 while taking a class about Silicon Valley architecture at Stanford University Continuing Studies taught by professor Barry Katz. Katz will join Adler for a conversation about Silicon Valley architecture on Aug. 17 at the museum.

"The thesis of this course was that there was a kind of a major revolution underway among high-tech companies," Adler said.

Where previously, many companies bought or leased existing office space, in recent years, more Silicon Valley companies have begun looking to make their mark by building architecturally unique campuses. One of the best known examples is the doughnut-shaped Apple Park in Cupertino, often called "the spaceship."

A longtime photographer, Adler set himself a challenge to get a visual record of these new buildings. He knows the region and its mindset well. He came to Palo Alto in 1972, where he lived for nearly 30 years. He now lives in Cupertino. He is a Distinguished Fellow at the Palo Alto-based Institute for the Future, where he has researched and consulted on emerging technologies.

"My goal is to show people what's here. You can go to San Francisco. You can go up to the top of Coit Tower and look out, and you can even fall in love with San Francisco. You know, it's this one little compact, charming city, but Silicon Valley isn't like that — there is no center, really, for Silicon Valley. It's more like L.A. in a way. It's very spread out. There's lots to see in L.A., but you have to know where you're going," Adler said.

The comparison to Los Angeles might be particularly apt, as one of Adler's inspirations for the project was in response to a 2013 Los Angeles Times article that declared Silicon Valley "an architectural wasteland."

But Adler agrees that, at the time, the L.A. Times writer had a point.

"It was sort of true, I mean, there really wasn't a lot to see here. And that's now, I believe, really changed because Silicon

Valley is so large an area. Most people have never seen many of these buildings. And so one of the goals of this exhibit is to let people know that this isn't the wasteland anymore," he said.

Because many of these new campuses do often go largely unseen for all but employees, "Building the Future" will include a map to encourage visitors to take themselves on a tour of the valley's new architecture.

"One of the things that we've created (for the exhibit) is going to be a free handout, which is called a 'Field Guide to Silicon Valley.' It has a map that shows where these buildings are, and it has a little section on each one of the sites. ... My hope is that this is going to spark people's interest in their own environment," Adler said.

Among the new additions to this former "wasteland" in the past 10 years are the Apple spaceship, the Frank Gehry-designed Meta headquarters in Menlo Park, Google's new Bay View campus in Mountain View, Nvidia's triangle-shaped headquarters in Santa Clara and Adobe's newest tower in downtown San Jose. Adler photographed these and other buildings, and in a few cases, toured them.

Getting the images presented some challenges, not the least of which was that COVID made places more inaccessible. Plus, the subjects were massive.

"These buildings tend to be very low and long. The Apple spaceship is literally a mile around. ... A lot of my photography uses a wide-angle lens. It's really sort of breathtaking when you see the scale of that building," he said.

Tech companies are also



Courtesy Richard Adler

The doughnut-shaped Apple Park, often called the "spaceship," opened in 2017. Adler called the scale of the building "breathtaking."

frequently siloed off from the public for security's sake.

"They tend to be very controlled. But I think they now realize that there really is a public interest," Adler said.

To that end, a number of the newer campuses boast spaces designed to welcome the public, with amenities such as cafes, stores, museums and visitors' centers.

Other trends Adler found in documenting these spaces was that there was an emphasis on making the exterior of the building a visual representation of the company, while on the interior, there was typically a focus on creating spaces for employees to collaborate. Since these structures were designed before the pandemic spurred an increase in remote work, he said it will be interesting to see how that design choice evolves in the coming years.

Another striking element to Silicon Valley's new architecture is that most buildings packed in many features to help mitigate environmental impact, such as solar panels, water recycling systems, living roofs or geothermal

climate control.

Adler notes that the Silicon Valley region has long been home to important structures that broke new ground, which is why, in part, he included a historic element to the exhibition.

"Things like Hangar One at Moffett Field, when that was built in 1933, it was the world's largest freestanding building, and then when the Stanford Linear Accelerator was built in the 1960s, it was the longest and straightest building ever built," he said.

The influence of such structures and of the local environment is present in some of the valley's new buildings. Adler pointed out that the hangars at nearby Moffett Field had an impact on the design of Google's Bay View campus.

Even the grounds of Apple Park take inspiration from the surroundings of another iconic local structure, the Stanford Dish, where Steve Jobs liked to stroll.

"People don't pay much attention to the past. That's why I liked the title, 'Building the Future: A Visual History of Silicon Valley.' So we're going to talk about the future but we're also talking about the past as well," Adler said. ■

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



Courtesy Richard Adler

Google's Bay View campus in Mountain View took some inspiration from the hangars at nearby Moffett Field. The campus opened in 2022.

"Building the Future: A Visual History of Silicon Valley" runs through Oct. 22 at the Los Altos History Museum, 51 S. San Antonio Road, Los Altos. Admission is free. On Aug. 17, 5:30-7 p.m., the museum presents "Conversations and Reflections: The Stories Behind the Buildings," a discussion with Adler and professor Barry Katz. Tickets are \$10, losaltoshistory.org.

Worth a Look



Courtesy Adam Chin

Jed Parsario, left, and Kina Kantor perform in San Francisco Mime Troupe's "Breakdown," which looks at the stories of an unhoused person, an activist and a news commentator who all have ties to San Francisco.

San Francisco Mime Troupe's 'Breakdown'

The Tony Award-winning San Francisco Mime Troupe will bring its newest production, "Breakdown," to Mitchell Park Bowl on Saturday, Aug. 6. This production explores the stories of an unhoused person, a social worker and a Fox News commentator who are all tied to San Francisco. Their various perspectives on the city and experiences with its culture are examined from a politically charged point of view through song, spoken-word and acting. And though "mime" may be in the troupe's name, there will be nothing silent about this show — the miming here is mimicry of those in power, an activist-centered performance that is focused on the rights of workers. This performance is one of many that the troupe is presenting in parks all over the Bay Area this summer, and will feature live music prior to the show. Presented by Earthwise Productions.

Sunday, Aug. 6, 2 p.m. at Mitchell Park Bowl, 600 E. Meadow Drive, Palo Alto. Tickets are free. sfmt.org.

Michigan Rattlers

If folk and roots rock is your thing, don't fret. Popular folk-rock band Michigan Rattlers brings their charismatic songwriting and penchant for high-energy performances to The Guild Theatre on Aug. 4. The band's musical style combines twangy guitars and swinging, folk-inspired grooves with anthemic choruses and modern rock instrumentation. With live shows and in-person performances being core to the group's ethos, this concert is sure to be a treat. Lucy and The Long Haul open.

Friday, Aug. 4, 8 p.m. at The Guild Theatre, 949 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. Tickets are \$23. guildtheatre.com.

Palo Alto Buddhist Temple Obon

Celebrate one of the most important Japanese Buddhist festivals of the year at the Palo Alto Buddhist Temple as they host their Obon festivities on Aug. 5 and 6. Across the two days, visitors can watch enthralling taiko performances, listen to live music by local band Bad Karma and honor ancestors as a part of the Obon Odori celebration featuring ancient and traditional ritual dancing. Craft beer, wine and locally brewed sake from Sequoia Sake will be available for purchase, along with desserts and snacks. This festival is open to temple members, neighbors, friends and anyone interested in Buddhism and Japanese culture, according to the Temple's website, and promises to be a vibrant display of cultural traditions and community ties.

Saturday, Aug. 5 and Sunday, Aug. 6 at 4 p.m. at the Palo Alto Buddhist Temple, 2751 Louis Road, Palo Alto. Attendance is free. pabt.org.

Dena DeRose Trio featuring Ralph Moore

The Stanford Jazz Festival will bring its 2023 season to a close with a virtuosic performance by the Dena DeRose Trio, along with special guest Ralph Moore on tenor sax. Veteran jazz pianist DeRose brings her bebop-inspired and passionate piano playing to the stage, swinging in perfect harmony with all-star drummer Akira Tana and top bassist Peter Barshay. The group's reverence for classic bop sounds and blues sensibilities will delight jazz connoisseurs of all ages. DeRose comes to Stanford on tour from her home in Austria, making this concert a rare opportunity for local audiences to experience her musical talent live.

Saturday, Aug. 5, 8 p.m. at Campbell Recital Hall, 541 Lasuen Mall, Stanford. Tickets are \$20- \$62. stanfordjazz.org.

Theatre in the Park: The Golden Goose

Join Peninsula Youth Theatre and the city of Mountain View for "The Golden Goose" on Aug. 4, the latest production in their free, outdoor Theatre in the Park series, running every Friday until Aug. 11. This particular family-friendly 45-minute production explores the classic fairy tale and its themes of greed and discovery in an accessible, lighthearted manner. Bring your little ones and some snacks with you and enjoy the beautiful summer sunshine while soaking up an enchanting theatrical experience.

Friday, Aug. 4, 3 p.m. at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. Tickets are free. mvcpa.com.

Briefs by Akhil Joondeph



Courtesy Chris Hardy

Celia Fushille, left, has announced she will step down as Artistic Director of Smuin at the conclusion of the company's 30th anniversary season in June 2024. Associate Artistic Director Amy Seiwert, right, will lead the company following Fushille's departure.

Smuin Ballet Artistic Director Celia Fushille to step down in 2024

Associate Artistic Director Amy Seiwert will take on the role following Fushille's departure

By Akhil Joondeph

Smuin Ballet Artistic Director Celia Fushille announced on Tuesday, July 25, that she will be stepping down from her role with the company at the end of the company's 30th anniversary season next year. Associate Artistic Director Amy Seiwert will take Fushille's place following her departure in June 2024.

The San Francisco-based company performs throughout the Bay Area, including in Mountain View.

Fushille is Smuin Ballet's last founding member to remain working for the company, having spent the last three decades with the company as a performer and later as the company's Associate Artistic Director. She took on the role of Artistic Director after founder Michael Smuin died in 2007. Having spent many years working by Smuin's side, Fushille has made honoring her mentor's legacy a priority of hers during her tenure as Artistic Director.

"I enjoyed so many satisfying moments on the stage during my performing career, but equally thrilling was being in the studio by Michael's side and helping to bring his work to life," Fushille said in a press release issued to announce her stepping down.

Fushille will continue to work closely with the ballet, serving as a trustee on the board and working with other ballet companies to stage Smuin's choreographies.

"I hope to keep his legacy alive by sharing his works with ballet companies around the globe," Fushille said.

Incoming Artistic Director Amy Seiwert also has a long history with the company, having performed with Smuin Ballet, the Los Angeles Chamber Ballet and Sacramento Ballet in her 19-year career as a performing artist and dancemaker. She was Smuin Ballet's first choreographer-in-residence, serving in this role from 2008-2018, and has worked under the leadership of both Smuin and Fushille.

"My successor will take the company forward in exciting ways while celebrating all that we learned from Michael," Fushille said in the press release.

Having directed her own company, Amy Seiwert's Imagery, since 2004, Seiwert has received critical acclaim for her choreography that has been lauded as keeping Smuin's tradition of innovative showmanship alive. She has been an artist-in-residence at ODC, the Joyce Theater and the Kennedy Center, and has staged her works with Smuin Ballet, AXIS, Ballet Austin, Atlanta Ballet, Oakland Ballet, Cincinnati Ballet, American Repertory Ballet and many others.

"Who I am as an artist was honed in the two-plus decades I have spent connected to Smuin," Seiwert said in the press release. "I owe so much to Michael and Celia — their support and belief in me opened doors to creative opportunities around the country. Now, it is my opportunity to give back. I am thrilled to be of service to this organization and to continue the legacy of Michael and Celia." ■

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Food & Drink

Love at first sight

San Francisco-based Burma Love makes Peninsula debut at Springline, serving up its cult-favorite tea leaf salad and mohinga alongside new dishes and cocktails

By Stephanie Gerson

Menlo Park's growing Springline development has added a renowned San Francisco restaurant to its lineup of eateries: Burmese restaurant Burma Love, which opened July 19. The new establishment is Burma Love's third Bay Area location and first restaurant on the Peninsula.

Burma Love is part of the Burma Food Group founded by Desmond Tan. The restaurant group's presence in the Bay Area dates back to Burma Superstar's opening on Clement Street in San Francisco in 1992. Three decades later, the Burma Food Group has grown across the Bay Area to include three Burma Superstar locations, three Burma Love locations that serve as the contemporary younger sister to Burma Superstar and one Burma Bites location serving casual to-go style Burmese cuisine.

Bryanna Yip, Burma Food Group's brand manager, explained that the Burma Love name is already very familiar in San Francisco, so opening an outpost in Menlo Park meant seizing the "opportunity to tap into a new demographic and new neighborhood." Burmese food is a relatively "untapped and unexplored" cuisine that the restaurant group wanted to introduce to the Peninsula, Yip added.

At the Menlo Park location, diners can expect offerings that differ slightly

from Burma Love's restaurants in San Francisco. The menu is a blend of legacy dishes served at all Burma Love locations and signature items specific to Burma Love Menlo Park. Burma Love classics include the tea leaf salad, Burmese curries, a multi-layered bread called platha served with various dips, and mohinga, a cod stew known as the national dish of Southern Burma.

Executive chef Jarvis Yuan, former owner and chef of Palo Alto Chinese restaurant Mandarin Roots, which closed in late 2022, created the restaurant's signature dishes, which are rooted in Burmese flavors with a contemporary Southeast Asian flair. Yuan expanded the menu, adding a crudité plate with Burmese goddess dressing, Andaman crudo made with Hokkaido sea scallop and a rich lamb shank curry.

Burma Love's innovative dessert menu can be attributed to Culinary Institute of America-trained pastry chef Naomi Kakatin. Rooted in specialty Asian ingredients, the offerings take a creative approach to dessert. The Golden Land includes cubes of calamansi curd and Earl Grey shortbread garnished with cardamom crumble and a blueberry yuzu compote. Playing off of a classic lava cake, the Burmese Bonfire merges lava cake with the components of a s'more, infusing the dish with Burmese flavors such as green tea.

Every Burma Love restaurant features a location-specific, adventurous cocktail menu. Each cocktail is an elaborate amalgam of bitters, florals and spices, resulting in experimental combinations. Sip on the Last Harp in Bagan, made with awayuki strawberry gin, hibiscus syrup and egg-based froth, or opt for The Lady, a refreshing cocktail with notes of green apple and Thai basil.

The restaurant space is an open concept with natural accents echoing the warmth of the dishes themselves and features a full bar with high-top seating. Murals painted by Lux Create that depict Burmese cultural landmarks decorate the walls of the restaurant.

With its new Peninsula eatery, Burma Love aims to challenge taste buds with a collection of bold flavors — a mixture of sweetness, spice,



Courtesy Burma Love

Above: The restaurant space is an open concept. Murals painted by Lux Create that depict Burmese cultural landmarks decorate the walls.

Top: A colorful crudité plate is served with Burmese goddess dressing.



Courtesy Burma Love

At the Menlo Park location, diners can expect a blend of legacy dishes served at all Burma Love locations and signature items specific to Burma Love Menlo Park.

tang and smoke — and educate the community on the creativity of Burmese cuisine.

"One of the most important aspects of the (Burma Restaurant Group) brand is education," Yip said.

Burma Love is one of nine eateries planned at the Springline development. The Burmese restaurant's opening was accompanied by the opening of Barebottle Brewing Company July 20.

Other restaurants that have opened at Springline include Andytown Coffee Roasters, tapas bar Canteen and grab-and-go cafe Proper Food. There are still four other eateries debuting later this year including Robin, which offers high-end omakase and is slated to open

in early August; Italian restaurant Che Fico, which plans to open in late summer along with Italian market Il Mercato di Che Fico; and contemporary Mexican restaurant Mírame. ■

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Burma Love, 1302 El Camino Real, Menlo Park; 650-250-5660; Instagram: @burmalove. Current hours are 4-9 p.m. Sunday through Thursday and 4-9:30 p.m. Friday and Saturday, with plans to offer lunch and happy hour.

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