Thousands attend Redwood City’s Día de los Muertos celebration

Courthouse Square becomes a gathering place for honoring the dead

By Nicholas Mazzoni

Thousands of people gathered in Redwood City’s Courthouse Square Sunday, Nov. 5, to celebrate Día de los Muertos, a Mexican cultural event that honors and celebrates the lives of people who have died. This year marks the 13th citywide celebration of Día de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, hosted by Casa Circulo Cultural, a nonprofit organization dedicated to creating cultural Latino events in the Bay Area.

Casa Circulo Cultural Founder and organizer for the Día de los Muertos celebration Verónica Escámez said she wanted to create a space for the community to celebrate the Mexican holiday. She described the celebration as a deeply personal tribute to the dead, reflecting on their lives and memories.

“We are happy because they left us their memories. Everything that comes with them is still with us, so that is why we celebrate Día de los Muertos,” Escámez said.

The free celebration spanned three blocks around the Courthouse Square. Mexican Artist Fernando Escartiz created the visual designs for the event and built around a dozen ceremonial altars on the street decorated with hundreds of marigold flowers and candles. The event centered around a stage on the square where live performers and musicians played throughout the night. Near the end of the night, multiple public officials spoke.

Each year, the nonprofit chooses a theme for the event. This year’s theme was dedicated to the Mayans, who lived in Guatemala and Southern Mexico. Escámez spent six weeks in Guatemala this summer learning about Mayan culture for the city’s event. She learned that Guatemalans create large barriletes, or kites, to fly over the cemeteries to honor the dead. The kites comprised seven layers of colored paper, which represent different moments in a person’s life and its roots date back to the Mayans, she said.

“The theme was notable for San Mateo County Supervisor Noelia Corzo, who is Guatemalan American. “Being that many of my ancestors, most of them, are in a different country, it’s sometimes difficult to feel as connected as you would be in those countries,” Corzo said. “For me, this event is really special because we have such a large immigrant community. It’s an opportunity for us to feel more connected to our ancestors and to remember the traditions of our home countries.”

During the Día de los Muertos festivities, participants had the opportunity to immerse themselves in cultural traditions with skull face-painting, exploring a vibrant marketplace featuring handcrafted ofrendas, enjoying diverse Latin American culinary offerings, and viewing a unique exhibit of festively decorated low-riders.

Attendees could be painted like a Catrín or Catrina — icons and prominent figures within Mexican culture associated with Día de los Muertos.

The Almanac launches annual Holiday Fund campaign with $300K goal

Annual charitable giving drive funds local nonprofits that serve families, children, individuals in need

By Almanac staff

The annual Almanac Holiday Fund campaign is getting underway this week with the aim of raising much-needed funds for local nonprofits that provide a safety net for families, children and adults in need on the Peninsula. Ten diverse and well-respected local nonprofits that deliver effective services will receive the funds raised this year.

A complete list of last year’s grantees and donors are on our website, Almanacnews.com/holiday_fund. Each year, community members step forward to contribute to the health and well-being of our entire community through the Holiday Fund,” said Bill Johnson, CEO of the Embarcadero Media Foundation. “As in years past, you can rest assured that 100% of your donation, large or small, will be directed to the local agencies for services.

Embarcadero and the Silicon Valley Community Foundation absorb all of the administrative costs.”

In addition, every contribution from the community will be doubled, thanks to matching grants from two additional Holiday Fund partners, the Packard and Hewlett foundations. Several family foundations and major donors also contribute matching funds anonymously.

The Menlo Park Rotary Foundation is a major Almanac Holiday Fund donor. This year, the Almanac’s goal is to raise $300,000. Last year, the Holiday Fund exceeded expectations, bringing in $310,000.

“Thank you in advance for joining this community campaign once again and helping to make it another record-breaking year,” Johnson said.

The Holiday Fund runs through mid-January 2024. All donations are tax-deductible and may be made in one’s own name, in honor or memory of a friend, relative or organization, or anonymously. For more information, go to embarderomediafoundation.org/holiday-fund.
Dear Friends and Neighbors,

**Who is overlooked right here in our own community?**

We are living through extraordinary and uncertain times with many worthy concerns vying for your attention and support. One that is often overlooked and neglected: *The well-being of our senior adults and their essential daily needs*, even right here in our own community. They are your parents, grandparents, neighbors, and friends—the ones who have contributed so much to the communities we enjoy today. Where would we be without them?

**The growing challenges of aging intensify during the holiday season**

We hope you enjoy a wonderful holiday season with your family and friends. For many local seniors this will not be so. Older adults on fixed incomes are disproportionately vulnerable to inflation and struggling to stay afloat with rising costs—running out of funds for food each week and facing impossible choices now between paying for food, medications, transportation, or other critical needs. Senior hunger, widespread loneliness, and social isolation now reach more deeply into every corner of our diverse community putting more seniors at risk.

Now in our 76th year, PVI is here with meaningful programs for critical needs like these, enabling seniors to age in place with essential services that also help to reduce the use of costly health care services. And we cannot do it without you.

**Your generous impact matters!**

We live in a community that counts on each other and our most vulnerable are looking to you. Because you care, PVI can freshly prepare and home deliver over 176,000 life-changing nutritious meals annually to seniors in need; re-open our Café for nominal cost weekday lunches; offer therapeutic care to those with Alzheimer’s and Aging Life Solutions for overwhelmed family caregivers; provide daily meaningful activities and social connections for otherwise isolated older adults; and provide 10,500 essential transportation rides for daily needs. PVI’s fast-growing weekly “Got Groceries” program is providing over 450 seniors per month with a vital weekly lifetime of over 6,000 pounds of protein, dairy, fresh produce, and pantry staples. Please take a moment to visit 1pvi.org to learn more about those whose lives are changed because you care.

**Join us as we transform aging and reach more seniors in need**

PVI is changing the way seniors are cared for and treated as respected and vital members in our local communities. Together we can fill empty plates with nutritious food and provide Alzheimer’s and caregiver support, stimulating wellness activities, and on-demand transportation to your neighbors who need us most. Help us protect our local seniors and families and create a future where no senior in our community is isolated or hungry. We are inspired by the community support that can make this possible.

**Yes, I want to make a difference today:** Your special year-end gift of an amount that is right for you**’s** means everything to the thousands of local families relying on us for their daily health and well-being. Please help us close our current Meals on Wheels waitlist and Got Groceries gap this holiday season. You may give securely online at www.1pvi.org/donate or by scanning the QR code. Give this message to friends who share your passion to help extend senior health and independence. We are so grateful for your support.

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* $500 funds one month of PVI Meals on Wheels for two at-risk seniors; or a fitness membership for one year; or helps fund Aging Life Solutions; $700 funds one week of Adult Day Services; $2,500 funds an iPad and training for a senior; or Ride PVI transportation services for one month for five seniors.

With hope and gratitude,

Peter Olson  
Chief Executive Officer

Georgie Gleim  
Board President

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For over 75 years, Peninsula Volunteers, Inc. has enabled seniors to age in place, driven by a profound legacy of caring and our core values of respect, commitment, trust, dedication and compassion. Our four core programs serve over 8,000 households and address the most pressing issues of aging adults by offering critical services to sustain their daily physical, nutritional, emotional, and mental health while achieving dignity and independence in their lives. PVI’s programs include Nutrition Services/Meals on Wheels; Adult Day Services and Aging Life Solutions at Rosener House; Health, Wellness and Lifestyle Enrichment offerings at Little House; and RIDE PVI, our on-demand Transportation Service at Little House.
For more information and to arrange a private showing of this exceptional estate, please contact:

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Local News

Portola Valley school district celebrates completion of $49.5 million building projects

By Angela Swartz

Nearly five years after passing a $49.5 million bond measure to build new facilities and modernize existing ones in the Portola Valley Elementary School District (PVSD), the project is complete.

Community members celebrated the milestone with a ribbon-cutting ceremony and celebration on Oct. 20 at each of the district’s two schools, Ormondale and Corte Madera.

“As we embark on this exciting new chapter, I look forward to witnessing the positive impact these state-of-the-art spaces will have on the educational journey of our students,” Superintendent Roberta Zarea told attendees, according to a press release. “The opportunities that lie ahead are infinite, and I am confident that these facilities will empower our students to thrive academically and personally.”

District voters approved Measure Z in 2018 to fund the construction projects. Pictured, from left, are trustees Aimee Armsby, Gary Hanning, Amod Setlur and Bob Bauer, architect Brent McClure, former Superintendent Eric Hartwig, former trustees Brooke Day, Jeff Klugman, Karyn Bechtel and Anne Fazioli Khari.

Woodside district’s new fire marshal driven by a sense of service

Kimberly Giulacci is taking over for retiring Fire Marshal Don Bullard

By Neil Gonzales

Kimberly Giulacci took a few turns in her career path before finding her calling. But she never lost sight of the sense of service.

She worked in a veterinary hospital for a while before looking into nursing. Then she went to EMT school where most of the students were men going into the fire service.

“I started considering that’s something I could do,” she said. “I can handle everything that they would do on an engine and respond to calls.”

She enrolled at the Fire Academy at College of San Mateo, and this detour into the fire service ultimately brought her to what she feels is her purpose.

Giulacci, 45, is the new fire marshal for the Woodside Fire Protection District. She takes over for Fire Marshal Don Bullard, who is retiring next month after 35 years working for the district.

Although she traveled through various occupational fields, searching for a way to serve others or the community seemed to have guided Giulacci’s career decisions.

The fire service certainly offers that opportunity. “I found a passion for working with the community and working with people for something that I saw very valuable – life and safety,” said Giulacci, who lives in San Mateo with her husband, Eric, and their son, Gianni, 14, and daughter, Nica, 9.

“Where I am now in this point in my career, I feel like I have found a purpose,” said Giulacci, who has been working with Bullard the past several weeks during a transition period before she officially takes over Nov. 1.

Bullard sees his successor as having the skill set to help lead the district amid new challenges and fast-evolving changes in the industry and local community.

“When I started with the fire district in 1988, we had no Fire Prevention Division,” Bullard said. “The fire marshal, at that time, was the responsibility of one of our line battalion chiefs.”

Now on top of the district’s normal process to review plans for new construction, additions and remodels, he said, “modern technology has kept our Fire Prevention Division busy over the years with the installation of photovoltaic systems, energy-storage systems and back-up generators.”

The division will just get even busier, he said, because of the anticipated increase of residential units in Woodside and Portola Valley as part of the state’s requirement for local jurisdictions to expand housing.

With that backdrop, Bullard described Giulacci as bringing “a well-rounded, diverse background in fire prevention to the district. She has a background in all phases of fire prevention” with a dozen years of experience working in various roles for different fire agencies throughout San Mateo County.

He also noted that Giulacci will be the second female fire marshal for the Woodside district. Before Bullard became fire marshal, Denise Enea served in that role for more than 20 years. Another female fire marshal, Christine Reed from the Central County Fire Department, just retired in August.

It was at Central County where Giulacci got her

Swastika-like symbols at Woodside High School prompt investigation

By Sue Dremann

Two symbols that appeared to be swastikas were found on the Woodside High School campus on Wednesday, Nov. 1, prompting an investigation that included the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office, a letter from school Principal Karen Van Putten confirmed on Friday, Nov. 3.

The two symbols were drawn or scratched into the pavement, according to witnesses.

In a message to the Woodside school community, Van Putten said administrators were informed of “two drawings on our campus grounds that appeared to resemble a symbol of hate,” on Nov. 1.

“We contacted the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Department in order to investigate the matter and determine if our school was at risk of a potential threat.”

An investigation by school administrators and the sheriff’s office determined the school isn’t under a threat, she said. Instead, the school confirmed the drawings were not intended to be hate speech targeted at anyone or any group.

“Our mutual investigation was able to confirm that it was a spiritual symbol from Japanese Buddhism known as Manji popularized by anime. To make that determination, beyond interviews, we were able to view the anime/manga images used as the genesis of the drawings and were able to verify the testimony we received,” she said.

Van Putten didn’t say whether the person or persons involved faced any repercussions for their actions.

See FIRE MARSHAL, page 18

See SWASTIKA, page 16
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING
BY THE WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Public Hearing will be held for the Woodside Fire Protection District Board of Directors to consider enacting the following proposed ordinance:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT OF SAN MATEO COUNTY, CALIFORNIA ESTABLISHING A SCHEDULE OF FEES TO BE CHARGED BY THE FIRE DISTRICT

The proposed ordinance is also identified as Ordinance 2023-04.

All interested parties are invited to attend the Public Hearing and be heard on this matter. The Public Hearing will take place on November 28, 2023, at 7:00 PM at 808 Portola Road, Portola Valley, CA 94028. This meeting will be conducted in a hybrid format, and the public may also attend this meeting virtually. Details on participating by Zoom or other virtual format will be available on the published Notice No. 2023-04.

SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED ORDINANCE: The purpose of the ordinance is to establish fees, as defined in the California Constitution, that are no more than necessary to cover the reasonable costs of Fire District governmental activities, and that the manner in which those costs are allocated to a payor bear a fair or reasonable relationship to the payor’s burdens on, or benefits received from, the Fire District’s governmental activities. The fees established by the Ordinance are authorized pursuant to Health & Safety Code section 13916 and any other applicable provisions of California statutes and regulations.

All interested parties are encouraged and invited to submit written comments regarding the merits of the proposed ordinance prior to the hearing or participate in the public hearing. Reasonable accommodations will be made to individuals with disabilities. To submit comments electronically, please forward them to Kimberly Giuliacci, Fire Marshal at kgiuliacci@woodsidefire.org. To submit comments via U.S. Mail, please forward them to the Woodside Fire Protection District Fire Marshal to arrive no later than 5:00 p.m. one day prior to the meeting at the following address: 808 Portola Ave. #C, Portola Valley, CA 94028.

Please note that any challenge of the proposed action in court may be limited to addressing only those issues raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence submitted to the Fire Marshal at, or prior to, the public hearing.

The proposed Ordinance 2023-04 is available for review online at http://www.woodsidefire.org/prevention and will be available in the agenda packet for the November 28, 2023, meeting.

A certified copy of the proposed Ordinance 2023-04 is also available upon request by contacting the District Office, at (650) 851-1594, 808 Portola Rd. #C, Portola Valley, CA 94028.

The data indicating the amount of cost, or estimated cost, required to provide the service or the cost of enforcing any regulation for which the fees are charged, and the revenue sources anticipated to provide the service or the cost of enforcing any regulation, including general fund revenues, is available for public inspection at the District Office, 808 Portola Rd. #C, Portola Valley, CA 94028.

Run Dates: November 10 and November 17

CRIME BRIEFS

Three teens arrested with guns, cocaine and cash

Five firearms including an AR-15 rifle with a 60-round magazine, drugs packaged for sale, and $4,000 in cash were seized in the arrest of three teens following a shooting, East Palo Alto police said Friday, Nov. 3.

The teens, two who are age 15 and one who is 16, were arrested on Nov. 2 when police searched their residences, the department stated.

Images of the three were captured on surveillance video in connection with a shooting Oct. 13 in the 2300 block of Cooley Avenue, police said. No one was injured in the shooting.

The drugs included more than 22 ounces of cocaine, MDMA pills and Ecstasy, police said.

Anyone who has relevant information is asked to contact the East Palo Alto Police Department by anonymous text to epa@tipnow.org or 650-409-6792. An anonymous voicemail may be left at 650-409-6792.

— Bay City News Service

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Menlo Park Police Department sets $74,000 road safety grant

The Menlo Park Police Department received a grant for $74,000 to improve road safety improvements by September 2024.

The grant comes from the California Office of Traffic Safety and the money will go toward efforts to reduce the number of serious injuries and deaths on the road, including DUI checkpoints and patrols and enforcement operations focused on cell phone use while driving, speeding and stop sign violations.

Menlo Park’s most recent road safety data from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) is from 2020, when the city ranked sixth worst out of 91 similar-sized California cities in bicycling collisions where the cyclist was injured or killed, and the third worst for cyclists under age 15. The OTS reported that Menlo Park had a total of 88 crashes resulting in injury or death in 2020, the 13th highest among comparable cities.

— Cameron Rebosio

Forum on how to talk with kids about violence and war

The local nonprofit Parent Venture will host a talk on how to provide comfort and support around conversations with kids about violence and war.

The forum will be non-political, trauma-informed and compassionate and based on guidance from public health psychologist Jane McNagen, according to the organization.

Sign up at tinyurl.com/forumviolencewar.

Grab coffee with the new town manager

Portola Valley’s new town manager, Sharif Etman, will be meeting with residents for coffee on Dec. 5 from 3 to 4 p.m. at the Town Center Heritage Room (next to the library), 765 Portola Road.

The town appointed Etman to the role in August. He filled the vacancy left by longtime town manager Jeremy Dennis.

— Angela Swartz

Books and toys for low-income families

Low-income households in San Mateo County can look forward to receiving toys and books during the holidays, according to county officials.

Families on time-limited programs and served by the Housing Authority of the County of San Mateo are invited to complete a survey listing at least three appropriate gift choices for each child living in their home, county officials said in a statement Monday.

The child will receive at least one gift from their wish list. The deadline for the survey is Nov. 17.

Toys will be distributed by HACSM staff during the second half of December, according to county officials.

“Every year, all of us at the Housing Authority look forward to this tangible reminder that we provide more than rental assistance — first and foremost, we are here to support families,” HACSM coordinator Victoria Grant-Velgado said in a statement.

According to county officials, the effort is a joint project between HACSM, the County Human Services Agency and the Peninsula Library System.

— Bay City News Service
Hate crime investigation into hit-and-run that injured Arab Muslim student at Stanford

Student reports that driver made eye contact, accelerated and shouted abusive comment

By Wendy Medina/ Bay City News Service

An Arab Muslim student at Stanford University was targeted by an allegedly pro-Israel student on Friday, Nov. 3, in what is being investigated as a potential hate crime. Shortly before 9 p.m., the Arab student was crossing the street near the student residences at Campus Drive and Ayrshire Farm Lane when he was hit by a car and the driver sped off while yelling, “F— you and your people.”

Officials reported that the student sustained non-life-threatening injuries and is currently still hospitalized.

According to a statement from the student after the incident, the driver made eye contact with him before accelerating.

“As soon as he hit me, as my body was turning around, the driver yelled, ‘F— you and your people,’” the student said.

Upon locking eyes, the victim identified the individual as someone who has taken to filming pro-Palestinian activists on campus, a newly widespread tactic employed to intimidate and dox students.

The suspect is described as a white male in his mid-20s, with short blond, brown hair, round framed eyeglasses and a short beard.

The car is described as a black Toyota 4Runner, model year 2015 or newer, with an exposed tire mounted to the rear center and a Toyota logo in the center of the wheel. The white California license plate had the letters M and J, with M possibly being the first letter and J in the middle, the student told police.

University police were alerted of the hit-and-run shortly after, but did not issue a campus-wide alert immediately upon knowing of injuries and is currently investigating the hit-and-run as a potential hate crime.

“The university must deploy its resources to determine who is complicit in the white supremacist violence Arab and Muslim students have faced on campus. To the university administration, we say unequivocally: shame on you. Your silence is enabling violent Islamophobic and anti-Arab hate crimes on our campus and the genocide of the Palestinian people.”

The hit-and-run comes amid mounting criticism of the university’s refusal to address an ongoing sit-in protest by student activists who demand the school denounce Israel’s invasion of Gaza, and provide additional support to Palestinian students.

The students have been camping out in Stanford’s White Plaza since Oct. 20 and have no plans of stopping. Asking the demands are for the university to offer counseling and academic accommodations for students impacted by the genocide in Palestine, along with access to free legal aid for those experiencing harassment.

According to the Department of Public Safety, “Stanford is continuing to work to provide a safe and secure campus environment in the context of heightened tensions related to the events in Israel and Gaza. The campus is currently investigating the hit-and-run as a potential hate crime.”

Anyone with information is encouraged to contact CHP at 650-779-2700 or Stanford public safety at 650-329-2413.

Tentative agreement gives Sequoia Union teachers nearly 8% pay raise

By Neil Gonzales

Teachers and other certified workers in the Sequoia Union High School District would see their eight-year wage raise of nearly 8% for the current academic year, according to a tentative agreement reached between their union and employer.

“It is a huge achievement to have come to this agreement,” Sequoia District Teachers Association (SDTA) President Edith Salvatore said in an email to this publication Wednesday, Nov. 1. “This is the largest salary increase I can remember in my 27 years in this district, and I am proud that our team and the district were able to work together to bring it to our members.”

After months of bristly negotiations and teacher rallies at school board meetings, SDTA and the district have agreed to a new two-year contract featuring a 7.75% raise for 2023-24. Talks are to resume at a later date about an increase for 2024-25.

The union planned to tell its 605 members about the agreement, Salvatore said. The members — classroom teachers, counselors, librarians and other non-management, certificated employees in the district — were scheduled to vote this week on whether to ratify the settlement.

District board President Rich Ginn praised both sides’ efforts in finding a resolution. “The board wants to thank the negotiations team of the students and the district for achieving this fair settlement,” he said in an email.

In a report to its members, the union credited their advocacy for getting the district to reallocate more than $10 million in its budget to make room for the 7.75% increase.

Union members showed up in large numbers to board meetings in person and via Zoom, urging district leaders to bring up pay in line with the Bay Area’s high cost of living.

In its report, the union pointed out that it decided to go with the raise this year only while continuing negotiations later for the 2024-25 pay to “ensure that we were able to capitalize on the unprecedented surplus in the district’s budget.”

Addressing the board during its Oct. 11 meeting, longtime Menlo-Atherton High School teacher Patrick Roisen condemned that “the district has a $40 million excess.”

He also argued that property tax revenue has climbed on average about 6% annually for the past decade.

This publication could not immediately confirm those numbers with the district.

“While we understand that it is preferable to know what your salary will be before the next school year begins,” the union in its report said to members, “the district is generally hesitant to make large commitments until they know for sure what their property tax income will be for the year, so while we hope we can have answers for next year by June, that will depend on how negotiations go.”

But Salvatore is confident about the district’s revenue growth.

“We are optimistic that revenues will continue to increase for the district and that we will have productive conversations when we reconvene to discuss next year,” she said. “We don’t have a timeline for that yet but anticipate we will begin talking in early to mid-spring. We want to have enough time to come to a settlement before the end of the school year, if possible, but also to give our committees enough time to meet and make recommendations.”

In regards to how much of an increase the union could seek for 2024-25, she said, it will review Sequoia Union’s budget in the months ahead and determine what we think is a fair amount that allows the district to continue doing its vital work while giving our members an opportunity to thrive in this area.”

Previously, SDTA sought an 8% salary bump for this current year and 7% for 2024-25. The district had countered with 4.75% and 2.5%, respectively, in early to mid-spring. We want to have enough time to come to a settlement before the end of the school year, if possible, but also to give our committees enough time to meet and make recommendations.”

In regards to how much of an increase the union could seek for 2024-25, she said, it will review Sequoia Union’s budget in the months ahead and determine what we think is a fair amount that allows the district to continue doing its vital work while giving our members an opportunity to thrive in this area.”

Previously, SDTA sought an 8% salary bump for this current year and 7% for 2024-25. The district had countered with 4.75% and 2.5%, respectively,

REAL ESTATE Q&A
by Monica Corman

It’s Almost Always Price

Dear Monica: My property has been on the market for two months and we haven’t had an offer yet. Should we lower the price or simply wait? Justin G.

Dear Justin: Experience has shown that regardless of factors affecting the real estate market, price is the number one reason that properties don’t sell. If the property itself is attractive and in generally good condition, but still hasn’t had an offer, the price is probably the reason why.

At this time of year as the days are shorter and the Fall market is ending, we are seeing many price reductions. Buyers who remain active in the market, can find what they are looking for, at a good price.

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

650.245.1845 COMPASS

Lehua Greenman

“Tall gave some, some gave all. Gone but not forgotten. Thank you to our Heroes and She-Roes! In honor of Veterans Day.”
Contributions to the Holiday Fund go directly to programs that benefit Peninsula residents. Last year, Almanac readers and foundations contributed $310,000 from more than 170 donors for the 10 agencies that feed the hungry, house the homeless and provide numerous other services to those in need.

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

Please consider donating online, which enables your gift to be processed immediately. The secure website is: almanacnews.com/holiday_fund

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We’ve got this.
After heated debate, Sequoia district trustees to meet about honors courses on Nov. 15

By Sue Dremann

The Sequoia Union High School District Board of Trustees debated heatedly over the timing of a discussion about contentious curricula changes for the next academic year after the topic failed to materialize on the agenda for more than a month.

The board first met on Sept. 20 to receive a district report regarding removing honors classes in the ninth grade and merging students into a class that would foster diverse learning and enhance college readiness among all students, but after an emotional seven-hour long meeting, the Zoom broadcast shut off abruptly, and the trustees were not able to weigh in.

District Superintendent Crystal Leach said during the Oct. 11 board meeting that the report was important in helping them determine what changes for the next academic year after discussion about contentious curricula being added to the Nov. 15 meeting agenda.

Carrie Du Bois, Amy Koo and Shawneece Nori were strongly opposed.

In the statement, he said he’d spoken to families whose parents or older children had attended Sequoia district schools and had decided to send younger children to private schools due to recent years’ reduction in course options. “These families were supporters of our schools and now we have lost their support,” he said.

“If our district does not offer more

End of daylight saving time correlated with car crashes, heart attacks

Experts say the time change doesn’t have any positive impact on our health

By Isha Trivedi

This Sunday, Nov. 5, marked the end of daylight saving time. But what does that actually mean, and why are we still changing our clocks twice a year?

On the second Sunday of every March, we set our clocks one hour ahead and lose one hour of sleep — entering daylight saving time, where our days feel longer. But on the first Sunday of every November, we set our clocks one hour behind and daylight saving time ends.

The legislation behind daylight saving time

While large swaths of North America still abide by the twice-per-year time change, a recent effort to eliminate the bi-annual changes has sparked conversation about the benefits and disadvantages of this disruption to our routines.

California voters first approved an initiative to establish daylight saving time back in 1949. While every state except Hawaii and Arizona currently abide by daylight saving time, in 2018 former Assemblymember Kansen Chu, D-San Jose introduced a bill that would put California in permanent daylight saving time, meaning the sun would rise consistently later and set consistently later. But despite widespread support from Californians, the legislation hasn’t gotten the support it needs from federal lawmakers to actually go into effect.

The Sunshine Protection Act also attempted in 2018 to make daylight saving time permanent, and the Senate even approved the bill in March 2022 with plans to implement it this month. But the legislation has since lost steam and fizzled in the House.

The health impacts of daylight saving time

Rafael Pelayo, a sleep specialist with the Stanford Sleep Medicine Center, said daylight saving time actually has no health benefits, as the sudden addition or elimination of an hour from our days typically leads to an increase in car accidents and heart attacks every year.

“We’re really a sleep-deprived country to begin with, so you’re robbing an hour of sleep from people who don’t have that hour to spare,” he told this publication.
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155 Willowbrook Drive, Portola Valley
Bedrooms: 3 | Bathrooms: 3.5 | Living: 3,090 sq ft | Lot: 1.117 acres
Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU): 1 Bathroom & Kitchenette
List Price: $6,198,000

Open house this weekend: 1–4pm, Saturday 11/11 & Sunday 11/12

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We’ve got this.
Menlo Park Planning Commission recommends boosting apartment density as high as 150 units per acre

City Council to weigh in at Nov. 14 meeting

By Cameron Rebosio

R elief was tangible as the Menlo Park Planning Commission on Monday, Nov. 6, concluded its year of zoning conversations, recommending that the City Council raise density in apartment districts to a maximum of 150 units per acre.

Zoning changes are required to demonstrate that the city is removing barriers to developing affordable housing by allowing denser housing in more parts of the city. Menlo Park has yet to get its housing element approved. City officials are working on a fourth round of revisions to the state-mandated plan after it was sent back in August. Since the housing element was not certified by the Jan. 31 deadline earlier this year, the city now has until Jan. 31, 2024 to adopt the zoning changes. If the city does not meet the rezoning deadline, its housing element risks being decertified even if state has approved it.

“Tonight, we’re at the end of a very long process,” Commissioner Andrew Erich said. “I think there’s been a lot of great work done and the most important thing that we can do is provide a strong recommendation to City Council in hopes that the City Council can move swiftly — to approve this, and we end up with a compliant housing element.”

One of the major changes is the upzoning in Menlo Park’s R-3 apartment districts, which includes areas of downtown Menlo Park, to as much as 30 units per acre. New housing overlays, which act as a density bonus, R-3 zoned properties could allow up to 150 units per acre.

The Planning Commission also focused on mixed-use zoning, allowing residential and retail to coexist. The mixed-use zones would prioritize retail, restaurants and multifamily housing.

The City Council is set to review the recommended zoning changes at its Nov. 14 meeting. Story by Cameron Rebosio at crebosio@almanacnews.com.

Menlo Park council targets school zones for traffic safety measures

By Cameron Rebosio

F acing grim collision data from the state, the Menlo Park City Council focused on school zone safety and “high- conflict areas” in its first conversation about the Vision Zero Action Plan at a Nov. 7 meeting.

The Vision Zero plan outlines policy, analysis and street safety regulations with the goal of eliminating collision-related fatalities and reducing by half the number of non-fatal collisions by 2030.

On average, six people are killed or severely injured in collisions in Menlo Park each year, and an additional 124 people are injured, according to a report from city staff. Staff identified the city’s “high-collision corridors,” which account for 20% of roadways, but see 83% of all collisions and 93% of collisions resulting in death or serious injury. The list includes El Camino Real, Bayfront Expressway, Willow Road, Ravenswood Avenue and Middle Avenue.

Crash data from the state paints an even bleaker picture of Menlo Park streets. The most recent crash data from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS), from 2020, ranks Menlo Park the sixth worst out of 91 similar-sized California cities when it comes to collisions where a bicyclist was injured or killed, and the third worst for cyclists under age 15. The OTS reported that Menlo Park had a total of 88 crashes resulting in injury or death in 2020, the 13th highest among comparable cities.

Matthew Rascoff, co-chair of the Safe Routes to Schools Committee at Oak Knoll School, called the council’s attention to OTS data from 2019, which showed 176 people killed or injured in collisions for so many areas.

Rascoff said that number is the equivalent of 1 in every 200 Menlo Park residents, as the city has a population of about 35,000. He recommended council members for their work on the controversial Middle Avenue pilot project to remove parking spaces and create buffered bike lanes to enhance safety for bicyclists.

“I know how difficult some of these decisions have been for the City Council, especially on removing parking,” Rascoff said. “I think we’ve got some real momentum, the Middle Avenue Project to me has been a tremendous success, and it took some political courage from this council.”

Staff said their Vision Zero plan accounts for human error, because mistakes shouldn’t have to result in injury or death. Assistant Public Works Director Hugh Louch said that staff focused on targeting areas that see the highest risk for collisions and installing the lowest-cost safety improvements throughout the city. Some quick-build improvements could look like the intersection of Menlo Avenue and University Drive, where pilot project eliminated a right-turn lane to improve crosswalk safety. That T-intersection, by Draeger’s market, was the site of about a quarter of total pedestrian-involved collisions in Menlo Park in 2022.

Council member Betsy Nash recommended a focus on school zones, a sentiment echoed by Vice Mayor Cecilia Taylor, who suggested school speed zones become a near-term priority. Taylor also recommended adding crossing guards not only in school zones but also for seniors. Several Menlo Park schools are located along these high-collision corridors, as are bike routes used by children.

“A lot of times, these high-collision corridors, they don’t really have a champion,” Mayor Jen Wolosin said. “The fact that they account for so much of the collisions and fatalities is critical to get this work done.”

Wolosin called for protected bike lanes as well for student safety, saying that one weak link could make a chain of safe bike routes fall apart. If there is one street that can’t safely be crossed, then that can no longer be considered a safe route.

The City Council is set to allocate funding for Vision Zero projects during its annual budget discussions. Story by Cameron Rebosio at crebosio@almanacnews.com.

Defendant in horrific San Carlos samurai sword slaying refuses to come to court

Karina Castro, the mother of accused killer’s baby, was slain in September 2022

By Nicholas Mazzoni

I n the case of the San Carlos man charged with killing the mother of his infant child using a samurai sword, prosecutors are tasked not with proving he committed the act but rather with establishing his sanity at the time of the crime.

Opening statements began Tuesday, Nov. 7, in the trial of Jose Rafael Solano Landaeta, 33, of Hayward, who is accused of killing Karina Castro, 27, the mother of his 18-month-old child, after an alleged violent argument ensued between the two in front of her San Carlos apartment on Sept. 8, 2022.

Landaeta previously pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity. While his attorney, Robert Cummings, spoke about mental illness, paranoia, and self-defense during his opening comments in San Mateo County Superior Court, Prosecutor Joshua Stauffer opened his statement with a definition for the word vengeance.

“She (is) looking to get smoked, blood,” said Stauffer, who was reading excerpts from an alleged transcript between Landaeta and a friend in an Instagram direct message hours before the alleged crime. “The defendant, Mr. Jose Solano Landaeta, used this sword in the act of vengeance against the victim, in this case, Karina Castro.”

On Monday, Nov. 6, Landaeta appeared in court while the jury selection process was finalized. Wearing a black suit and white turtleneck, he stood with his hands crossed at his waist, appearing poised and facing the potential jurors as they walked into the room after a recess. At one point, Judge Lisa Novak misspoke during the hearing; she made a joke, and Landaeta cracked a smile, along with the rest of the room.

Yet on Tuesday, Landaeta remained in his cell, refusing to come to court. It marks the first day of trial, to which he faces 26 years to life in prison for murder. San Mateo County District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe said the last time someone didn’t come to trial for a murder case in the county was in the late 1980s, but that was for a death row sentencing.

“I have never seen in a murder trial in this county a defendant failed to come to court for the trial on whether he committed the crime,” Wagstaffe said.

On the day Landaeta is alleged to have killed Castro, Stauffer said three witnesses were walking along Laurel Street shortly before noon when they approached a couple arguing on the sidewalk. The witnesses crossed the street to avoid the argument. One of the witnesses reported hearing Castro ask Landaeta if he was going to hit her, and then she pushed him. Shortly after, Stauffer said the witness would tell the jury that Landaeta punched Castro with a closed fist. He grabbed an item from a nearby car and struck Castro in the arm so severely that her arm was nearly severed from her body, prosecutors told the jury.

Stauffer said witnesses saw Castro run behind a vehicle away from Landaeta. He said she left a trail of blood and blonde hair because Landaeta allegedly swung the sword at her head, chopping her hair as she ran away. When Castro got to the rear of the vehicle, witnesses said they saw Landaeta raise the item above his head, striking her many times around the neck and head. Landaeta allegedly put the sword back in the vehicle and drove away. One witness toward Castro attempted to help her but found that she was dead, and then she pushed him. Shortly after, Stauffer said the witness remembered a police officer two blocks away during their walk...
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261OrchardAve.com

195 N CALIFORNIA AVENUE
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195NCaliforniaAve.com

1032 PILINUT COURT
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440SanDomingo.com

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

881 LYTTON AVENUE
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$2,798,000 | 3 Bd | 2.5 Bth
881LyttoneAve.com

13850 PASEO DEL ROBLE DR
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MENLO PARK
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Estate Sale

1443 PITMAN AVENUE
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SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 12, 2023
10 AM - 1 PM

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中文諮詢請聯繫Audrey Sun, DRE #01933274 電話: 650.785.5822 | DELEONREALTY.COM | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
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A sought-after location in Sharon Heights sets the stage for this spacious 3-bedroom, multi-level home with nearly 2,200 square feet of living space. Bright, well-lit interiors enjoy an open and welcoming ambiance that greets you from the moment you step inside. A stunning atrium seamlessly connects each floor, while expansive windows will offer captivating views of the 10th fairway of the Sharon Heights golf course. The thoughtfully designed floorplan provides expansive gathering areas, a fireplace, an eat-in kitchen, and comfortable bedrooms highlighted by the primary suite with a private balcony overlooking the golf course. Plus, this home also includes a large backyard deck, a 2-car garage, and access to the community pool. This peaceful location is just moments to everything Sharon Heights has to offer, and offers convenient access to downtown Menlo Park, Interstate 280, and acclaimed Las Lomitas schools (buyer to verify eligibility).

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Phyllis Elaine Cima
April 14, 1928 – September 28, 2023

Phyllis Cima, known by her friends and family as a bastion of taste, beauty and elegance during her life, passed away peacefully from complications of Alzheimer’s disease at the age of 95. A consummate host, Phyllis invited family and acquaintances from her extensive world travels, into a home that was curated under her exacting eye.

During her early life on a farm in Murray, Iowa, Phyllis learned all that was required for success there: feeding the chickens, canning fruit, sewing and baking. Her parents, Elnora and Charlie Thurman, had a large extended network of family close by and Phyllis saw the importance of family connections, whether it was at a barn raising or a simple potluck celebration. Starting school she skipped a grade – kindergarten – so was actually a year younger than all of her classmates but excelled. Upon high school graduation she moved to the “big city” of Des Moines to work in the banking industry. She met her love and life partner, Norman, through family and church friends and they married in 1950. Moving to St. Louis where they bought their first house, their daughter Joyce was born, and during a 6-month TDY to Oranod, CA, their son Alan was born. Loving the weather in California, Phyllis and Norm moved to Orange County and then to the Bay Area where they lived in the same house for over 60 years. She concentrated on raising her family, advancing Norm’s business career, and making the world a more beautiful place.

Discovering a love of travel early in their marriage, Phyllis and Norm saw the world together, allowing her to have a hands-on appreciation for the art of other cultures. With Norm’s business taking him to Japan frequently, Phyllis discovered Ikebana, the ancient Japanese art of flower arranging. Appealing both to her green thumb and precise nature, it was the perfect way to spend her time while Norm was working. She served as Ikebana International San Francisco Bay Area chapter president, organized many flower exhibitions at the Hall of Flowers in Golden Gate Park and became an expert teacher to others in the Ikebana style school. Like a poem or painting made with flowers, Ikenobo expresses both the beauty of flowers and the beauty of longing in our own hearts. Visiting her home oneforming, picking up and putting things in their right places, moving

SWASTIKA
continued from page 5
defacing the school.
Campus staff could be seen painting over the symbols on Friday, but not everyone felt the matter was settled.

At least one member of the school community told this news publication via text they were deeply upset by the symbols and questioned the explanation. “What a crock of!” the community member said. The school knows “full well how painful it is for Jewish students and staff to see but then goes and has it painted over if it’s only anime?”

The person said they were heartbroken after learning that another parent told their child to stop wearing a Star of David necklace to school.

Van Putten said she understood that some community members might not accept the explanation.

“I know that the idea of hate speech on our campus is heartbreaking for all of us, I, too, was saddened by the idea that hate speech may have occurred on our campus, as we do not tolerate any hateful speech or actions on our campus,” she said.

“I recognize that this explanation may not feel like enough for some in our community. This is an isolated incident that we have investigated with sensitivity and seriousness, and we are committed to educating all our students. When you have a concern, our staff and I will listen and problem-solve with you because your safety, well-being, and feeling of being a part of our community are top priorities at Woodside High School.”

The Sequoia Union High School District Superintendent Crystal Leach didn’t return requests for comment, nor did most members of the Board of Trustees as of Nov. 3. Trustee Carrie Du Bois said that all press inquiries would be handled by President Richard Ginn.

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

Contributed photo

Two symbols that appeared to be swastikas were found on the Woodside High School campus on Wednesday, Nov. 1.

“I know that the idea of hate speech on our campus is heartbreaking for all of us, I, too, was saddened by the idea that hate speech may have occurred on our campus, as we do not tolerate any hateful speech or actions on our campus,” she said.

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Email Staff Writer Sue Dremann at sdremann@paweekly.com.
High-end materials, exceptional craftsmanship, and a sought-after address in Sharon Heights are just a few of the countless standout features belonging to this impeccable home, newly constructed in 2023 and set on nearly a third of an acre. Harmonious design permeates more than 4,000 square feet of living space that has been tailored to meet the needs of a modern lifestyle. Glide through the open, light-filled floorplan brimming with luxurious finishes and offering spacious gathering areas, a gourmet kitchen, convenient office space, and 5 inviting en suite bedrooms. Folding La Cantina doors provide a seamless transition to the expansive backyard to enjoy a true California indoor/outdoor lifestyle. And an incredible location puts you close to everything the area has to offer: a gorgeous country club, scenic parks, great shopping and dining options, and convenience to downtown Menlo Park, Sand Hill Road, and top-ranked schools (buyer to verify eligibility). In one of Silicon Valley’s most desirable neighborhoods, this brand-new home stands as an exceptional option for upscale living.

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professional start in the fire service, as a fire-prevention intern. Then she worked as a part-time inspector serving with the Millbrae and San Bruno fire departments. After Central County absorbed the Millbrae fire departments, she became a full-time fire-prevention specialist.

After a few years with Central County, she was hired by the Menlo Park Fire Protection District as a fire inspector. She eventually made fire inspector 2 there.

When the Woodside district was hiring for a fire inspector 2, she said, “I was ready to make a change to a different type of community and challenges because they’re a wildland-urban interface. It’s a community that’s very different from anything I’ve ever done before, and I just felt because of the goals that I had to one day be a fire marshal I wanted to be very well-rounded and be familiar with every aspect of fire prevention.”

So she joined Woodside in January, developing and deepening her knowledge of wildfire prevention. Several months later, she tested for the post being left by Bullard and was promoted.

“Becoming fire marshal is something Giuliacci aimed to do for a long time. ‘Every opportunity I’ve had — every training, every class I’ve taken — was always with the goal of fulfilling this role one day,’ she said, ‘and now after all these years, it’s exciting to know I’ve accomplished that, but I still have a long ahead of me.’

She agreed with Bullard that among the key challenges moving forward is the prospect of rapid residential growth due to the state’s housing mandates. That growth translates to an increase in fire-related calls.

“Anytime there are more people, there are more emergencies and there are more car accidents and there’s more of everything,” Giuliacci said.

That’s why it’s critical to beef up fire personnel and access funding, she said. “We can support the community more with having inspectors out in the field that can fight every single parcel and every single house.”

Although the area that the district covers is affluent, she said, it’s still vital to pursue grants and other funds to help residents prevent or prepare for fire disasters.

“Just because it’s more of an affluent community doesn’t necessarily mean that everybody has the means or the resources to be able to do what needs to be done,” she said. The district has been working on strengthening local fire codes and helping forge an evacuation plan in the event of large-scale emergencies such as the deadly wildfires up north the past few years or just recently in Maui.

Spreading public education about fire prevention is also a particularly important piece of strategy given that the Woodside and Portola Valley area is a high-vegetation zone during a time of increased wildfire catastrophes statewide.

“It’s basically raising awareness of where we are and what we’re in and the vegetation that surrounds us,” Giuliacci said.

“We have to create fuel breaks or create our defensible space and cut down everything that’s dry and dead,” she added. “It’s such a beautiful community, but with that beauty comes the responsibility to also manage it.”

Email Contributing Writer Neil Gonzales at ngonzales92@yahoo.com.

Construction of the new facilities at the K-3 Ormondale School was completed early this year, according to the press release. There’s a new STEAM (science, technology, engineering, art and music) lab and sensory garden where students take “Garden Thyme” classes. Students take woodworking classes in the new art room on Wednesdays and Fridays, according to a district board staff report.

Corte Madera School’s new middle school opened this April. Construction of the new fourth and fifth grade building was completed in August. Updates include a new amphitheater and an outdoor classroom.

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

Local residents who have died recently include:

Dr. John Borghi, 86, a resident of Los Altos who was a psychologist and forensic examiner for the Superior Court of California, die-hard fan of the 49ers, Giants and Sharks and an opera aficionado and lover of fine foods who possessed a wicked sense of humor, on Oct. 18.

Donald Max Garz, 84, a former Palo Alto resident who worked in construction, as an ABS technician, and retired from AT&T as an engineering supervisor, who took special pride in his cabinet making, enjoyed ocean fishing and traveling, and hosted special occasions for family and friends, on Oct. 22.

Bailey L. Merman, 61, a former Palo Alto resident and the adopted child of Marion and Harry Lewenstein, who built a landscape design business with husband Marc Merman, and who was a life-long artist known for, among other works, complex Celtic murals, on Oct. 12.

To read the full obituaries, leave remembrances and post photos, go to Lasting Memories at Almanacnews.com/Obituaries.
Ginn said.

The trustees might consider referring to the spring start of daylight saving time. In fact, the California Department of Fish and Wildlife issued a bulletin Friday, Nov. 3, encouraging drivers to exercise caution when driving on state roads and highways after the time changes this past weekend, given the annual spike in vehicle and wildlife collisions associated with it every November.

“... As drivers adjust to less daylight during the evening commute during the first week of November, please understand this is also the time of year that deer, elk, bears and other animals are typically on the move for migration, mating or foraging,” the bulletin reads.

Pelayo said in the face of the obvious negative health impacts of daylight saving time, it’s largely those in the commerce industry who support keeping it — those who benefit financially from consumers having more time in their days to spend money on optional expenses.

“People think we’ll go shopping more, spend more time in retail if when they get out of work there’s more light,” he said.

He said even the Sunshine Protection Act would have negative health impacts because it would put us in constant daylight saving time with darker mornings. An earlier attempt to do so in the 1970s led to an increase in children dying in car crashes while waiting for school buses in the dark, he said.

“The American Academy of Sleep Medicine, the California Sleep Society and other health organizations propose that we just stay in permanent standard time, or standard real time, which makes biological sense,” he said.

Pelayo said Californians should keep in mind that young children and pets won’t be aware of the time change, and we should keep an extra eye on them this time of year.

“So even though the clock is changing, your animals are still going to want to get walked at the same time and will be active at the same time as before,” he said.

HONORS COURSES

The Almanac News

November 10, 2023

THE ART OF BATHROOM RENOVATION: ENHANCING FUNCTIONALITY AND STYLE.

Join us in our new home in Mountain View for our complimentary workshop hosted by Sara, Senior Designer, CID, AKBD at Harrell Design + Build. Refreshments will be served. Saturday, November 18 from 11am-12pm. 2284 Old Middlefield Way, Mountain View. IT’S TIME TO RENEW.

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SERIES /
RESOLUTION NO. 2393 (2023)
RESOLUTION OF INTENTION TO ANNEX CERTAIN TERRITORY TO THE WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT ON-SITE WASTEWATER DISPOSAL ZONE

Lands of Michael William Poutre and Janeen Michelle Poutre, as Trustees of the Poutre Living Trust dated November 11, 2021

The District Board of West Bay Sanitary District finds and determines as follows:

A. This Resolution of Intention is adopted pursuant to the District’s “Zone Master Annexation Resolution” (“ZOMAR”), which was adopted by the District Board August 12, 1996. The provisions of ZOMAR are incorporated by reference into this Resolution of Intention.

B. The District has received an application to annex a parcel of real property (the “Parcel”) to the District’s On-Site Wastewater Disposal Zone (the “Zone”). The Parcel is described in Exhibit “A” attached to this Resolution of Intention and the description contained in the Exhibits is incorporated by reference. The name and address of the applicants and the number, type, volume and location of on-site wastewater disposal systems which are proposed to operate on the parcels to be annexed are described in Exhibit “B” attached to this Resolution of Intention and the information contained in the Exhibit are incorporated by reference.

C. The applicants have demonstrated to the satisfaction of the District Board that the Parcel constitutes “real property” for the purposes of Section 2(b) of ZOMAR in that:

☐ All of the conditions described in Subsections i., ii., iii., iv. and v. of ZOMAR Section 2(b) are satisfied; or

☐ Other conditions exist which demonstrate that the Parcel will benefit directly or indirectly from the activities of the Zone. If applicable, those conditions are also set forth in Exhibit “B” and are incorporated by reference.

D. All of the conditions and requirements of ZOMAR Sections 2(a), 2(c), 2(d) and 2(e) have been fully satisfied.

In consideration of the foregoing findings and determinations, IT IS RESOLVED by the District Board as follows:

1. It is the intention of the District Board to annex the Parcel to the Zone pursuant to the provisions of ZOMAR and applicable provisions of law.

2. In conjunction with a meeting of the District Board to be duly and regularly called and conducted, the Board will conduct a Public Hearing for the purpose of considering all matters pertaining to this Resolution of Intention.

The time, date and place of the Public Hearing are:

Date: December 13, 2023
Time: 7:00 PM
Place: West Bay Sanitary District Offices
500 Laurel Street
Menlo Park, CA 94025
& via Zoom

At the Public Hearing, all interested persons will be heard.

1. This Resolution of Intention shall be published and copies shall be delivered to the persons and entities as specified in ZOMAR Section 2(e)(i).

2. A true copy of this Resolution of Intention shall promptly be filed for record in the office of the County Recorder of the County of San Mateo.

3. The General Manager shall cause the matters set forth in Sections 3 and 4 of this Resolution of Intention to be completed as directed.

Passed and adopted by the District Board of the West Bay Sanitary District at a regular meeting thereof held on the 11th day of October, 2023 by the following vote:

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Exhibit A

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Exhibit B

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ENGELMAN said. “I just want it to be visibly bothered and crying.

opening statements, they were all in and listened to the prosecution.

Castro’s relatives and friends sat in front of the prosecution.

Redwood City, Engman and her husband stopped taking his medication, according to evidence that Landaeta had spo-

However, Stauffer gave Novak a patent on the day of the alleged crime.

Leading up to the trial, Cummings said arguments between Castro and Landaeta boiled up to a point where Castro threatened to have Landaeta, his mother and his brother killed by her gangster friends. Landaeta was paranoid and worried about his family’s safety, causing him to act.

Landaeta, who has a history of mental illness, was apparently off his medications for days before he left his job in Berkeley and allegedly went home to Hayward, retrieved a samurai sword to protect himself and went to Castro’s home in San Carlos, where he acted in self-defense after Castro attempted to stab him with a pink knife, Cummings said.

Ultimately, Stauffer denied the motion for new competency proceedings.

During Tuesday’s trial in Redwood City, Engman and Castro’s relatives and friends sat in and listened to the prosecution. Shortly after the prosecutor’s opening statements, they were all visibly bothered and crying.

“I relive this every day,” Engman said. “I just want it to be over already.”

Twice, Stuard passed around photos of Castro’s body during Tuesday’s hearing, and multiple jury members were visibly both-

Engman, who said she was at her daughter’s residence minutes before the killing, dropping off groceries, said she wished those witnesses would have attempted to stop Landaeta.

She said Castro had only been home a few days after spending two weeks in a hotel because she was avoiding Landaeta, who had a restraining order to stay away from Castro. Stauffer said that about 20 minutes after the alleged crime, Landaeta returned to the scene with his mother and surrendered himself.

But Landaeta’s defense counsel painted a different picture of what happened inside Landaeta’s head on the day of the alleged crime.

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the holiday. They are adorned with flowers and brightly colored hats, and their faces are painted like calaveras or skulls.

There was a classic car area that featured around a dozen low-rider cars decorated in the spirit of the event. There were more than 70 retail vendors and a dozen vendors offering a variety of food, such as Tijuana-style hotdogs, empanadas, pupusas and tamales.

One of the retail vendors, Andrea Manjarrez Tamayo, created miniature ofrendas, or offerings. Traditional offerings are designed on a table and displayed during Día de los Muertos. The table had items that represented the person being honored as a way to celebrate their life, Manjarrez Tamayo said.

She had around 10 generic ofrendas for sale with various items on the table, equipped with a small frame for a picture of the honored person.

Manjarrez Tamayo started making small ofrenda ornaments as gifts for people mourning the loss of a loved one, and it became so popular, she decided to sell them. The ofrendas range in price from $25 to $35.

“We are celebrating somebody’s life,” Manjarrez Tamayo said.

While the day was made to celebrate, San Mateo County Sheriff Christina Corpus and Maria Sarasua, the Pacifica Police Department’s chief of police, partnered to create a ceremonial altar inside the San Mateo County History Museum for the five women who have died from domestic violence incidents since 2022.

Their names are: Grace Marie Kelly, 49, who was shot and killed in her Daly City garage; Yesenia Lopez-Hernandez, 41, stabbed to death in her Redwood City home, leaving two children, ages 17 and 5, without a mom; Claribel Estrella, 41, whose brutal stabbing in San Mateo was recorded and posted to Facebook by her alleged killer; Maria Romero-Molina, 30, strangled to death in South San Francisco; Frances Lucero shot and killed in Daly City in front of her two young children, ages 3 and 4.

The ofrenda is located in the San Mateo County History Museum historic courtroom on the second floor and will be on display until Friday, Nov. 10. It is decorated with personal items and pictures to honor their memories.

**AGREEMENT continued from page 7**

according to the union.

“I want to recognize the contributions of the teams that made the negotiations possible. The board and I are grateful for our dedicated educators and are pleased to have reached an agreement,” said Superintendent Crystal Leach.

Salvatore said she appreciated Leach in particular for her role in helping close the gap for this year.

“We are especially grateful to our superintendent, who has only recently found a new assistant superintendent of administrative services/CBO to fill her old shoes and who was instrumental in looking at the budget and finding the money to make this possible,” Salvatore said.

The tentative agreement also covers deals pertaining to work hours, transfers, health and welfare benefits, stipends and other labor issues.
The Google Visitor Experience opened on Oct. 12 with much fanfare and media coverage. Although the multinational tech company's headquarters in Mountain View is privately owned, it is adjoined by public parks and green space. So, it was possible to walk around the 26-acre site but not really have much interaction with Google employees. The new visitor center changes all that, with opportunities to, as Communications Manager Bailey Tomson explained, "create a welcoming collection of public amenities by connecting the community space — now called the Huddle — with a pop-up shop and public cafe." And now there is also a chance to enjoy the corporate art collection.

After parking in the lot near the Shoreline Amphitheater, a short walk leads you to the first of several Guest Visitor stations. Visitor Experience employees cheerfully direct you to the store, the cafe or the art, all of which are located on one side of the signature Gradient Canopy building.

Walking across the street to an expansive park with walking paths, a large water feature, and lots of geese, offers a landscape that is not only scenic but must provide Google employees with ample opportunities to step outside and reset. The first public art work you’ll encounter is "Halo" by SOFTlab, a colorful structure with a domed roof that re-creates the appearance of light reflecting off soap bubbles. According to the artist’s statement, “the dichroic film on the crystalline interior of this artwork produces its beautiful effect through the principle of thin-film interference — selectively passing the light of a small range of colors while reflecting others.” Taking a seat inside the structure, the prismatic light show is engaging, while also being meditative. Apart from the soft whirring sound of the Google buses going by, one would never know that you are only a short distance from Highway 101 and the hustle and bustle of Silicon Valley.

Cross the street, while watching out for the many Google bikes, and another Visitor Experience staff person will direct you to the main plaza, which contains numerous large-scale outdoor sculptures. The pieces are sited directly on the plaza or carefully installed amid the native plants along the walkways. All are labeled with titles and QR codes for those who want more information.

"Quantum Meditation II" by Julian Voss-Andreae is a sculpture of a seated woman constructed of parallel slabs of stainless steel. In the yoga world, she is in hero’s pose, a meditation position in which the person sits with knees bent, resting back on the heels. It’s fun to view the piece from several vantage points, moving from side to side. As the description promises, her solid figure virtually disappears when you cross her line of gaze.

Moving on, a decidedly non-high-tech sculpture will capture your attention. It is a big, brown bear covered with 160,000 pennies. It’s a whimsical piece and fun to see a figurative object in a high-tech collection but it does have a serious message. The artists behind the piece, entitled "Curious," are Mr. and Mrs. Ferguson Art and they want to make a statement about how species like the grizzly bear can easily become extinct.

An interactive sculpture titled "GO" is inspired by the world’s oldest board game. The artists, a duo known as Hou de Sousa, also say that it references the astounding 3.5 billion questions asked on the Google search engine every day. The black and white discs — there are 600 of them — can be flipped and each one is inscribed with a question. Some are profound, like “Is there anybody out there?”, some personal, such as “What is your earliest memory?” and some just silly, like “What makes the best pizza?” Hours could be spent reading the queries and...
changing the black and white patterns.

The largest artwork on the plaza is “Orb” by artist Marc Fornes. This curvilinear construction, made of almost 7,000 flat pieces of aluminum that have been joined by over 200,000 rivets, has been constructed by hand, according to the artist statement. The white strips seem to twist, turn and continue without a stopping point. Viewers can enter into the structure and enjoy views of the sky through the open roundels. The artist’s statement explains that the piece was developed “using cutting-edge computational methods,” which makes it very fitting for the setting.

A visit to the café is worthwhile, both for the food and to enjoy the space. The café is bright, spacious and airy, and helpful employees will take your order for organic offerings like salad, soup or sandwiches which are then delivered to your table. While eating your meal, you can enjoy the large, three-section wall mural that surrounds most of the dining area. It was created by John Patrick Thomas and is called “Farm to Table Roundtrip.” It was created by John Yanu, who is a member of the Oglala Lakota Sioux nation. This piece was created by the artist in residence. “Google provided me with a safe space to dream big when it came to my art. This collaborative approach with AI felt like a great way to speak about how my work incorporates new technology with traditional modes of printmaking.”

There have been well-publicized layoffs at Google lately, as well as a halt to plans to build housing communities in San Jose, but Tomson says the company still plans to acquire more housing. “We’ll continue to explore more ways we can recognize artists and bring new artwork into our spaces — from commissioning artists to create site-specific original artworks to having workshops led by various artists in residence.”

Email Contributing Writer Sheryl Nonnenberg at nonnenber@aol.com.

The Young Dubliners
Veteran Celtic rock band The Young Dubliners, led by the Dublin-born singer and guitarist Keith Roberts and including multimedia artist Chas Waltz, bassist Ethan Jones, drummer Dave Ingraham and guitarist Justin Pecot, will return to the Midpeninsula for an Earthwise Productions-hosted show in Palo Alto as part of their autumn tour. While the music is rooted in influences from the Emerald Isle, “the sound was intended to be a hybrid because we all come from different backgrounds,” Roberts states on the group’s website. “In truth the Celtic riffs can just as easily come from the American band members. Everyone writes now so you never know what you’ll end up with.”

Jazz and wine at QD Gallery
The pop-up gallery based at Stanford Shopping Center hosts a festive event on Nov. 11 showcasing local art. Visitors can enjoy some vintage jazz from the 1920s, ‘30s and ‘40s from the Topman Trio and sip on wine from Napa’s Vandellos Vineyards while taking in works in a variety of media by 31 Bay Area artists.

Roy Hage
Operatic tenor Roy Hage was born in Virginia and raised in both the U.S. and Lebanon, received opera training from a number of prestigious institutions, and has, according to his website, sung in more than 70 operatic and symphonic performances in eight languages. This year, the two-time Grammy nominee also earned an MBA from the Stanford Graduate School of Business. Hage brings together his acclaimed musical career and his recent academic pursuit when he offers his multidisciplinary presentation, “Finding My Voice,” at the Bing Concert Hall Studio on the Stanford campus. Hage weaves music, poetry and spoken word together in this exploration of his Middle Eastern and American identities.

Marriage Made in Heaven
Symphony San Jose Chorale and Cantabile Youth Singers team up for a program that makes the most of the big, dramatic sound of a church organ paired with the airy, celestial quality of choral music. Elena Sharkova leads the combined choirs in works that include Benjamin Britten’s “A Wedding Anthem,” Penelope Thwaites’ “Missa Brevis” plus masterworks by Brahms, Elgar, Walton and Gretchaninoff.

Adam Grant
According to organizational psychologist and writer Adam Grant, “the true measure of your potential is not the height of the peak you’ve reached, but how far you’ve climbed to get there.” In his latest book, “Hidden Potential: The Science of Achieving Greater Things,” Grant argues that growth and progress depend less on innate talent and more on developing character, motivational structures and systems that support opportunities. As his website states, “we can all improve on improving.” Grant, who’s also the author of “Think Again,” “Originals,” “Give and Take” and “Option B” (with Sheryl Sandberg), is a professor at The Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania. He will discuss “Hidden Potential” with Michael Lewis at an event hosted by Kepler’s Literary Foundation.

Earthwise Productions presents The Young Dubliners on Nov. 11 at the Mitchell Park Community Center.

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In the case of Trustor in Trustee’s possession, the Trustor shall be entitled to the property of the Trustee, either by sale or by any other means that may be the subject of a sale, which shall be conducted in accordance with the provisions of this Act. In the case of a sale, the Trustor shall be entitled to receive the net proceeds of the sale, and shall be entitled to any other benefits that may accrue to the Trustor as a consequence of the sale.

The provisions of this Act shall apply to any sale of property by a Trustee, and shall be construed and applied in accordance with the provisions of this Act.

[The text continues with further details, legal terms, and listings that are typical of legal documents, including notices and declarations.]

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Acclaimed San Francisco eatery Che Fico is the latest big-name addition at the Springline development

By Julia Brown
Photos courtesy Eric Wolfinger

Handmade pastas and naturally fermented pizzas are key ingredients on the menu of the latest restaurant making its debut in Menlo Park this month. But you’ll also find freshly made mozzarella stuffed with an ounce of caviar and vongole in crosta, clams dressed with herbs and nduja butter, wrapped in pizza dough and baked in an oven before the dough is cut tableside.

Che Fico Parco Menlo opens at the Springline development Nov. 8. The sister restaurant of the acclaimed Che Fico and Che Fico Alimentari in San Francisco, it’s one of the final eateries to open at the development. The lineup includes Robin Menlo Park, the sister location of the renowned San Francisco sushi restaurant; Andytown Coffee Roasters, tapas bar Canteen and sister cafe Canteen Coffee Shop, grab-and-go cafe Proper Food, Burmese restaurant Burma Love and Barebottle Brewing Company. Remaining eateries coming to Springline include Che Fico’s Italian market, opening later this year, and contemporary Mexican restaurant Mirame, opening in 2024.

Executive chef and co-owner David Nayfeld opened Che Fico in 2018 with co-owner Matt Brewer. Brewer grew up on a 40-acre horse ranch and vineyard in the Sonoma Valley, working on the ranch before school and helping his mother prepare dinner with produce from their garden. He moved to Chicago after graduating from culinary school and worked at L2O in Chicago as chef de partie before moving to a front-of-the-house role in 2010 to help open Gilt Bar, according to Che Fico’s website. Brewer returned to the Bay Area in 2014 with the goal of opening his own restaurants.

Nayfeld also grew up in the Bay Area, taking his first job at a produce market at the age of 13. After graduating from The Culinary Institute of America, he worked at restaurants including Eleven Madison Park and Cru in New York City before taking a nearly year-long trip around Europe in 2012 to work with renowned chefs. Upon his return, Nayfeld went to Los Angeles before making his way back to San Francisco, also looking to open his own restaurant.

Despite the success of Che Fico, Nayfeld said he and Brewer were skeptical about their ability to grow economically in the Bay Area. As the pandemic hit and the two mulled an expansion, they discussed opening another restaurant outside the region.

“Economically speaking, it’s really challenging to make businesses work (in the Bay Area),” Nayfeld said. “We went through a lot of different thought processes during the pandemic about whether we should expand in other locales. Both Matt and I are young fathers, so the idea of being on an airplane and away from our kids was not our favorite option.”

The Springline development attracted Nayfeld and Brewer, and developer Presidio Bay’s investment in Che Fico Menlo’s buildout “changed the economics such that a business like ours was able to come in and be successful,” Nayfeld said.

“Ultimately when you ask what drew us here it was the idea that we could build community around this project,” he added.

While the menu in Menlo Park includes Che Fico favorites like focaccia with whipped mascarpone and Sicilian olive oil and suppli — a rice croquette filled with tomato and fontina — the vast majority of the offerings are different. New items include Parmigiano Fritti, fried Parmesan that “almost looks like a round churro pinwheel” made with choux batter, and Frittella al Tartufo Nero, a black truffle fritter with a fontina fonduta.

“I don’t want to prescribe what each team is going to be doing — each space feels different,” Nayfeld said. “We’re all about trying to meet our guests where they are and providing what the community wants and needs most. We’re opening a restaurant with a menu we write on paper and it’s 85% different than the one in the city... it’s not as much fun if we say both menus are exactly the same.”

Pasta dishes range from garganelli with fresh shelling beans, heirloom tomatoes and house-cured pancetta to Gnoccofetti Sardi De Zafferano, a saffron-infused pasta with spicy sausage, tomato ragu and pecorino Sardo. Pizzas include classics such as Margherita and the pineapple and chili, as well as newer varieties like the amarticiana with black pepper, tomato, pecorino and guanciale.

For dessert, choose from homemade soft-serve gelato, ice cream sandwiches or seasonal crostatas.

Wine director Jason Alexander created a 400-selection wine list that is mostly Italian, with other beverages including produce-driven cocktails, local and Italian beers and nonalcoholic options. Che Fico Parco Menlo has a horseshoe-shaped bar that seats eight, a chef’s table for 12, a main dining room with 26 seats, a weatherized patio that seats 80 and a private dining room with a 70-person seating capacity. The restaurant was designed by Jon de la Cruz of DL&C ID and includes touches like Murano blown glass chandeliers, graphic terrazzo floors and plush red leather booths.

“At Che Fico (in San Francisco) it’s in an old auto body garage,” Nayfeld said. “There’s a raw, uncut gem feeling in that space. Here in Menlo Park, there’s a much bigger feeling of (a) polished, finished gem that has been built bespoke for this space.”

The Che Fico space will expand in the next couple of months with the opening of a separate market at Springline that will sell fresh produce, meat and fish as well as sandwiches, salads and other lunch items for people who work or live nearby. The market will also serve gelato on fresh waffle cones from a walk-up window, letting patrons watch as their gelato is paddled in front of them.

“We really view it as a way of opening up the keys to our cuisine to guests who live around here,” Nayfeld said.

And one of the key components of Che Fico’s cuisine is its grounding in traditional Italian cooking that feeds its modern approach.

“Knowing historical context allows you to break the rules in a more thoughtful fashion that shows you have an understanding and respect of cultures, and that’s when it becomes appreciation,” he said. “The older I get, the more I recognize refinement and simplicity is the ultimate show of a chef.”

Che Fico Parco Menlo, 1302 El Camino Real Suite A, Menlo Park; 650-384-6514, Instagram: @cheficoparcomeno. Open Tuesday-Sunday from 4:30-10 p.m.; brunch and lunch coming soon. cheficoparcomeno.com.
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MARY 650 888 0860
DRE 00373961
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