

# The Almanac

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

NOV. 17, 2023 | VOL. 59 NO. 11



WWW.ALMANACNEWS.COM



## Coming to Town

*Check your list twice for these acts hitting local stages for the holidays*



Special section:  
See which businesses  
won The Almanac's  
Readers' Choice  
awards this year!





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 core programs serve over 6,000 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.

## Find the PVI program that's right for you!

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#### *Senior Activity Center*

- Variety of fitness classes such as Pilates, Tai Chi, Zumba Gold, and more
- One-on-one personal training sessions
- Technology assistance
- Educational and cultural programs
- Ceramics and other crafts

### PVI's Adult Day Services at Rosener House

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- **Meals on Wheels:** home-delivered meals for homebound individuals
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- **Got Groceries:** No-cost weekly grocery pickup program

### PVI Aging Life Solutions


#### *Comprehensive caregiver support*

- Providing coordinated concierge support and resources for the caregiver and care receiver
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# The Almanac

OF THE SERRA VALLEY AND WOODSIDE



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OPENS THE DOOR TO THE FUTURE  
OF COMMUNITY JOURNALISM**

**READ ABOUT THE CHANGES — PAGE 12**

# Help Us Fill the Care Gaps!



**GIVING  
TUESDAY  
NOV. 28  
2023**

A decade ago, our patient Maria's life took a drastic and unexpected turn: Maria suffered a stroke. This life-altering event left her with various challenges, including mobility impairment, difficulty carrying out daily tasks, and multiple surgeries. Since her stroke, she has been a patient of Ravenswood Family Health Network where she now utilizes many of the services, including Family Medicine, Optometry, Social Services, Lab, and Pharmacy.

Social Services has played a pivotal role in Maria's health and well-being. In March of 2023, she had multiple absent medical appointments, overdue labs, and was at risk of losing In-Home Support Services (IHSS). Ravenswood's Social Services Manager, Karla, made a visit to Maria's home and noticed Maria had a lack of motivation to attend to her medical needs. Jacqueline, Ravenswood's Medical Social Worker, began making regular visits to help Maria overcome any health challenges.

Maria faced many barriers, including transportation to and from the clinic, food insecurity, and an accessible place to shower at home. With the help of the Social Services Team, Maria learned how to order her own rides using Redi-Wheels, a local transportation service assisting the mobility of impaired people. She was also connected to Second Harvest of Silicon Valley, a local food bank that delivers groceries to her doorstep every other week. Lastly, since Maria needs assistance with bathing, the team is also working on reconstructing her bathroom so she can safely bathe in her own privacy.

Maria enjoys having in-home visits with Jacqueline, receiving care at Ravenswood, and feels good about being an advocate for her own health. Karla says, "She has been a beautiful evolving patient. The biggest thing for me is her motivation. Going from depressed to hopeful and determined."

**With the help of our Social Services Team, Maria has regained hope, mobility strength, and determination to attend to her medical needs.**

**JOIN OUR CARE TEAM, DONATE TODAY**  
[www.ravenswoodfhn.org/donate/](http://www.ravenswoodfhn.org/donate/)



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DONATE ONLINE**



## Yes! I Want to Join Ravenswood's Care Team!

**GIVING TUESDAY**  
 TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 28, 2023

Donate online at:  
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Mail a check with this slip to:  
 Ravenswood Family Health Network  
 1885 Bay Road, East Palo Alto, CA 94303

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Questions? Contact the Development Team  
 at [Development@RavenswoodFHN.org](mailto:Development@RavenswoodFHN.org)

- \$100 pays for one child's routine dental exam with x-rays
- \$250 pays for one patient's routine eye exam
- \$300 pays for one patient's podiatry exam
- \$500 pays for one child's vaccines and immunizations
- \$1,200 pays for one mother's prenatal care
- \$2,000 pays for one year of care for a diabetic patient
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The Gullixson Team is ranked **#5 small team** in the nation and **#1 Compass small team in the nation** in RealTrends report of the Top Residential Real Estate Professionals. (June 2022)



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 **179,000 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 lifeline** of over **6,000 pounds** of protein, dairy, fresh produce, and pantry staples. Please take a moment to visit [1pvi.org](http://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.

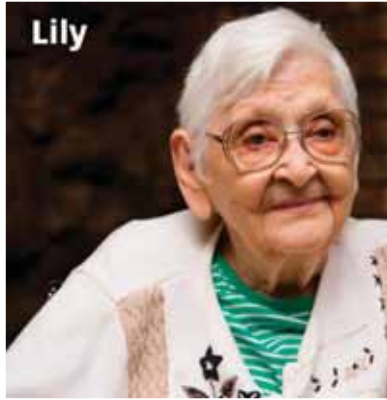
**Yes, I want to make a difference today:** Your special year-end gift of an amount that is right for you\* means everything to the **thousands of local families relying on us** for their daily health and well-being. Please help us close our current Meals on Wheels waitlist and Got Groceries gap this holiday season. You may give securely online at [www.1pvi.org/donate](http://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.

**\* \$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



**Lily**

When Lily's caregiver daughter moved to Sacramento, Lily found herself relying on soup or costly microwave meals. She was afraid she might have to move from her home and her Redwood City community of 53 years. Now PVI's Meals on Wheels "is a true lifesaver"! Lily is so thankful for the healthy food and those who deliver the meals and talk with her. She can remain in her home and **"now I won't be lying to my daughter when I tell her I have something good for dinner!"**

**DAILY SENIOR IMPACT:**

- 1 in 6 seniors is facing hunger**
- 1 in 2 seniors living alone are without the finances for basic needs**
- 1 in 3 seniors dies with Alzheimer's**
- 1 in 4 seniors live alone and feel lonely**
- Nearly 1 in 5 spousal caregivers passes away before their loved one**



**USE YOUR SMARTPHONE CAMERA TO SCAN OUR QR CODE AND DONATE FROM YOUR PHONE.**



**Angel**

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 6,000 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 Lifetime Enrichment offerings at Little House; and RIDE PVI, our on-demand Transportation Service at Little House.

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# Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY



Magali Gauthier

President Joe Biden deboards Air Force One at Moffett Federal Airfield in Mountain View on Jan. 19, 2023. Biden is in town for the APEC Summit this week and arrived Nov. 14.

## President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping offer hope of improved relations at Woodside meeting

By Joshua Picazo/Bay City News Service and Angela Swartz/Almanac

President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping met Wednesday, Nov. 15, morning in what many see as the highlight of the 2023 Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum.

The meeting took place at the historic Filoli estate on Cañada Road in Woodside. Filoli's website notes that the estate is closed to visitors Monday, Nov. 13, through Wednesday, Nov. 15,

while workers "deck the halls for the holidays!" San Mateo County officials announced at 7:30 a.m. Wednesday morning that Cañada Road between Highways 280 and 92 would be closed to all traffic, as would Edgewood Road at 280, until at least 8 p.m.

The public portion of the meeting began shortly after 11:20 a.m. with Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen seated at Biden's side.

"It's good to see you again. We spent many hours together over the last 10 or 12 years and

to host you in the United States is a great pleasure," Biden said at the start of the meeting.

Biden mentioned he hopes to cooperate with Xi and China going forward and thaw the tense relationship between the two nations.

"We've known each other for a long time, we haven't always agreed which is no surprise to anyone," Biden added. "We have to ensure competition does not veer into conflict."

Xi similarly acknowledged

See **MEETING**, page 29



Michelle Le

Portola Valley Town Center

## Portola Valley launches restructuring amid staffing and finance-operations crisis

By Neil Gonzales

Portola Valley Town Hall is launching a major restructuring effort as it tackles an unprecedented staffing exodus and widespread concerns with its financial operations — challenges that are jeopardizing how the town conducts business and serves its residents.

Staff turnover just this year has run high while an accounting consultant contracted as part of what's been dubbed the "Reset - Refocus - Restructure" effort has found the town deficient in a multitude of finance-related areas.

Mayor Jeff Aalfs knew Portola Valley was facing steep hurdles but said he didn't realize the full extent of them until Pleasant Hill-based Krisch & Company detailed its fiscal findings and recommendations in a report submitted early this month to new Town Manager Sharif Etman. "There's a lot of work to do

here," the mayor said during the Town Council's regular meeting Wednesday, Nov. 8, when he and his colleagues took up the staffing issues and Krisch report.

"It's frustrating," Aalfs said. "It is not for a lack of effort. It's also, I would argue, not for a lack of oversight. We have been paying attention to this and realizing there were problems. I will say I was not aware of all the problems this (Krisch) report's identified. There is more work than I realized at the time, but I'm really glad that we have this in front of us."

### Filling staff posts

According to a town staff report, Portola Valley has experienced a turnover rate of nearly 70% in 2023.

The departures have "significantly impacted town operations and continuity of leadership," staff said in its report. "There is

See **RESTRUCTURING**, page 30

## Ladera residents may sue school district if access to Woodland School campus doesn't improve

By Angela Swartz

Around 350 Ladera residents signed a petition to nix restrictions on community use of play areas on a public school property leased since the 1980s by the private Woodland School. And they're considering legal action if the school district doesn't reverse its policy.

Residents, some of whom are part of a group of Ladera citizens

called the Equitable Access Rights Alliance, presented the document to the Las Lomas Elementary School District board on Nov. 8, and contended that Woodland has restricted community use of the field and other recreational space on the campus at 360 La Cuesta Drive.

During the same meeting, the school board met in closed session for property site negotiations with Woodland School officials, but did not come to an agreement

about how to move forward.

About two dozen speakers, many who are neighbors of Woodland School, lobbied the board to increase access to the play areas before the closed session meeting.

Restrictions began in 2017 when the school district brokered a lease agreement amendment with Woodland to close access to the areas until 5 p.m. on weekdays, but Ladera residents say it's only more recently that the

school has begun enforcing them.

"The geographical separation of your neighborhood (Ladera) from the rest of the district community puts you at a disadvantage in many ways," said Trustee Heather Hopkins during the meeting. "I also understand how shocking and upsetting it must have been to learn recently that things changed in regard to the lease back in 2017."

She noted that the board should work to make its agendas easier to

access, but noted that all government bodies use similar systems.

"Unless they (the board) specifically tried to increase communication and make their board accessible this is standard," Hopkins said, referring to board notice of the agenda item amending the lease terms in 2017.

Ladera resident Karen Marchiano, a parent to first and third graders who attend Las Lomas

See **WOODLAND SCHOOL**, page 28

## 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 persons 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 November 28, 2023 agenda for the Board of Directors meeting.

**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](mailto: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

Established 1965

# The Almanac

Serving Menlo Park,  
Atherton, Portola Valley,  
and Woodside for over 50 years

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## CRIME BRIEFS

### Crash closes El Camino Real in Atherton

A driver who apparently fell asleep at the wheel crashed into a utility pole in the early morning hours of Nov. 10, knocking out power and causing the closure of traffic in both directions on El Camino Real between Wilburn Avenue, Lloyd Drive and Almedral Avenue in Atherton, according to a town news bulletin.

An initial estimate for reopening the state highway was 10 a.m. but it was pushed back throughout the day. Atherton police announced at 6:50 p.m. that the roadway finally had reopened.

The collision caused a "major" AT&T fiber optic communications cable to fall across all lanes of El Camino Real around 2 a.m., said Police Chief Steve McCulley in an email. Some 354 PG&E customers in Atherton were without power as of 9:41 a.m. last Friday, according to PG&E's outage maps. Power was expected to be restored at 7 p.m.

"We had trouble in getting AT&T technicians to respond," McCulley said. "AT&T recently contacted us and advised they will be arriving on scene shortly."

Police say no one was injured in the incident.

— Angela Swartz

### Stanford hate crime suspect sketch released

The Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office has released more information about a hit-and-run suspect who struck a Muslim student with his vehicle on the Stanford University campus on Nov. 3.

The collision is being investigated as a hate crime, because the suspect reportedly yelled "F--- you and your people" out the window of his vehicle after making eye contact with the man, accelerating, and striking him as he crossed the intersection of Campus Drive and Ayrshire Farm Lane.

The suspect fled the scene and the man was taken to the hospital, where he survived his injuries.

The man believed he was targeted because he was wearing a shirt that had Arabic script on it.

According to the victim, the suspect was a white, unshaven adult male in his mid-20s. He was wearing a grey top and prescription glasses. His vehicle was a black Toyota SUV with a tire mounted on the rear. Police believe this vehicle should have passenger-side bumper damage from the collision.

Authorities are also looking for anyone who may have witnessed the collision or who were walking near the area around that time.

Anyone who may have information helpful to this case is urged to contact the Sheriff's Office at (408) 808-4500 or call the anonymous tip line at (408) 808-4431.

Police have released a sketch of the suspect and a picture of a similar vehicle.

— Bay City News Service

## OBITUARIES

Local residents who have died recently include:

**Frederick Carl Schwerer III**, 82, a Palo Alto resident and Pennsylvania native who worked as a research scientist at U.S. Steel Research Center, Unconventional Energy Group, Alcoa Research Laboratory and R.J. Lee Group and whose enthusiasms included woodworking, spelunking, cultural festivals, bridge and college sports, on Oct. 24.

**Susan Joan Barnhill Moore**, 71, a 40-year Palo Alto resident and proud flower child — "not a hippie" — who survived a major car accident when her children were young, worked as an activities coordinator

at College Park Convalescent Hospital in Menlo Park, loved to dance and whose many hobbies included making handmade greeting cards, on Nov. 1.

**Charles William Bradley**, 86, an avid tennis player and former Palo Alto resident who worked in sales and consulting in the computer industry, authored the 1985 book "The Manager's Guide to Small Business Computers," and actively fostered his children's interest in science and technology, on Nov. 4.

To read the full obituaries, leave remembrances and post photos, go to Lasting Memories at [AlmanacNews.com/Obituaries](http://AlmanacNews.com/Obituaries).

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[bloodcenter.stanford.edu](http://bloodcenter.stanford.edu)

# Sequoia Union district responds to criticism over swastika drawings at Woodside High

By Sue Dremann

Responding to complaints over its handling of two swastikas that were drawn on the Woodside High School campus, Sequoia Union High School District officials pushed back on the criticism and emphasized its programs to address hate speech.

The two symbols, which appeared to be Nazi swastikas, were found scratched or drawn on the campus pavement on Nov. 1. School administrators reported the incident to the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office, which conducted a safety assessment of the campus and investigated the incident, Principal Karen van Putten said in a Nov. 3 letter to parents.

Arthur Wilkie, school district spokesperson, said in an email to this media organization that "Woodside (High School) and District administration took this matter seriously, and remains committed to fostering a safe and inclusive environment in its schools."

In her letter, Principal van Putten emphasized that Woodside High School does not tolerate any hateful speech or actions on its campus.

Van Putten said that a staff investigation along with the sheriff's office found the symbols were "manji," Japanese Buddhist symbols that are used in anime, a popular form of comics and graphic novels and were not meant to threaten any ethnic or religious group, an explanation that has angered some in the community. (The manji is used as a gang emblem in the series Tokyo Revengers.)

The swastika symbol was appropriated by the Nazis before and during World War II as a symbol of mythical Aryan power and became linked with hate and terrorism due to Nazi atrocities, particularly toward Jews in Europe. Scholars say the symbol has ancient and sacred origins, signifying prosperity and good luck in Hinduism and Buddhism. It is a religious symbol in Native American cultures and was used by the Druids, Celts and others. In Buddhism, it represents the footprints of the Buddha.

There are some differences between the Nazi symbol and the one used in other religions. The Nazi swastika's cross is centered on a 45-degree axis, while the Japanese symbol and that of others is centered on a 90-degree, vertical line, for example.

But in the Western world and Europe, it remains clouded by

the hatred and violence it represents. It is still used by white nationalist and neo-Nazi groups as hate symbols. At a recent demonstration in Palo Alto at Embarcadero Road, a masked man was seen protesting against the war between Palestine and Israel while displaying an Israeli flag; the Star of David at the center having been replaced by the Nazi swastika, photos sent to this news organization show.

The incident at Woodside High, regardless of its purported intention, only further inflamed feelings that it was antisemitic and prompted some to wonder why the school — and the school district — haven't used the Nov. 1 incident as a teachable moment for all students to learn about the power of reckless actions and cultural sensitivity. How schools will address the swastika amid changing demographics where cultures and religious symbolism might clash remains unclear.

A parent whose child attends a school in the district said that Van Putten's email didn't go far enough to condemn hate speech and outline what is being done school- and district-wide to combat it or to link parents and students to information about these programs.



Magali Gauthier

Sequoia Union High School District office in Redwood City on Nov. 19, 2020.

"This was a missed opportunity," the parent said in an email to van Putten and the district board. This incident was a time for the school to lead on the issue by providing resources, information and much stronger words than were offered. The school leadership missed a chance to educate students on how their actions are perceived and the harm they can create. Instead, the school was "basically sweeping things under the carpet and saying, 'False alarm,'" they said.

The manji argument is a well-known gaslighting excuse for antisemitic speech, they added.

While they were glad the school called for a formal investigation, they thought it was not enough. The parent said they want to know what the district

and the school are doing to fight intolerance in its many forms and to ensure that parents understand that their children might be involved. They also want to learn the specifics about how these programs are evidence-based methods to fight intolerance and what the district is doing to monitor their effectiveness.

Wilkie said the district has multiple programs to include students and offer support. The programs include Students Offering Support, which trains and supports youth advocates on conflict mediation, empathy and respect, and violence prevention, and ninth-grade circles where students discuss identity, diversity

See **SWASTIKA**, page 30

## Council weighs how to staff Menlo Park's new community center amid city's budget woes

City Council searches for most cost effective way to run Menlo Park Community Campus in Belle Haven when it opens next year

By Cameron Rebosio

With Menlo Park's new community campus opening in Belle Haven in mid-2024, the City Council, with an eye on the city's \$1 million budget deficit, wants to hold down staffing expenses.

The Menlo Park Community Campus (MPCC) is opening at 100 Terminal Ave., replacing the former Onetta Harris Community Center in the Belle Haven neighborhood. Five main services will be offered at the center: an aquatics center, a library, a youth center, a senior center and a recreation center.

City staff presented the council with three staffing options for operating the new community center, with annual costs ranging from nearly \$2 million down to a little over \$1 million. Staff recommended the most expensive one, which includes six new full-time positions as well as seven temporary ones, totaling \$1.99 million after adding operating costs such

as IT support, supplies, repairs and maintenance, utilities and training. The new positions are a librarian, a library assistant, a recreation coordinator, a senior program assistant, a nutrition services coordinator and a library and community services supervisor.

The lower-cost option would cut the new positions down to three, eliminating a permanent library assistant, senior program assistant and library and community services coordinator, but add two temporary staffers, for \$1.5 million annually. The cheapest option, which city staff does not recommend, would hire only nine temporary staffers and create no new positions, at a cost of \$1.1 million. Any positions left unfilled would be taken over temporarily by current city employees.

Due to budget concerns, the council elected to look more closely at the mid-cost option. While the city expects to see \$715,000 in annual revenue from things such as user fees, rentals and donations

to the MPCC to offset the costs, the council is looking to minimize expenses after passing this year's \$76 million budget with a forecasted \$1 million deficit.

Three residents spoke at the meeting, urging the city to hire local residents to staff the MPCC, saying that they would best understand the community's needs.

While no vote was taken at the council meeting, members gave direction to staff to focus on equity for Belle Haven, a key concern among council members. Council member Maria Doerr said that the city has a library, a recreation center and a pool at Burgess Park on the west side of the city, and it is important to ensure that all services are equitable throughout Menlo Park, a commonly heard concern among Belle Haven residents.

The city plans to use money from Fund 111, or the One-Time Developer Payments Fund, to support the staffing of the MPCC, but those funds cannot be used in perpetuity. Fund 111 has approxi-



Courtesy city of Menlo Park

A rendering of the Menlo Park Community Campus.

mately \$2.8 million in it, with an additional \$1.5 million in revenue payments expected this fiscal year. The council can authorize the use of the fund to finance some of the early years' operational costs, and city staff said that it had sufficient funds to support the staffing expenses for several years.

"We want to make sure that we don't hire on folks for two or three years and then have to have a conversation about cutting staff," Doerr said. "That's the last thing I'd hope for, given the important resource of this community center."

Council member Betsy Nash said that the city is in a different fiscal position than it was when the community center project got the green light in 2021.

"In the short term, you kind of do what you have to do," said Library and Community Services Director Sean Reinhart, who warned against relying on cur-

rent city staffers to take on additional MPCC duties for too long before hiring dedicated employees for the new Belle Haven campus. "In the long term, it has deleterious effects, just like the human body. You can go without some nutrients for a while, but if it goes on too long, you start to have some longer-term issues," he told the council.

Mayor Jen Wolosin said that the council should find a solution that didn't burn out employees as they are the city's "most important resource."

City staffers will return to the City Council at a future meeting with a proposal for hiring four MPCC employees that also offers the option to reduce that down to three, and said they would try to find some additional cost savings. ■

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# Local SETI Institute receives \$200 million to search for extraterrestrial intelligent life

Qualcomm co-founder's gift will support scientific activities, partnerships and outreach

By Emily Margaretten

For nearly 40 years, the SETI Institute, a nonprofit research organization in Mountain View, has been searching for intelligent life forms beyond Earth. A philanthropic gift of \$200 million, announced last week, is bringing this quest closer to reality.

The windfall came from the estate of Franklin Antonio, co-founder of Qualcomm, a communications chip company, who died last year at the age of 69. Antonio was well-known for his philanthropic contributions to scientific endeavors and spent more than a decade supporting the SETI Institute and its mission to find extraterrestrial life.

"Guided by our core mission and Franklin Antonio's vision, we now have the opportunity to elevate and expedite our research and make new discoveries to benefit all humanity for generations to come," said SETI President and CEO Bill Diamond, in a press

release.

"In his memory, the SETI Institute will continue its pursuit of one of the biggest and most profound questions in all of science, a question as old as humanity itself — are we alone in the universe?" he added.

Founded in 1984, SETI — the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence — started as an offshoot of NASA's Ames Research Center, with the idea of finding alien life by listening to communication signals in space. At its peak in the early 1990s, the program received \$10 million a year in federal funds to design and build radio telescopes to detect extraterrestrial life, according to the institute's website.

But federal support for the program ended in 1993 and, since then SETI has been relying on private funding and philanthropic gifts to fund its research on alien communications. The \$200 million grant is the largest donation the institute has ever received, according to Simon

Steel, deputy director of SETI's Carl Sagan Center for Research.

"Being a nonprofit and relying on private donations, it's sort of a hand-to-mouth existence. And what this award will do for the institute is to ensure its future, that we can guarantee that we will be operating our telescopes indefinitely," Steel said, noting that the institute receives limited federal funding for some of its other research activities.

With a background in engineering and communications, Antonio played a pivotal role in upgrading the institute's radio telescope facility near Redding. Antonio offered financial support and hands-on technical assistance to the facility.

"I think he loved the idea that this is developing a really sophisticated communications tool. And the fact that the communication you're trying to have is with aliens makes it even more special," Steel said.

The \$200 million grant will continue the institute's work



Courtesy Seth Shostak/SETI Institute

The Allen Telescope Array is used by the SETI Institute to search for signs of extraterrestrial life.

with radio telescopes, but it also will have a wider reach, Steel said. It will support new research positions, fellowships and international partnerships as well as outreach efforts, with a particular focus on educating the public about the institute's scientific activities.

"Ever since I arrived, we've

always said with lots of different projects, 'what if we could do this? That would be really amazing, that would be really beneficial.' And suddenly the 'what if' became a reality. And that's very, very exciting," Steel said. ■

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## Menlo Park council bucks public sentiment, doesn't name new community campus after Onetta Harris

In 4-1 vote, it will be the Belle Haven Community Campus, which contains the Onetta Harris Community Center

By Cameron Rebosio

After four years of construction, the Menlo Park City Council chose to name the new community center the Belle Haven Community Campus, overriding a vociferous grassroots campaign to name it after late community activist Onetta Harris. The council opted instead to name the campus' recreation center after Harris at a Nov. 14 City Council meeting.

The newly-minted Belle Haven Community Campus has seen a grassroots movement throughout the naming process, with Belle Haven residents coming out en masse to ask that the City Council name the building after Harris. At a recent meeting, 100 people voiced support for the Onetta Harris name for the campus at 100 Terminal Ave. that's expected to open in mid-2024, overwhelming any alternate suggestions.

Belle Haven's old community center, renamed for Harris in 1983, was torn down to make way for the new campus, was named for Harris, who was an activist and involved community member, according to the Menlo Park Historical Association.

Vice Mayor Cecilia Taylor opened the council's discussion with an impassioned speech about the erasure of history in Belle Haven, which historically

was the center of Menlo Park's Black community. Census data shows that Belle Haven's Latino population has grown while the number of Black residents has dwindled in recent decades.

Taylor said that the new campus under construction is an opportunity to build community, and amid the ardent debate over the name, she feared the opposite had happened.

"Our history in the community has already been destroyed, sadly," Taylor said. "So how can a building encompass what our legacy truly is? The legacy of being red-lined? The legacy of being underrepresented, underrepresented and under-invested? Is that what we want to see in this new building? Is that a part of our legacy?"

Taylor, a member of the council subcommittee on the community campus, suggested keeping the prior names for each of the five services housed at the new campus, including Onetta Harris's name on the community center. She also proposed on behalf of the subcommittee that the new campus remain unnamed or be named the Belle Haven Multigenerational Community Center or the Belle Haven Community Campus.

"This is not about one person," Taylor said. "This is not about one name. This is not just about one piece. This is about a community that has always felt like

it was not included in the city of Menlo Park."

### Community members voice their concerns

Over 20 people spoke at the council meeting in support of naming the community center after Onetta Harris, including several members of the Harris family. Her great-granddaughter Gabrielle Harris said that she had learned more about Harris's legacy through several meetings about the naming decision, which inspired her.

"I know that I wouldn't be where I am, pursuing a higher education and actively taking on leadership roles at my school, without the legacies of my great-grandmother and other Black women who paved the way for future generations and showing us it is possible to make meaningful change in our communities," Gabrielle Harris said. "Even if we're not here in person, the younger generations are paying attention."

At times, emotions ran high. Several speakers voiced their concerns over the erasure of Black history in Belle Haven and throughout the United States, saying that failing to name the center after Harris would be a symptom of a larger problem by erasing the history of a Black woman who served

her community. Multiple people went over their allotted time to talk. Most were cordial, but some yelled at the council and levied accusations of racism.

### Council debates how to name new campus

The Community Center is only one of the five services that will be offered at the new campus. The facility also replaces the pool, youth center, senior center and Belle Haven Branch Library.

At a joint meeting of the city's library and parks and recreation commissions on Oct. 25, commission members recommended the council name it the Onetta Harris Community Campus.

The council was largely torn between the demands of droves of residents who came to speak at meetings held over the years that the project has been underway and those who approached them outside of public forums with different names for the campus.

Taylor advocated for the overall campus to remain unnamed for now. Along with her recommendation, she and Council member Betsy Nash recommended commissioning a documentarian to create a documentary on Belle Haven to preserve the community's history.

Council member Maria Doerr took a different stance, saying

that she respects Taylor's role as the council member representing Belle Haven and a member of the subcommittee, but that she had seen an outpouring of support for the name Onetta Harris Community Campus.

"The thing that I keep hearing is the community speaking loud and clear about priorities they have in hopes they have of seeing how the name reflects an important leader and legacy in our community," Doerr said. "And I've also heard folks speak about how this is more than just a building and more than just the programming that used to be there. And that this is more than just one woman. We're talking about this legacy."

Nash said that the recommendation from the subcommittee still hopes to honor Onetta Harris through the name of the community center within the larger campus.

"Onetta Harris Community Center is an actual name," Nash said. "It is not just a picture on the wall ... This is above and beyond."

Nash also said that the proposed documentary would highlight Harris, along with other members of the community whose contributions should be recognized. The project would also focus on the history of Belle

See **COMMUNITY CAMPUS**, page 30

# Accused San Carlos samurai sword killer refuses to testify to prosecutors

Defendant claims he doesn't remember killing victim Karina Castro, the mother of his child

By Nicholas Mazzoni

For nearly three hours on Monday, Nov. 13, accused killer Jose Rafael Solano Landaeta spoke in detail about the conversations he had with Karina Castro hours before she was slain, claiming he feared for his life.

Landaeta, 33, of Hayward, is on trial in San Mateo County Superior Court for the killing of Castro, a 27-year-old mother of two, with a samurai sword outside her San Carlos apartment on Sept. 8, 2022. Landaeta is the father of one of Castro's children.

But the cross-examination only lasted around 15 minutes, during which Landaeta failed to recognize a photo of Castro, claiming he didn't kill her. He then asked to take a break, but upon returning to the witness stand, he

appeared to be asleep and didn't respond to the prosecutors.

During the recess, Castro's father, Martin Castro, said he was shocked that Landaeta refused to acknowledge Castro's picture or his involvement in her death.

"Frustration isn't even the beginning of it. I am blown away right now. It's like one minute, I don't think it could get any worse, and the next minute I think, OK, this is worse," said Martin Castro, who added that he believes Landaeta is playing a game with the court system by trying to pretend he isn't competent, which



Courtesy of San Mateo County Sheriff's Office  
**Jose Rafael Solano Landaeta**

would slow the trial down.

While testifying, Landaeta's demeanor appeared to change throughout the day.

Wearing a striped jacket with his hair slicked back, he said multiple times that he felt threatened thinking that Castro would have him and his family killed.

But when asked to explain what he meant when he messaged Castro, 'F\*\*\* around and find out,' in a Snapchat social media thread hours before she died, he appeared defensive, saying that she was lying about him.

"Now she's getting my people involved and lying about it, so when she gets my people involved, that's a problem," Landaeta said. "It's the ultimate threat, trying to get your people to turn on you. You know, if she wants to go to war, then I'm going

to have to take care of business because I'm not going to let you kill me and let anything happen to my mama."

His defense attorney claimed his mental illness triggered a psychotic episode fueled by over-the-phone arguments that led Landaeta to believe Castro was out to have him and his family killed. Landaeta claimed to have acted out of fear and alleged self-defense, saying that he thought Castro was trying to stab him in the heart.

While his attorney Robert Cummings said it wasn't a case of 'who did it, but why,' during his opening statement on Monday, Nov. 6, Landaeta stopped answering the prosecutors' questions after saying he did not kill Castro. Landaeta previously pleaded not guilty by reason of insanity but

was found competent to stand trial by court-appointed doctors.

Landaeta had a restraining order to stay away from Castro, according to the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office. During Monday's trial, Deputy District Attorney Josh Stauffer, who objected multiple times, noted Landaeta was reciting answers from notes he had taken from text message conversations between himself and Castro.

Novak ended the trial an hour early when Landaeta refused to answer questions. Landaeta claimed he was unable to answer questions because he had a panic attack due to his mental illness.

San Mateo County District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe said it was the first time he's seen someone stop answering questions on the stand.

"(That's) out of hundreds of murder cases we had in this county over the decades where somebody stopped answering questions," Wagstaffe said. ■

Email Staff Writer Nicholas Mazzoni at nmazzoni@rwcpulse.com.

# To fix classrooms and shore up creek bank, Woodside Elementary district set to vote on \$36 million bond measure

Projects include \$3 million for repairing creek erosion from last winter's storms

By Angela Swartz

The Woodside Elementary School District may ask voters to approve a \$36 million facilities bond measure to fund repairs to the school campus, including millions of dollars worth of damage from creek erosion at the back of the campus caused by last winter's rains, including a big storm on New Year's Eve.

The school board reviewed a draft of the measure on Nov. 6. The board plans to vote on putting the measure before voters at its Nov. 28 meeting. If approved, it would appear on the ballot of the statewide primary election on March 5, 2024.

Aside from \$3 million to stabilize the hillside behind the campus, located at 3195 Woodside Road in Woodside, the proposed bond would fund about \$26 million in renovations, including repairing or replacing leaking



Magali Gauthier

Flooding has eroded the hillside at the back of the Woodside Elementary School campus. A fence is seen on the verge of falling into the creek in Woodside on March 14.

roofs, replacing outdated HVAC systems, and replacing and modernizing transitional kindergarten and kindergarten classrooms (a \$13.4 million project).

Superintendent Steve Frank

noted that the projects are expensive because the school building code is stricter than for other types of construction.

Over the last year, district consultant Clifford Moss sent out

mailers, drafted a facilities master plan to share with the community and conducted master plan stakeholder meetings. Some 106 people responded to surveys about district facilities.

The Woodside district held a Nov. 8 community meeting to answer questions about a potential bond measure. It last went out for a bond measure in 2014. Measure D passed and brought in \$13.5 million.

## Damage to hillside

Work the district completed a decade ago, when "stitch piers" were drilled into the ground next to creek banks to prevent further erosion, has been so compromised that the district had to install fencing in March for student safety, Frank said.

"Water was just raging so high," Frank said. "It took out so many trees and washed away a section of hillside. ... The ground is really unsafe."

The district's FEMA grant funding for the project has been approved, but the district doesn't know how much it will be for yet.

"My understanding is that once the project is developed and the total cost is known, the FEMA grant will be a 'percentage' of that total cost," Frank said in an email Tuesday, Nov. 14. "We are not yet aware of what the percentage is but hope to get a better understanding as the scope of the project is developed in the upcoming months."

## Special meeting on bond measure

The school board will make a decision on the potential bond measure during a special meeting at 8:30 a.m. on Tuesday, Nov. 28, in the Wildcats room at Woodside Elementary School, 3195 Woodside Road. ■

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

# San Mateo County Board of Supervisors disagreement about leadership rotation policy boils over

By Thomas Hughes/  
Bay City News Service

The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors narrowly voted to delay adopting a policy for the rotation of leadership posts on the board after a debate Tuesday, Nov. 14, that grew contentious at times.

The current, informal policy has seen the five-member board elect the vice president to be the new board president and place the outgoing president at the back of the rotation. The longest-serving board member would then become the vice president, with newly elected members waiting to rotate in.

But if two or more new mem-

bers are elected at the same time, as was the case this past year, it could prevent one of them from serving in leadership if they only serve one four-year term.

That would mean that if the new policy was adopted, Supervisors Noelia Corzo and Ray Mueller, both elected in 2022, would draw straws in January to

determine who becomes fourth in line, which could prevent that person from getting a turn serving as board president if they aren't reelected.

Mueller suggested adopting a style similar to what he said he experienced as a city council member in Menlo Park, which had newly elected members

quickly escalated to the vice president role.

Supervisors David Canepa and Warren Slocum said they supported the policy being proposed Tuesday as one that took politics out of the process, but Slocum's comments drew a rebuke from Mueller.

See **SUPERVISORS**, page 29

# Police: Burglary rates are down, thanks to Atherton's theft-detering tech

By Angela Swartz

To keep the community in the know about home burglaries in town, Atherton police held what's become an annual community meeting on crime on Nov. 3. The main takeaway: burglaries haven't been eliminated in town, there have been fewer of them since new technology has debuted.

So far there have been 17 burglaries in Atherton this year. The police department would like to keep that figure under 20 for 2023, police officials said during the meeting. The number of burglaries has dropped sharply since 2021 when there were 45 reported.

In recent years, the town began installing Flock Safety automated license plate reader cameras (ALPRs). There are 47 cameras in town, 26 of which are funded by residents rather than the town budget. According to town officials, communities using Flock ALPRs reported a reduction in package and mail theft by up to 90%.

Police Chief Steve McCulley credited the ALPR system for leading to the arrest of a suspect after a man was robbed of his watch at his home on Marsh Road in 2021.

"Within two hours, they were IDed and one was placed under arrest," he said.

The readers are able to capture more details about a vehicle than just the license plate, including the color, brand and whether

its a car, truck or motorcycle. It also captures pedestrians, bicycles and animals. "These are the details we often need to take the next step in solving a case," McCulley said.

In 2022, there were 252 ALPR alerts in town, a mix of stolen vehicle alerts, Amber Alerts and hits on wanted people, according to police.

This year, Atherton also added the Paladin Nighthawk drone to its police force, which can fly out and gather real-time information during burglaries, and also be used for missing person cases, disaster response, traffic accidents, active shooter situations and more.

The last burglary reported in town was on Oct. 25 when three burglars broke a front glass door and entered a home on Ridgeview Drive.

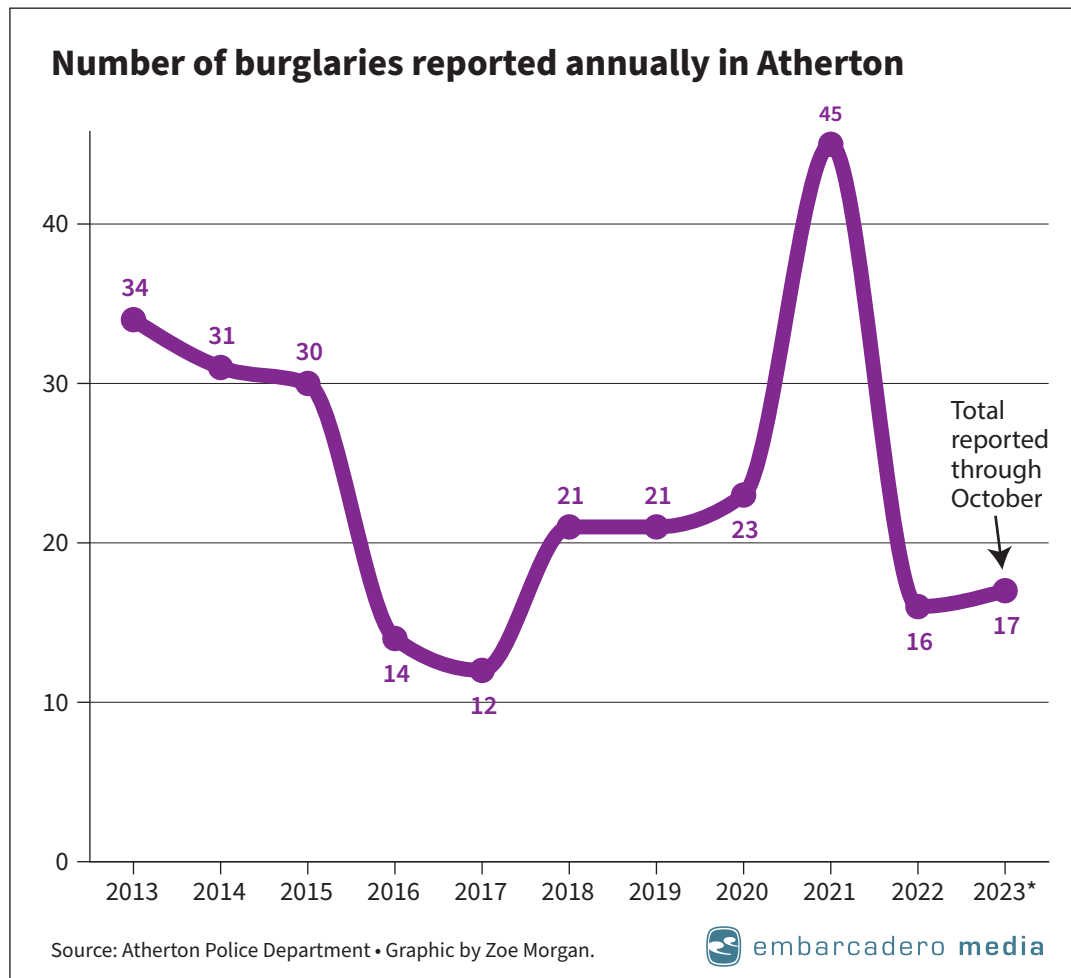
## Modus operandi for burglaries in town

During the meeting, police shared the commonalities in many of the burglaries in town:

- Window or door smashed on first or second floor
- Entry through open doors and windows
- Burglar alarms not activated
- Minimal to no exterior lighting

Common items taken this year include safes, jewelry, wallets, gift cards, keys, gate openers, purses, power tools, credit cards, cash, bicycles and cars.

Police noted that one obstacle for preventing burglaries is that



smashed windows don't usually trip alarm systems. Alarm system sensors are often attached to the window itself and set up to detect if a window or door is opened.

Master bedrooms, where a lot

of residents keep their safes and jewelry, don't often have cameras or motion sensors for privacy and convenience. This makes them easier for intruders to access, police said.

Residents also don't always

turn on alarm systems because they think they're inconvenient, but they should do so if they want to prevent break-ins, police said. ■

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## Recognizing fake news now a required subject in California schools

Instead of a stand-alone class, media literacy will be woven into existing classes and lessons

By Carolyn Jones / Bay City News Service

Pushing back against the surge of misinformation online, California will now require all K-12 students to learn media literacy skills — such as recognizing fake news and thinking critically about what they encounter on the internet.

Gov. Gavin Newsom last month signed Assembly Bill 873, which requires the state to add media literacy to curriculum frameworks for English language arts, science, math and history-social studies, rolling out gradually beginning next year. Instead of a stand-alone class, the topic will be woven into existing classes and lessons throughout the school year.

"I've seen the impact that misinformation has had in the real world — how it affects the way people vote, whether they accept the outcomes of elections, try to

overthrow our democracy," said the bill's sponsor, Assemblymember Marc Berman, a Democrat from Menlo Park. "This is about making sure our young people have the skills they need to navigate this landscape."

The new law comes amid rising public distrust in the media, especially among young people. A 2022 Pew Research Center survey found that adults under age 30 are nearly as likely to believe information on social media as they are from national news outlets. Overall, only 7% of adults have "a great deal" of trust in the media, according to a Gallup poll conducted last year.

Media literacy can help change that, advocates believe, by teaching students how to recognize reliable news sources and the crucial role that media plays in a democracy.

"The increase in Holocaust denial, climate change denial,

conspiracy theories getting a foothold, and now AI ... all this shows how important media literacy is for our democracy right now," said Jennifer Ormsby, library services manager for the Los Angeles County Office of Education. "The 2016 election was a real eye-opener for everyone on the potential harms and dangers of fake news."

AB 873 passed nearly unanimously in the Legislature, underscoring the nonpartisan nature of the topic. Nationwide, Texas, New Jersey and Delaware have also passed strong media literacy laws, and more than a dozen other states are moving in that direction, according to Media Literacy Now, a nonprofit research organization that advocates for media literacy in K-12 schools.

Still, California's law falls short of Media Literacy Now's recommendations. California's approach doesn't include funding

to train teachers, an advisory committee, input from librarians, surveys or a way to monitor the law's effectiveness.

Keeping the bill simple, though, was a way to help ensure its passage, Berman said. Those features can be implemented later, and he felt it was urgent to pass the law quickly so students can start receiving media literacy education as soon as possible. The law goes into effect Jan. 1, 2024, as the state begins updating its curriculum frameworks, although teachers are encouraged to teach media literacy now.

Berman's law builds on a previous effort in California to bring media literacy to K-12 classrooms. In 2018, Senate Bill 830 required the California Department of Education to provide media literacy resources — lesson plans, project ideas, background — to the state's K-12 teachers. But it didn't make media literacy mandatory.

The new law also overlaps somewhat with California's effort to bring computer science education to all students. The state hopes to expand computer science, which can include aspects of media literacy, to all students, possibly even requiring it to graduate from high school. Newsom recently signed Assembly Bill 1251, which creates a commission to look at ways to recruit more computer science teachers to California classrooms. Berman is also sponsoring Assembly Bill 1054, which would require high schools to offer computer science classes. That bill is currently stalled in the Senate.

## Understanding media, and creating it

Teachers don't need a state law to show students how to be smart media consumers, and some have been doing it for years. Merek Chang, a high school science teacher at Hacienda La Puente Unified in the City of Industry east of Los Angeles, said the pandemic was a wake-up call for him.

During remote learning, he

See **FAKE NEWS**, page 29

# Former community college district chancellor facing new felony charges for embezzlement, theft of public funds

Menlo Park resident Ron Galatolo faces 23 charges related to his tenure as head of San Mateo County Community College district

Joshua Picazo/  
Bay City News Service

Former San Mateo County Community College District Chancellor Ron Galatolo's case continued as prosecutors added two new felony charges — theft of public funds and embezzlement.

Galatolo, who served as chancellor from 2001 until 2021, including two years as “chancellor emeritus,” now faces a total of 23 charges. He was fired after his arrest at San Francisco Interna-

tional Airport in April 2022.

The new charges filed Wednesday, Nov. 8, are based on allegations that Galatolo improperly used community college district funds to pay for his private attorney, San Mateo County District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe said.

The case has moved at a slow pace partially due to a dispute over the admission of electronic evidence, which tied into the new charges.

“The allegations are based on emails between Mr. Galatolo and his attorney. It took many months

to resolve the issue of our access to these emails (whether they were protected by the attorney-client privilege or whether we get access to the emails), as we contend they are evidence of criminal activity,” Wagstaffe added.

Galatolo's defense had asked the California Supreme Court to take up the case of whether the emails were admissible or



Ron Galatolo

not, however the Supreme Court declined and Wagstaffe's office was able to move forward.

“Early this past summer we got access to the emails and after review and consideration, we filed the additional two charges,” Wagstaffe said.

The other charges in the case allege tax fraud, perjury and unreported gifts, among other complaints.

In February of this year, the community college district also moved to sue several contractors involved in projects with the

district's three colleges under Galatolo's tenure over alleged “pay for play” schemes and listed him as co-conspirator.

A counter suit was filed by one of the contractors listed in the complaint, Karim Allana, CEO of Allana Buick & Bers, seeking over \$32 million due to alleged damages to the company's reputation over the allegations.

A call to Galatolo's defense attorneys was not immediately returned. He has pleaded not guilty or denied all of the felony charges and remains out on bail. ■

## Amid internal tensions, religious leaders unite for peace vigil in Palo Alto

Multifaith Voices for Peace and Justice brings community together through songs, prayers

By Gennady Sheyner

The solemn demonstration that took place in front of Palo Alto City Hall on Saturday night was almost as striking for what wasn't there as for what was.

There were no political signs or chants. No calls to support Israel or to denounce Hamas. No voices of support for Palestinian independence and no diatribes against Israeli occupation. No arguments for a ceasefire.

The only poster that was prominently displayed at the Nov. 11 event was one announcing the name of the event: Vigil for Peace. And for the group Multifaith Voices for Peace & Justice, which organized the rally, that was the point.

The vigil, which featured songs, prayers, tears, hugs and moments of silence, brought about 150 people to King Plaza. The messages in their songs and prayers were purposefully vague, multicultural and universal. Louis' Armstrong's “It's a Wonderful World.” Emma Revolution's “Peace Salaam Shalom.” A recital of “Prayer for mothers for life and peace,” which was written by Sheikha Ibtisam Mahameed and Rabbi Tamar Elad-Applebaum.

The Saturday event almost didn't happen. While Multifaith Voices for Peace & Justice prides itself on inclusiveness, event organizers acknowledged the difficulty of coming up with the right words to say during times of high divisiveness and trauma.

The Rev. Eileen Altman, who serves on the organization's Prayer Committee, said the tension within the group's ranks

has been similar to the tension within the wider community. Some members feel like there hasn't been enough sympathy for the devastation that happened in Israel on Oct. 7. Others feel like Israel's subsequent military actions in Gaza and attacks by Israeli settlers in the West Bank haven't been given enough attention, Altman said in an interview.

Despite the difficulty in coming up with a unified message, the group felt it's important to rally and bear witness to the current moment, she said. Since the Oct. 7 terrorist attack, members of the multifaith group have been in “excruciating pain together,” she said.

“We've grieved together, we've wondered what we might bear witness to during this very difficult time,” said Altman, associate pastor at First Congregational Church in Palo Alto. “We felt it was important to bear witness for peace in the midst of this violence, as we have for other wars. But we also struggled with what to say.

“We felt like, even if we don't quite know what to say yet, we know we want to pray together for peace. We want to sing together, we want to pray together. We want to be together.”

The multifaith group was born in the aftermath of 9/11 and the ensuing war in Iraq. In 2003, members of various Midpeninsula congregations started holding monthly meetings, which take place on the 11th of each month as a commemoration of the group's origin. Today, the group lists as its participants 17 congregations and religious organizations, a roster that includes

Trinity Church in Menlo Park, American Muslim Voice, Mountain View Buddhist Temple, St. Thomas Episcopal Church in Palo Alto, and Beyt Tekkun in Berkeley.

Altman said that since the group's founding two decades ago, no issue has been as divisive and complex as Israel and Palestine. That, she said, is a reflection of the fact members of the group come from different places and, as such, have different views and positions.

Diana Gibson, convener for Multifaith Voices for Peace and Justice, told the assembled crowd that the group made a conscious decision to keep politics out of the event to create a “safe space” for everyone to pray together. For organizers, this meant banning signs and cancelling speakers, Gibson said.

The organization considered not doing anything at all but decided that this was not an option, Gibson said.

“For while it is a vigil for peace in the Middle East, we also desperately need peace here and now,” Gibson said. “The wounds are deep here and, tragically, as we all know, the violence and hatred have struck here as well. We could not be silent. That said, words can cause unintended pain.”

Sumina Sundas, one of the founders of Multifaith Voices for Peace & Justice, acknowledged the difficulty of showing restraint and avoiding politics altogether during the present time.

Sundas said in an interview she strongly supports a ceasefire in Israel and believes the



Photo by Gennady Sheyner

Diana Gibson, convener at Multifaith Voices for Peace and Justice, addresses a crowd during the Nov. 11 “Vigil for Peace” in front of Palo Alto City Hall.

situation will only get worse if things remain on the current trajectory. But she also noted that some of her Jewish colleagues are offended by that position. Her comments at the vigil avoided any mention of a ceasefire.

“All of us are walking on eggshells and the only reason we're surviving is because of having these long-term relationships,” Sundas said after the event.

If anything, the recent conflict has only reinforced the importance of the multifaith group and the relationships that its members had forged over the past two decades, she said.

“We are honest and we care about each other,” Sundas said. “We have rabbis in the group and I deeply care about them because they're building friendships. ... The reason we can do this particular work today is because we have relationships.”

These ties were on display Saturday, as leaders from three

different faiths — Jewish, Christian and Muslim — came together to recite “Prayer of Mothers for Life and Peace” in English, Arabic and Hebrew. At the conclusion of the vigil, all attendees stood in a circle to jointly recite a prayer for peace.

One of the goals of the event, Sundas said, is to encourage residents of different faiths and backgrounds to get to know one another. All religions, she noted, encourage their followers to love their neighbors.

“But the thing is, how do we love our neighbors if we don't even know them?” she said. “So my request to my fellow Americans would be: Please get to know your neighbors. Get to know everybody. Because the only way this can subside — this war and violence — is if we see each other and see our humanity.” ■

Email Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner at [gsheyner@paweekly.com](mailto:gsheyner@paweekly.com).

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# THE ALMANAC TO BECOME A NONPROFIT IN 2024



**Embarcadero Media**, which has been operating in the San Francisco Bay Area for the last 44 years, will transition its business model to a new nonprofit called Embarcadero Media Foundation. The Foundation will continue as a hyperlocal news publisher, operating seven local digital news publications and three weekly print publications.

- Palo Alto Weekly
- Palo Alto Online
- The Almanac
- Mountain View Voice
- Redwood City Pulse
- Pleasanton Weekly
- Danville | San Ramon
- Livermore Vine



Above and right, reporters Sue Dremann and Angela Swartz; below, Audience Engagement Editor Jamey Padojino



## Embarcadero Media jumps on industry trend to gain greater financial sustainability

By Jocelyn Dong,  
Gennady Sheyner, Isha Trivedi

**E**mbarcadero Media, a 44-year-old Bay Area news publisher and the parent company of The Almanac, has announced that it will become a nonprofit organization at the start of 2024.

The decision to go nonprofit was made after a careful review of the company's business model and financial outlook, the company stated in a press release. The boards of directors of the for-profit Embarcadero Media and the nonprofit Embarcadero Media Foundation on Nov. 14 approved an agreement for the

for-profit Embarcadero Media, who is slated to helm the Embarcadero Media Foundation in 2024.

In adopting a nonprofit model, Embarcadero Media is joining a host of other news organizations around the United States that have sought financial sustainability by forgoing their for-profit status. As a nonprofit, news groups can solicit and accept philanthropic donations to supplement revenue from advertising, memberships, sponsorship fees and events.

The embrace of a new business model is one of numerous ways that an anxious global media industry is trying to regain a solid financial footing after seeing revenues collapse over the past two decades.

The disruptors of the news media's traditional business model, which once thrived on print advertising revenues, are many and oft-cited: a massive shift in readers' habits to digital consumption, the rise of social media as a ubiquitous source of information, the monopolistic grip on digital advertising revenue by tech behemoths, and more.

"Advertising once accounted for 80% of newspapers' revenue. In the past 20 years, that revenue stream has fallen by 80%. The economics that supported the news industry for most of the twentieth century are no longer viable," according to the American Journalism Project, a venture philanthropy that is working to attract hundreds of millions of investment dollars to fund nonprofit newsrooms.

The United States has lost a quarter of its newspapers — some 2,500 — since 2005, leaving 6,380 newspapers as of last year, according to "The State of Local News 2022," a report from the Medill Local News Initiative at Northwestern University. Of the remaining papers, 1,230 were dailies and 5,150 were weeklies.

It's a trend that continues unabated with the loss of about two per week, and newsrooms at all levels of the industry have been hit. Even major outlets are struggling to bring in the revenue to support their staffing, resulting in recent

company to donate the operation to the nonprofit.

In recent years, Embarcadero Media has faced significant challenges, including declining advertising revenue due to the local business closures from the pandemic paired with a significant decline in real estate listings and advertising, the press release stated.

"Operating as a nonprofit will enable Embarcadero to continue to provide high-quality journalism to the community, become financially sustainable and expand its coverage to areas of public interest," said Adam Dawes, CEO of the



**'Operating as a nonprofit will enable Embarcadero to continue to provide high-quality journalism to the community, become financially sustainable and expand its coverage to areas of public interest.'**

—Adam Dawes, CEO, Embarcadero Media



Magali Gauthier

In the Embarcadero Media East Bay newsroom are (from left) reporter Nicole Gonzales and Jeanita Lyman, editor Cierra Bailey and reporter Christian Trujano.

layoffs at the Washington Post and Gannett, among others, and the entire shutdowns of online sites like BuzzFeed News and Jezebel.

But local weekly newspapers have been the hardest hit, the State of Local News report found. Of the 360 newspapers that shuttered across the country between late 2019 and May 2022, nearly all were weeklies. Even affluent suburban communities are losing their newspapers and joining the one-fifth of the country without a local news source, the report stated.

About 60% of the nation's newspaper journalists have lost their jobs since 2005, raising alarm over the ability of newsrooms to hold government officials accountable or to even bring readers essential information about their communities.

In response to the disappearance of newspapers, digital-only newsrooms have sprouted from coast to coast. The growth of digital-only sites is making up for, barely, the loss of papers, but in 2022, there were still only 545 such state and local sites, the State of Local News report said. Many of these are small outfits and not nearly able to replace the headcount of laid-off newspaper journalists.

### BANDING TOGETHER

To counter the industry's catastrophic revenue freefall, everyone from academics to C-suite executives have been urgently searching for ways to radically reinvent how the news is delivered and funded.

In 2009, journalists from 27 nonpartisan, nonprofit newsrooms banded together to form what is today called the Institute for Nonprofit News, a major player in the burgeoning nonprofit news sector.

The collective has since grown to include 425 member organizations that collaborate and produce public-service journalism. These news nonprofits employ some 4,000 people, including 2,700 journalists, and that figure is growing: The Institute for Nonprofit News reported in 2022 that staffing among its member newsrooms had grown 15% over the prior year.

Other initiatives have launched with ambitious aspirations to create entirely new streams of revenue by catalyzing philanthropic giving. The American Journalism Project was founded in 2018 by John Thornton — a

*Continued on next page*

# Dear reader: We're transitioning to a nonprofit

*A message from the publisher / CEO of Embarcadero Media*

By Adam Dawes

After taking over in September 2022 from Bill Johnson, the company's founder and CEO for the last 42 years, my top priority has been to chart a course for the company that would ensure our survival for decades to come.

The company has been navigating the changes afflicting the local news industry for many years and it was clear that we needed to move aggressively to become less reliant on our print advertising revenue in this post pandemic environment. It's been a rollercoaster ride, shifting more resources towards our digital products, restructuring our management organization and learning how to support our team who gets the news out every day. It has become increasingly clear this year that to maintain our future viability, we need to update our business model. As of Jan. 1, 2024 all of our publications will be operated by the Embarcadero Media Foundation, a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization



Adam Dawes,  
CEO

Why is this necessary? There are two main reasons. First, with all of the headwinds that we and other local news publishers across the country are facing, we need to shift our business model to rely more directly on donations from our communities. Second, operating as a nonprofit will enable us to grow and evolve our journalism in exciting ways that can provide greater benefit to the community.

The headwinds we're experiencing as a business have been dramatic. Over 75% of our revenue still comes from advertising and starting with the pandemic in 2020, many local businesses that advertised with us have closed. In particular, since 2019 we've experienced a 45% erosion of real estate advertising, our largest advertising category. We see that relying too heavily on advertising going forward could lead to our downfall, which has happened to so many other local news publishers.

An unflinching look at our bottom line is sobering. Across our three newspapers and special publications, we've seen our print ads revenue decline by more than 42% since the end of 2019. Revenue across our entire operation, including print, our seven news websites and three newsletters, has declined by 32%. Were it not for the federal government and two rounds of funding from the Paycheck Protection Program and the Employee Retention Tax Credit, our company would have failed and local news in our communities would be gone.

We have not sat idly through this decline. We have built up a significant new revenue stream around subscriptions. This year we're expecting to top \$900K in revenue, which will cover about 18% of our 2024 budget. While we had a huge surge in paid membership during the pandemic, we are struggling to bring on more new members to replace those that leave us. We continue to find and invest in new ways to bring on new members, but it's a tough row to hoe. Media organizations everywhere are seeing declines in subscribers. We're actually doing pretty well compared to the industry.

We've also been willing to make hard choices. Over this year, we made cuts to management and administrative expenses,

including reducing our office space to adapt to the number of employees who are working remotely, that will collectively reduce our annual operating expenses by more than \$900K. We made these changes without any reduction to our investment in our editorial team. But we still need to change our business model to meet our remaining deficit, prepare for further declines in advertising and invest in new technology and our editorial department.

Converting to a nonprofit will allow us to rely more on the giving capacity of our communities. Our target is to raise \$3M over the next three years, with \$1M of that coming in 2024. We're already off to a fast start with pledges totalling about \$200K from several incredibly generous individuals who are offering gifts as large as \$100K.

This new philanthropic funding will diversify our revenue and give us greater stability to aggressively pursue our journalistic mission. We are so proud of the work we've done in the last year to make our community more informed, accountable and cohesive:

- **Over 1,500 stories published**
- **Over 95 stories about Almanac towns' local government**
- **39 stories about the local schools**
- **Over 240 stories about the 2022 election across our network**
- **149 candidate interviews for 2022 election across our network**
- **18 candidate forums for 2022 election across our network**
- **\$310,000 raised and distributed to Almanac-area nonprofits with our annual Holiday Fund**

The Foundation will be able to expand and change how we cover our communities. Being a nonprofit enables us to develop partnerships with other foundations and accept major contributions from individuals who have a passion to shed more light on particular issues.

We know there are great beats that can make a big public impact, like expanding coverage of education, homelessness and housing, immigrants, health, transportation and the environment. We are thinking more ambitiously as well, like starting new online publications to provide news for chronically underserved communities.

Even though we've operated as a for-profit company all these decades, we have always been a mission-driven organization at our heart. What motivates our entire staff is the ability to help our communities function better. We look forward to your continued support as we make the transition.

We're incredibly excited about this change and how it will allow us to partner and work more deeply with our communities. If you want to support us, the easiest way to do that is to become a member. If you have the ability to support us at a more significant level, please consider making a one-time donation to the Foundation now (it's tax deductible!). If you want to help us with a major gift such as appreciated stock or a gift from your estate, or to sponsor a project going forward, please reach out to [publisher@embarcaderomediafoundation.org](mailto:publisher@embarcaderomediafoundation.org). ■

## How you can help keep dedicated local journalists reporting for The Almanac

- Read and share our print newspapers and special publications
- Become a paying member on our website
- Sign-up to receive one of our free email newsletters
- Engage with other community members by commenting on online stories
- Patronize our advertisers who support us
- Make a one-time, tax-deductible donation today!

Thank you for your support!

[AlmanacNews.com/donate](https://AlmanacNews.com/donate)



Continued from previous page

venture capitalist and founder of the nonprofit Texas Tribune — and Elizabeth Green, founder of the nonprofit Chalkbeat, as a venture philanthropy.

To date, it has raised \$168 million for local news from funders including the John S. and James L. Knight Foundation. American Journalism Project backs 41 nonprofit news organizations so far, according to its website.

And in September, a coalition of 22 donors, spearheaded by the MacArthur Foundation, announced a five-year, half-billion-dollar initiative “to strengthen communities and democracy by supporting local news and information.”

“We have a moment to support the reimagining, revitalization, and rapid development of local news,” the MacArthur Foundation stated in its announcement of the initiative, called Press Forward.

The Knight Foundation announced its contributing \$150 million to the Press Forward cause.

“News is at the center of a healthy and engaged democracy. That is why a free press is protected in our constitution,” Knight Foundation president Alberto Ibarra said in a press release. Since 2005, the Knight Foundation has invested more than \$632 million to “enhance and support robust news ecosystems.”

## PATHS TO NONPROFIT STATUS

The paths that newsrooms have taken to nonprofit status are varied. Some are founded as nonprofits: the policy- and politics-oriented CalMatters and the south bay-based San Jose Spotlight are but a few.

Others converted from being for-profit businesses: The first legacy newspaper to transition to nonprofit was The Salt Lake Tribune, now viewed as the national standard bearer for nonprofit newspapers.

The Tribune made the switch in 2019 after a turbulent decade in which it won a Pulitzer Prize but had to contend with dropping advertising revenues and multiple rounds of staffing cuts.

In 2016, investor Paul Huntsman bought the paper from Digital First Media, a media conglomerate owned by the hedge fund Alden Global Capital. The change in ownership did not, however, reduce the financial challenges, and Huntsman announced in 2018 that 34 additional newsroom jobs would be cut from a staff of 90, according to The Tribune’s reporting from that time.

Unwilling to see that trend continue, the following year, Utah’s largest newspaper became the first legacy for-profit newspaper in the U.S. to transition to a 501(c)(3) nonprofit.

This move, along with other initiatives (such as reducing print from seven days per week to twice



Magali Gauthier.

Almanac Visual Journalist Magali Gauthier, left, and reporter Cameron Rebosio, right, take a selfie in 2022 while reporting at SLAC in Menlo Park on the world’s biggest camera.

per week), appears to be bearing results. In 2021, The Tribune’s Executive Editor Lauren Gustus announced to readers that the company was “healthy” and “sustainable” — with a newsroom 23% larger than the prior year — and had no plans to return to a “previously precarious position.”

Gustus worked at The Tribune from 2004 and 2007 before moving on to management and corporate roles in other newspapers, including ones owned by Gannett and McClatchy. In November 2020, she left her position as editor at Sacramento Bee to return to The Tribune.

Among the changes that nonprofit status has brought to The Tribune, Gustus said, is that the organization no longer has a single owner.

“It has fewer demands from an ownership entity with respect to return on investment, which means we can put our profits right back into our journalism,” Gustus said. “We’ve also got more financial flexibility in that we welcome subscribers and the support they give us in subscription revenues.”

Gustus said The Tribune’s donor base is broad and mostly local. Most have indicated that they are contributing because they are interested in seeing their communities be “stronger, more resilient and healthier.” No donor is large enough to influence its approach to journalism, she added.

“That’s because we are community-owned,” Gustus said. “We truly don’t answer to anyone.”

A more local example of a newsroom that’s pursued nonprofit status — and grown as a result — is in the East Bay: BerkeleySide.

Tracey Taylor, one of the three founding members of the digital-only BerkeleySide, said the formerly for-profit news organization started as a passion project between friends in 2009.

“We ran that as a for-profit for about 10 years, but I have to say it was a pretty unprofitable for-profit,” Taylor said.

Enter Cityside, a 501(c)(3) nonprofit that the BerkeleySide founders launched in 2019 to serve as the parent organization for BerkeleySide. Soon after, in 2020, Cityside also launched Oaklandside, a similar online publication covering the city of Oakland, and earlier this month announced plans to launch yet

another publication, this one for the city of Richmond.

The switch to the nonprofit model has only resulted in positive growth for Cityside, both in terms of engagement from the community and its readers and also in terms of the size of the team working at Cityside across its various publications.

BerkeleySide’s newsroom had a total of five staff members before switching to the nonprofit model in 2019, and today the whole Cityside operation employs 29 staff across its publications.

Despite launching around the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, Taylor said Cityside thrived in the midst of the chaos.

“It was good for local news outlets like ourselves,” she said. “Something that people liked and supported and read was suddenly really almost indispensable because we were providing really, really essential vital information about COVID, about vaccinations when they came along, where people could get vaccinated.”

She also said the move to the nonprofit model allowed them to expand the sources of funding they could tap into, with their new eligibility for grants intended for nonprofit newsrooms, and with individual donors now able to make tax-deductible donations.

Before becoming a nonprofit, BerkeleySide was largely getting funding from advertisers and individual members who paid roughly \$100 per year to support their work, Taylor said. Today, Cityside’s revenue sources are much more varied. This year, 18% of Cityside’s funding came from sponsorships and advertising, 21% from its members, 23% from major donors, and 36% from foundations, she said.

“As soon as we became a nonprofit, it just opened so many doors,” she said.

## CHALLENGES AHEAD

Despite the momentum building around the nonprofit news model, changing to nonprofit status doesn’t make a publication immune to the broader challenges that newsrooms across the country are facing today, according to newsroom leaders.

In August, the nonprofit Texas Tribune laid off 11 staff for the first time in its 14-year history.

“The strength of our revenue

model has propelled us through the past 14 years, fueling the Tribune’s steady growth and the enterprising work and engaging storytelling of our newsroom,” Sonal Shah, CEO, said in announcing the layoffs. “In spite of this year’s budget difficulties, we believe the business is sound and will continue to thrive.”

Journalism remains a challenging business for any organization, regardless of for-profit or nonprofit status, The Salt Lake Tribune’s Gustus said.

Across the industry, news organizations have to contend with factors beyond their control, like recent changes on major social media platforms that have caused referrals to news articles to plummet, she noted.

“I think we need a lot of experimentation,” Gustus said. “We’ll continue to see significant change and disruption, and I think we need smart people in local newsrooms making bold decisions that will lead to better outcomes.”

And despite big initiatives like Press Forward, there exist deeply embedded challenges on the funding side to surmount.

According to Harvard’s Shorenstein Center on Media, Poli-



Mountain View Voice Editor Kevin Forestieri

tics and Public Policy, foundations are often structured to tackle specific and time-limited projects.

“For most foundations, their grant-making process is ... defined around specific social issues or problems, making it more difficult to provide general operating support to a news nonprofit and for prospective grantees to define their fit,” the center’s 2018 report, “Funding the News: Foundations and nonprofit media,” stated.

But Gustus said that opportunity also accompanies nonprofit status. While continuing its traditional role as a newspaper that holds power to account and that points out areas where Utah can do better, The Tribune as a nonprofit now does more listening “on the front end” of reporting, she said.

This means gauging readers’ interest through annual surveys, regular crowdsourcing and listening sessions in the community to determine what issues are most important to them. (Accountability journalism is the top request, she said.)

Every story, she said, begins with the question: Why does the

story deserve to be here? And the follow-up is: Who is this story for?

The nonprofit model means that The Tribune is increasingly taking a role as “helpers and conveners” in finding solutions, she said. It also means moving from competition with other media partners to collaboration.

Taylor said that the financial stability that came with the nonprofit model has allowed Cityside to be more intentional when it came to developing Oaklandside and Richmondside.

She said staff conducted several interviews and surveys with members of the community in both cities, and they used that data to drive their decision-making around which beats to cover in which cities, and what types of stories community members wanted to see more or less of.

The switch also encouraged them to think more about how their work aligns with their overarching mission — something they had thought about prior to the switch but consider more seriously today.

Embarcadero Media’s Dawes agrees that greater community input seems to go hand-in-hand with the switch to nonprofit for many newsrooms, and he expects the same to be true for Embarcadero.

“We know there are great beats that can make a big public impact, like expanding coverage of education, homelessness and housing, immigrants, health, transportation and the environment,” he wrote in a letter to readers announcing the conversion from for-profit. “Being a nonprofit enables us to develop partnerships with other foundations and accept major contributions from individuals who have a passion to shed more light on a particular issue.

“We are thinking more ambitiously as well, like starting new online publications to provide news for chronically underserved communities,” Dawes wrote.

But those plans, he acknowledged, rest in large part upon the response of the communities that Embarcadero Media serves, which include Redwood City, Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley, Woodside, Palo Alto and Mountain View on the Peninsula and Pleasanton, Danville, San Ramon and Livermore in the East Bay.

In the coming year, Embarcadero Media Foundation, which will have a budget of \$5 million, aims to raise \$1 million from philanthropic giving. Dawes reported that pledges of about \$200,000 from donors have already been made.

“Local journalism has the ability to make our communities stronger by shining a light on local institutions and helping people to feel connected to their neighbors,” Dawes said in the announcement. “But we can’t do that alone. We need the support of our community to ensure that publications can continue to thrive for years to come.” ■

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 Town Administrative Offices  
 80 Fair Oaks Lane  
 Atherton, California 94027  
 650-752-0500  
 Fax 650-688-6528

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the Atherton City Council will hold a public hearing to consider a tentative map for a Request for a three-lot Subdivision Tentative Map review and Lot Line Redesignation of the parcels on 178,170 Atherton Avenue (APN 070-070-110 / 280), zoned R1-A, based on the Planning Commission's recommendation pursuant of Atherton Municipal Code Title 16.

This meeting will be held in person. The public may participate in the City Council Meeting via Zoom Meeting or by attending in-person in the Council Chambers at 80 Fair Oaks Lane Atherton, CA 94027.

**Join Zoom Meeting:**  
<https://ci-atherton-ca.zoom.us/j/506897786>  
**Meeting ID: 506 897 786**  
**One tap mobile**  
 +16699006833, 506897786# US (San Jose)  
**Dial by your location**  
 +1 669 900 6833 US (San Jose)

**Remote Public Comments:**  
 Meeting participants are encouraged to submit public comments in writing in advance of the meeting. The following email will be monitored during the meeting and public comments received will be read into the record.  
**Email:** [council@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:council@ci.atherton.ca.us)

**Description:** Request for a three lot Subdivision Tentative Map review and Lot Line Redesignation of the parcels on 178,170 Atherton Avenue (APN 070-070-110 / 280), zoned R1-A.

The project has been determined to be Categorically Exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under Class 15 Section 15315: Minor Land Divisions

A copy of the meeting agenda, City Council staff report, and application materials can be found online by Friday, December 15, 2023 here: <https://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/641/Agendas-Minutes>

**NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN** that said the proposed project is set for hearing by the City Council at its meeting on December 20th, 2023 at 6:00 PM In person. City Council decisions are final on the date of decision and may not be further appealed.

If you have any questions on the item, please contact the Project Manager. Radha Hayagreev, Senior Planner at [rhayagreev@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:rhayagreev@ci.atherton.ca.us), or (650) 752-0576. If you have any questions about the City Council meeting, please contact Francesca Reyes, Office Specialist, at [freyes@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:freyes@ci.atherton.ca.us) or (650) 752-0500. Any attendee who wishes accommodation for a disability should contact the Building Division at (650) 752-0542 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

**Date Mailed and Posted:** November 13th, 2023.

ATHERTON CITY COUNCIL  
 /s/ Anthony Suber  
 Anthony Suber, City Clerk



**Town of Atherton**  
 Town Administrative Offices  
 80 Fair Oaks Lane  
 Atherton, California 94027  
 650-752-0500  
 Fax 650-688-6528

**NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING**

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the Atherton City Council will hold a public hearing to discuss and review a draft Master Fee Schedule at the December 20, 2023, City Council Regular Meeting.

This meeting will be held in person. The public may participate in the City Council Meeting via Zoom Meeting or by attending in-person in the Council Chambers at 80 Fair Oaks Lane Atherton, CA 94027.

**Join Zoom Meeting:**

<https://ci-atherton-ca.zoom.us/j/506897786>

**Meeting ID:** 506 897 786

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**Remote Public Comments:**

Meeting participants are encouraged to submit public comments in writing in advance of the meeting. The following email will be monitored during the meeting and public comments received will be read into the record.

**Email:** [council@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:council@ci.atherton.ca.us)

**Description:** The Master Fee Schedule contains fees and charges attached to Town services delivered by each department. The Master Fee Schedule resolution reports fees for services that are provided to our residents. Fees that do not recover the full cost of providing the service result in a subsidy which shift funds away from the critical, high priority needs of public safety, public works, planning, among others.

A copy of the meeting agenda, City Council staff report, and application materials can be found online by Friday, December 15, 2023 here: <https://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/641/Agendas-Minutes>

**NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN** that said the proposed project is set for hearing by the City Council at its meeting on **December 20th, 2023, at 6:00 PM** In person. City Council decisions are final on the date of decision and may not be further appealed.

If you have any questions on the item, please contact the Finance Director, Robert Barron III at [rbarron@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:rbarron@ci.atherton.ca.us), or (650) 752-0552. If you have any questions about the City Council meeting, please contact Anthoy Suber, City Clerk, at [asuber@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:asuber@ci.atherton.ca.us) or (650) 752-0500. Any attendee who wishes accommodation for a disability should contact the City Clerk at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

**Date Mailed and Posted:** November 17, 2023.

ATHERTON CITY COUNCIL  
 /s/ Anthony Suber  
 Anthony Suber, City Clerk

**Bistro Vida**

bistro - cafe - bar



**Thank You for Voting Us #1!**

To all who voted in the Readers' Choice Awards, we are proud to announce that we won in several categories:

Best French Restaurant, Best Outdoor Dining,

Best Romantic Restaurant, and Best Place for a Date.

We are honored to have been chosen among so many other excellent candidates and privileged to have been part of the Menlo Park community for over 25 years. We are continually grateful for your support and look forward to seeing you soon in our new cocktail lounge, coming soon!

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T 650.462.1686

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[info@bistro-vida.com](mailto:info@bistro-vida.com) | [jobs@bistro-vida.com](mailto:jobs@bistro-vida.com)



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# Give back locally

## WITH A GIFT TO THE HOLIDAY FUND

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.

### DONATE ONLINE:

[almanacnews.com/holiday\\_fund](http://almanacnews.com/holiday_fund)

### The organizations below provide major matching grants to the Holiday Fund.



Rotary Club of Menlo Park

*The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation*

*The David and Lucile Packard Foundation*

Please consider donating online, which enables your gift to be processed immediately. The secure website is: [almanacnews.com/holiday\\_fund](http://almanacnews.com/holiday_fund)

Enclosed is a check for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

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The Almanac



The Almanac  
Holiday Fund  
2023

All donors and their gift amounts will be published in The Almanac unless the boxes below are checked.

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**Palo Alto, CA 94306**

The Almanac Holiday Fund is sponsored by the Embarcadero Media Foundation and Silicon Valley Community Foundation. Both are 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organizations, allowing your donation to be tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

### Boys & Girls Club of the Peninsula

Provides after-school academic support, enrichment, and mentoring for 1,800 low-income K-12 youth at nine locations across Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, and the North Fair Oaks neighborhood of Redwood City.

### Ecumenical Hunger Program

Provides emergency food, clothing, household essentials, and sometimes financial assistance to families in need, regardless of religious preference, including Thanksgiving and Christmas baskets for more than 2,000 households.

### Fair Oaks Community Center

This multi-service facility, serving the broader Redwood City community, provides assistance with child care, senior programs, citizenship and immigration, housing and employment, and crisis intervention. Programs are available in Spanish and English.

### LifeMoves

Provides shelter/housing and supportive services across 18 sites in Silicon Valley and the Peninsula. Serves thousands of homeless families and individuals annually on their path back to permanent housing and self-sufficiency.

### Literacy Partners

Supports literacy programs and projects through fundraising and community awareness. Helps community members enhance their reading, writing and related skills and education to improve their economic, professional and personal wellbeing.

### Ravenswood Family Health Center

Provides primary medical and preventive health care for all ages at its clinic in East Palo Alto. Of the more than 17,000 registered patients, most are low-income and uninsured and live in the ethnically diverse East Palo Alto, Belle Haven, and North Fair Oaks areas.

### Second Harvest Food Bank

The largest collector and distributor of food on the Peninsula, Second Harvest Food Bank distributed 52 million pounds of food last year. It gathers donations from individuals and businesses and distributes food to more than 250,000 people each month through more than 770 agencies and distribution sites in San Mateo and Santa Clara counties.

### St. Anthony's Padua Dining Room

Serves hundreds of hot meals six days a week to people in need who walk through the doors. Funded by voluntary contributions and community grants, St. Anthony's is the largest dining room for the needy between San Francisco and San Jose. It also offers take-home bags of food, as well as emergency food and clothing assistance.

### StarVista

Serves more than 32,000 people throughout San Mateo County, including children, young people and families, with counseling, prevention, early intervention, education, and residential programs. StarVista also provides crisis intervention and suicide prevention services including a 24-hour suicide crisis hotline, an alcohol and drug helpline, and a parent support hotline.

### Upward Scholars

Upward Scholars empowers low-income adults by providing them with financial support, tutoring, and other assistance so they can continue their education, get higher-paying jobs, and serve as role models and advocates for their children.

DONATE ONLINE: [almanacnews.com/holiday\\_fund](http://almanacnews.com/holiday_fund)



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694SandHill.com

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13850PaseoDelRoble.com

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1932EmersonStreet.com

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\$7,988,000 | 5 Bd | 5.5 Bth  
980MonteRosa.com

3 OLIVER COURT  
MENLO PARK



\$2,598,000 | 3 Bd | 2.5 Bth  
3OliverCt.com

195 N CALIFORNIA AVENUE  
PALO ALTO



\$4,700,000 | 5 Bd | 3.5 Bth  
195NCaliforniaAve.com

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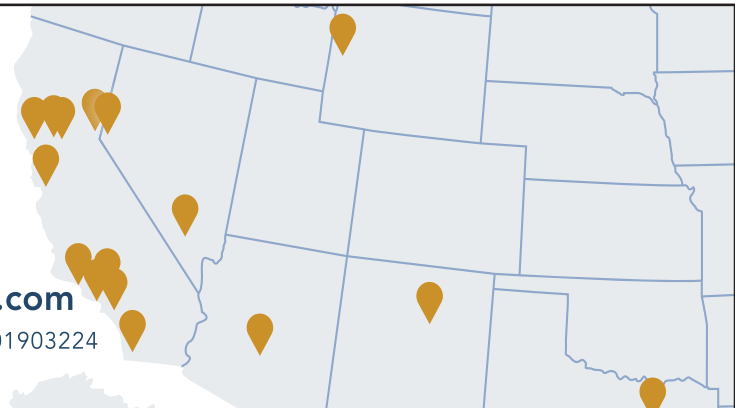
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Offer applies to new clients only. Does not apply to clients who signed listing agreements before November 13, 2023. Offer ends December 15, 2023.

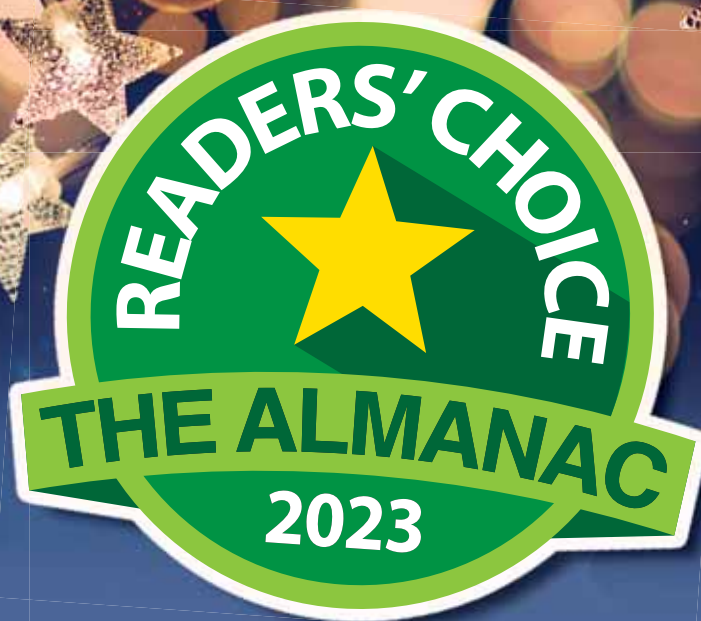
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# In the spotlight



## The best places to eat, drink and play this holiday season

Soon holiday lights will be twinkling and friends and family will gather to celebrate, so this is the perfect time to shine a light on what our readers say are the best places to eat, drink, shop and spend time with family and friends in and around Menlo Park,

Woodside, Portola Valley and Atherton.

Nearly 900 locals cast 11,201 votes for their favorites in the Almanac's 2023 Readers' Choice contest.

This year's list of winners includes some familiar favorites as well as some new places

we're eager to explore. The informational write-ups submitted by some of the winners will give you more insight into those businesses.

Here's your crowd-sourced guide to the very best of Menlo Park, Woodside, Portola Valley and Atherton.



Courtesy of Studio K-Fit

Studio K-Fit — Best Fitness Classes, Best Gym

### Arts & Entertainment

#### BEST LIVE MUSIC

##### Pioneer Saloon

2925 Woodside Road, Woodside  
(650) 851-8487  
PioneerSaloonMusic.com

#### BEST PLACE FOR A DATE

##### Bistro Vida

*Bustling Parisian-style bistro in downtown Menlo Park serving classic French cuisine for 25 years. The new cocktail lounge next door is under construction and will be opening soon.*

641 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park  
(650) 462-1686  
Bistro-Vida.com

#### BEST PLACE TO MEET PEOPLE

##### Cafe Borrone

1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park  
(650) 327-0830  
CafeBorrone.com

### Food & Drink

#### BEST BAKERY

##### Woodside Bakery

325 Sharon Park Dr., Menlo Park  
(650) 854-6207  
WoodsideBakery.com

#### BEST BREAKFAST

##### Buck's of Woodside

3062 Woodside Road, Woodside  
(650) 851-8010  
BucksRestaurant.com

#### BEST DESSERT

##### Woodside Bakery

325 Sharon Park Dr., Menlo Park  
(650) 854-6207  
WoodsideBakery.com

#### BEST HAMBURGERS

##### Dutch Goose

3567 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park  
(650) 854-3245  
DutchGoose.net

#### BEST HAPPY HOUR

##### Left Bank

635 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park  
(650) 473-6543  
LeftBank.com

#### BEST ICE CREAM/ FROZEN YOGURT

##### WildBerry Yogurt

325 Sharon Park Dr., Menlo Park  
(650) 233-8883



Courtesy of Shady Lane

**Shady Lane** — Best Boutique, Best Place to Buy Jewelry



File photo by Magali Gauthier

**Pioneer Saloon** — Best Live Music

**BEST INDEPENDENT COFFEE AND TEA HOUSE**

**Cafe Borrone**

1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park  
(650) 327-0830  
CafeBorrone.com

**BEST PIZZA**

**Amici's**

880 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park  
(650) 329-8888  
Amicis.com

**BEST PLACE TO BUY MEAT**

**Bianchini's Market**

3130 Alpine Road, Portola Valley  
(650) 851-4391  
BianchinisMarket.com

**BEST SANDWICHES**

**Bianchini's Market**

3130 Alpine Road, Portola Valley  
(650) 851-4391  
BianchinisMarket.com

**BEST TAKE OUT**

**Chef Kwan's**

630 Menlo Ave., Menlo Park  
(650) 322-4631  
ChefKwans.com

*Restaurants*

**BEST AMERICAN RESTAURANT**

**Alice's Restaurant**

17288 Skyline Blvd., Woodside  
(650) 851-0303  
AlicesRestaurant.com

**BEST ASIAN RESTAURANT**

**Chef Kwan's**

630 Menlo Ave., Menlo Park  
(650) 322-4631  
ChefKwans.com

**BEST CASUAL DINING**

**Alice's Restaurant**

17288 Skyline Blvd., Woodside  
(650) 851-0303  
AlicesRestaurant.com

**BEST DINING WITH KIDS**

**Amici's**

880 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park  
(650) 329-8888  
Amicis.com

**BEST FRENCH RESTAURANT**

**Bistro Vida**

*See Best Place for a Date for additional information.*

641 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park  
(650) 462-1686  
Bistro-Vida.com

**BEST ITALIAN RESTAURANT**

**Ristorante Carpaccio**

1120 Crane St., Menlo Park  
(650) 322-1211  
Carpaccios.com

**BEST JAPANESE RESTAURANT**

**Naomi Sushi**

1328 El Camino Real #4211, Menlo Park  
(650) 321-6902  
NaomiSushiMenloPark.com

**BEST MEXICAN RESTAURANT**

**Amigos Grill**

3130 Alpine Road #290, Portola Valley  
(650) 851-3997  
AmigosPortola.com

**BEST OUTDOOR DINING**

**Bistro Vida**

*See Best Place for a Date for additional information.*

641 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park  
(650) 462-1686  
Bistro-Vida.com

**BEST ROMANTIC RESTAURANT**

**Bistro Vida**

*See Best Place for a Date for additional information.*

641 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park  
(650) 462-1686  
Bistro-Vida.com

*Retail*

**BEST BICYCLE SHOP**

**Woodside Bike Shop**

1800 El Camino Real, Unit C, Menlo Park  
(650) 299-1071  
WoodsideBikeShop.com

**BEST BOOKSTORE**

**Kepler's Books & Magazines**

1010 El Camino Real #100, Menlo Park  
(650) 324-4321  
Keplers.com

**BEST BOUTIQUE**

**Shady Lane**

325 Sharon Park Dr., Menlo Park  
(650) 321-1099  
ShadyLaneGallery.com

**BEST FLOOR COVERINGS**

**Stephen Miller Gallery**

800 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park  
(650) 327-5040  
StephenMillerGallery.com



Courtesy of Bistro Vida

**Bistro Vida** — Best Place for a Date, Best French Restaurant, Best Outdoor Dining, Best Romantic Restaurant

*Continued on next page*



File photo by Magali Gauthier

**Peabody Gallery and Framing** — Best Frame Store/Art Gallery



Courtesy of Stanford Park Hotel

**Stanford Park Hotel** — Best Hotel

Continued from previous page

**BEST FRAME STORE/  
ART GALLERY**

**Peabody Gallery and Framing**  
603 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park  
(650) 322-2200  
PeabodyGallery.com

**BEST GIFT SHOP**

**Ladera Garden & Gifts**  
2029 Ralston Ave., Belmont  
(650) 232-7154  
LaderaGardenAndGifts.com

**BEST GROCERY**

**Bianchini's Market**  
3130 Alpine Road, Portola Valley  
(650) 851-4391  
BianchinisMarket.com/locations/  
portola-valley

**BEST HARDWARE STORE**

**Menlo Hardware**  
700 Santa Cruz Ave.,  
Menlo Park  
(650) 325-2515  
MenloHardware.com

**BEST HOME DECOR  
AND FURNISHINGS**

**Anthem**  
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Menlo Park  
(650) 440-7400  
AnthemSF.online

**BEST NURSERY**

**Ladera Garden & Gifts**  
3130 Alpine Rd #380,  
Portola Valley  
(650) 854-3850  
LaderaGardenAndGifts.com

**BEST PLACE TO BUY  
JEWELRY**

**Shady Lane**  
325 Sharon Park Dr., Menlo Park  
(650) 321-1099  
ShadyLaneGallery.com

**BEST PLACE TO BUY  
SHOES**

**Fleet Feet**  
859 Santa Cruz Ave.,  
Menlo Park  
(650) 325-9432  
FleetFeet.com/s/menlopark

**BEST PRODUCE**

**Sigona's Farmers Market**  
399 Stanford Shopping Center,  
Palo Alto  
(650) 329-1340 | Sigonas.com

**BEST SPECIALTY STORE**

**Cheeky Monkey Toys**  
640 Santa Cruz Ave.,  
Menlo Park  
(650) 328-7975  
CheekyMonkeyToys.com

*Services*

**BEST AUTO REPAIR**

**Portola Valley Garage**  
4170 Alpine Road, Portola Valley  
(650) 851-7442 | PVGarage.com

**BEST BARBER**

**Menlo Park Barber Shop**  
2100 Avy Ave., Menlo Park  
(650) 391-9008  
MenloParkBarberShop.com

**BEST DAY SPA**

**LaBelle Day Spas & Salons**  
855 El Camino Real Suites 95 & 33,  
Palo Alto  
(650) 327-6964  
LaBelleDaySpas.com

**BEST DRY CLEANER**

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*Ladera Cleaners has been serving customers at the same location since 1988, and are winners of 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2021 and 2022 Almanac Readers' Choice awards. They say "Dry Clean Only" doesn't mean clothes shouldn't be enjoyed as often as you like and, by bringing your dry cleaning to them, your favorite duds will last for years.*

3130 Alpine Road #260,  
Portola Valley  
(650) 854-2291  
LaderaCleaners.net

**BEST FITNESS CLASSES**

**Studio K-Fit**  
*Studio K-Fit staff members say that, at their core, they are a fitness studio that's community driven through unique award-winning workouts as well as an emphasis on building positive relationships among members.*

3708 Florence St., Redwood City  
(650) 503-3949 | StudioKFit.com

**BEST FLORIST**

**Ladera Garden & Gifts**  
3130 Alpine Rd #380, Portola Valley  
(650) 854-3850  
LaderaGardenAndGifts.com

**BEST GYM**

**Studio K-Fit**  
*See Best Fitness Classes for more information.*  
3708 Florence St., Redwood City  
(650) 503-3949 | StudioKFit.com

**BEST HAIR SALON**

**Antonio Cremona Salon**  
104 Portola Road, Portola Valley  
(650) 851-5757  
AntonioCremonaSalon.com

**BEST HOTEL**

**Stanford Park Hotel**  
100 El Camino Real, Menlo Park  
(650) 322-1234  
StanfordParkHotel.com

**BEST MANICURE/PEDICURE**

**A Touch of Elegance Nail Care**  
1150 Crane St., Menlo Park  
(650) 321-0679

**BEST PLUMBER**

**Guy Plumbing & Heating**  
1265 El Camino Real, Menlo Park  
(650) 323-8415 | GuyPlumbing.com

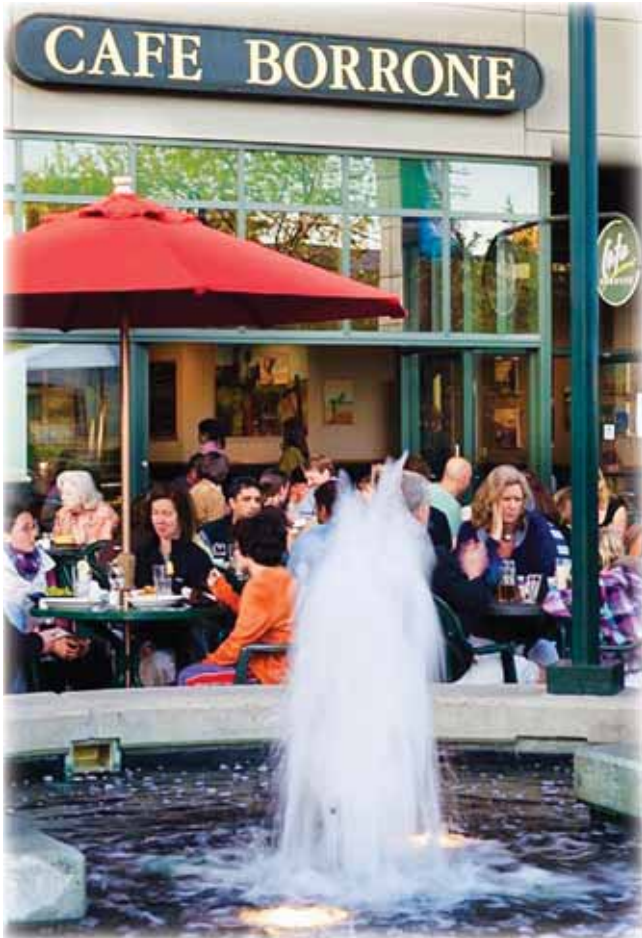
**BEST YOGA**

**Yoga Source — Palo Alto**  
158 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto  
(650) 328-9642 | YogaSource.com



File photo by Michelle Le

**Kepler's Books & Magazines** — Best Bookstore



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Best Independent Coffee  
and Tea House



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(BRUNCH ALL DAY)  
7AM-4PM

1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park  
650-327-0830

Follow us on Instagram  @CafeBorrone



It's A Five-Peat...

# THANK YOU!

We are honored to be The Almanac Readers' Choice 2018, 2019, 2021, 2022 and 2023 winner for Best Sandwiches! We are also honored to be the Almanac Readers Choice 2023 winners for Best Grocery and Best Place to Buy Meat! From our family of employees to you, thank you for keeping it local and voting us The Almanac Readers' Choice Winner once again in 2023!



PORTOLA VALLEY 3130 Alpine Rd, Portola Valley, CA 94028

SAN CARLOS 810 Laurel St, San Carlos, CA 94070

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# Employment

The Almanac offers employment advertising.

The deadline is Sunday at 11:59 pm.

Visit [AlmanacNews.com/employment\\_ads/](https://AlmanacNews.com/employment_ads/).

For assistance email [LegalNotices@AlmanacNews.com](mailto:LegalNotices@AlmanacNews.com).

Support your community

The Almanac  
**Holiday Fund**  
2023

Donate online:  
[almanacnews.com/holiday\\_fund](https://almanacnews.com/holiday_fund)



## Town of Atherton

Planning Commission, December 13, 2023  
REGULAR MEETING, 6:00 P.M.  
This meeting is held virtually and in-person at the Council Chambers  
80 Fair Oaks Lane, Atherton, CA 94027



### NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN** that the Atherton Planning Commission will hold a public hearing to consider the projects as listed below during their regular meeting.

This meeting will be held in-person and via teleconference pursuant to Government Code section 54953(e) to provide the safest environment for staff and the public while allowing for public participation. The public may participate in the Planning Commission Meeting via Zoom Meeting or by attending in-person in the Council Chambers at 80 Fair Oaks Lane, Atherton, CA 94027.

**Town of Atherton is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom Meeting.**

**Topic:** Atherton Planning Commission Regular Meeting  
**Meeting Time:** December 13, 2023, 06:00 PM Pacific Time (US and Canada)

**Join Zoom Meeting**  
<https://ci-atherton-ca.zoom.us/j/84150249099>

**Meeting ID:** 841 5024 9099  
**One tap mobile**  
+13017158592,84150249099# US (Washington DC)  
+13052241968,84150249099# US

**Find your local number:**  
<https://ci-atherton-ca.zoom.us/j/kglcVN4cq>

**Remote Public Comments:**  
Meeting participants are encouraged to submit public comments in writing in advance of the meeting. The following email will be monitored during the meeting and public comments received will be read into the record.

**Email:**  
[planningcommission@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:planningcommission@ci.atherton.ca.us)

### Projects under Public Hearing:

A. **Description:** **Tree Protection Zone Exception** for one heritage tree at 6.7x the tree's diameter for a Garage at **39 Barry Lane**, zoned R1-A (APN 070-192-070 / Permit PTP223-10).  
CEQA: This proposal has been determined to be categorically exempt from further environmental review pursuant to: CEQA Section 15304, Minor Alterations to Land

B. **Description:** request for removal of one (1) 26.5-inch DBH Coastal Live Oak at **9 Betty Lane** (APN 070-022-720) as part of a new single-family residence with JADU.  
CEQA: The proposal has been determined to be categorically exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) under CEQA 15303 (e) New construction or conversion of small structures.  
A copy of the Planning Commission staff report and application materials can be found online, by **Friday, December 8, 2023**, here: <https://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/641/Agendas-Minutes>

**NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN** that said application is set for hearing by the Planning Commission at its meeting on **December 13, 2023, at 6:00 PM** in-person and via teleconference accessible through the above-described information, at which time and place all persons interested may participate and show cause, if they have any, why the projects listed in the public hearing section should or should not be approved

**IF YOU CHALLENGE** the listed projects in court, you may be limited to raising only those issues you or someone else raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence delivered to the Planning Commission at, or prior to, the public hearing.

Planning Commission decisions are appealable by any aggrieved person to the City Council within 10 days of the date of the decision. If you have any questions on the item please contact If you have any questions on the item please contact Radha Hayagreev, Senior Planner, (408)796-4370 at [rhayagreev@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:rhayagreev@ci.atherton.ca.us) or directly to the Planning Commission at [planningcommission@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:planningcommission@ci.atherton.ca.us). For the TPZ exception update, kindly contact Sean Manalo at [smanalo@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:smanalo@ci.atherton.ca.us)

Any attendee who wishes accommodation for a disability should contact the Building Division at (650) 752-0542 at least 48 hours prior to the meeting.

**Date Posted:** November 13th, 2023.

ATHERTON PLANNING COMMISSION

/s/ Radha Hayagreev

Radha Hayagreev, Consulting Senior Planner

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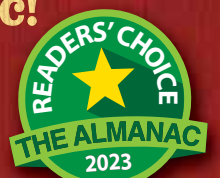
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# Public Notices

ON SQUARE CONSTRUCTION  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
File No.: M-295622  
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:  
1.) On Square Construction, located at 6748 Mission St #308, Daly City, CA 94104.  
Registered owner(s):  
TWE CORPORATION  
683 Templeton Ave  
Daly City, CA 94014  
CA  
This business is conducted by: a Corporation.  
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 09/12/23.  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on October 17 2023.  
(ALM Nov 3, 10, 17 and 24, 2023)

OLLIN REMEDIES HEALING CENTER  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-295802  
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:  
1.) OLLIN REMEDIES HEALING CENTER, located at 915 Oak Lane, Apt 2, Menlo Park, CA 94025, San Mateo County.  
Registered owner(s):  
OLLIN REMEDIES LLC  
2710 Crown Canyon Rd, 1180 San Ramon, CA 94583  
State of Incorporation/Organization: CA  
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.  
Registrant has not yet begun 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 November 03, 2023.  
(ALM Nov 10, 17, 24 and Dec 1, 2023)

EVERYTHING MATTERS PSYCHOTHER  
APY PC  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
File No.: M-295612  
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:  
1.) Everything Matters Psychotherapy PC, located at 570 El Camino Real, STE 150-459. Redwood City, CA 94063.  
Registered owner(s):  
MARGAUX A. DEVER LICENSED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER PC  
570 El Camino Real, STE 150-459 Redwood City, CA 94063  
CA  
This business is conducted by: a Corporation.  
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 08/01/2023.  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on October 16 2023.  
(ALM Oct 27, Nov 3, 10 and 17, 2023)

OLLIN REMEDIES BODEGA AND BOTANICA  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-295801  
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:  
1.) OLLIN REMEDIES BODEGA AND BOTANICA, located at 915 Oak Lane, Apt 2, Menlo Park, CA 94025.  
Registered owner(s):  
OLLIN REMEDIES LLC  
2710 Crown Canyon 1180 San Ramon, CA 94583  
State of Incorporation/Organization: CA  
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.  
Registrant has not yet begun 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 November 03, 2023.  
(ALM Nov 10, 17, 24 and Dec 1, 2023)

PMI REDWOOD REALTY  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
File No.: M-295673  
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:  
1.) PMI Redwood Realty, located at 919 Johnson Street, Redwood City, CA 94061. San Mateo County.  
Registered owner(s):  
R&R REAL ESTATE ENDEAVORS  
919 Johnson Street  
Redwood City, CA 94061  
CA  
This business is conducted by: a Corporation.  
Registrant has not yet commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on October 20 2023.  
(ALM Oct 27, Nov 3, 10 and 17, 2023)

KAHLILA MAE LIVERPOOL, LLC  
KAHLILA MAE VENTURES, LLC  
KML VENTURES, LLC  
KAHLILA MAE LIVERPOOL VENTURES, LLC  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
File No.: M-295508  
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:  
1.) Kahlila Mae Liverpool, LLC, 2.) Kahlila Mae Ventures, LLC, 3.) KML Ventures, LLC, 4.) Kahlila Mae Liverpool Ventures, LLC, located at 870 Campus Drive, Apt. 301, Daly City, CA 94015.  
Registered owner(s):  
KAHLILA MAE VENTURES LLC  
870 Campus Drive, Apt. 301  
Daly City, CA 94015  
California  
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.  
Registrant has not yet begun 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 October 03 2023.  
(ALM Nov 3, 10, 17 and 24, 2023)

MAGIC CLEANING SERVICES  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
File No.: M-295628  
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:  
1.) Magic Cleaning Services, located at 1885 East Bayshore Rd. Spc. 66, East Palo Alto, CA 94303. San Mateo County.  
Registered owner(s):  
OLGA LILIA GUTIERREZ  
1885 East Bayshore Rd. Spc 66  
East Palo Alto, CA 94303  
ALBA JUDITH SEVILLADESIERRA  
1271 Poplar Avenue APT. 410D  
Sunnyvale, CA 94086  
This business is conducted by: Co-Partners.  
Registrant has not yet begun 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 October 17 2023.  
(ALM Oct 27, Nov 3, 10 and 17, 2023)

AMIKERS  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-295836  
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:  
1.) AMIKERS, located at 350 Sharon Park Dr. APT H302, Menlo Park, CA 94025.  
Registered owner(s):  
JIN SOO DAVID KIM  
350 Sharon Park Dr. APT H302  
Menlo Park, CA 94025  
This business is conducted by: an Individual.  
Registrant has not yet begun 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 November 09, 2023.  
(ALM Nov 17, 24, Dec 1 and 8, 2023)

MIGHTY TRANSPORT  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
File No.: M-295626  
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:  
1.) Mighty Transport, located at 50 North San Mateo Dr. Unit 112 San Mateo, CA 94401.  
Registered owner(s):  
BENDITU INC.  
50 North San Mateo Dr. Unit 112  
San Mateo, CA 94401  
California  
This business is conducted by: a Corporation.  
Registrant has not yet commenced to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.  
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on October 17 2023.  
(ALM Nov 10, 17, 24 and Dec 1, 2023)

IN THE CIRCUIT COURT OF THE STATE OF OREGON

FOR JACKSON COUNTY

Juvenile Department

In the Matter of

XADRIEN BALCITA-LOPEZ,

A Child.

Case No. 22JU03899

PUBLISHED SUMMONS

TO: Ivar Lopez

IN THE NAME OF THE STATE OF OREGON:  
A petition has been filed asking the court to terminate your parental rights to the above-named child under ORS 419B.500, 419B.502, 419B.504, 419B.506 and/or 419B.508 for the purpose of placing the child for adoption.  
YOU ARE REQUIRED TO PERSONALLY APPEAR before the Jackson County Court 100 S Oakdale Ave, Medford, OR 97501, on the **12 th day of January 2024 at 1:00 P.M.** for a hearing on the allegations of the petition and to personally appear at any subsequent court-ordered hearing. YOU MUST APPEAR PERSONALLY in the courtroom on the date and at the time listed above. AN ATTORNEY MAY NOT ATTEND THE HEARING IN YOUR PLACE. THEREFORE, YOU MUST APPEAR EVEN IF YOUR ATTORNEY ALSO APPEARS. This summons is published pursuant to the order of the circuit court judge of the above-entitled court, dated 11/03/2023. The order directs that this summons be published once each week for three consecutive weeks, making three publications in all, in a published newspaper of general circulation in San Mateo County.  
**NOTICE READ THESE PAPERS CAREFULLY**  
IF YOU DO NOT APPEAR PERSONALLY BEFORE THE COURT OR DO NOT APPEAR AT ANY SUBSEQUENT COURT-ORDE RED HEARING, the court may proceed in your absence without further notice and TERMINATE YOUR PARENTAL RIGHTS. **RIGHTS AND OBLIGATIONS**  
(1) YOU HAVE A RIGHT TO BE REPRESENTED BY AN ATTORNEY IN THIS MATTER. If you are currently represented by an attorney, CONTACT YOUR ATTORNEY IMMEDIATELY UPON RECEIVING THIS NOTICE. Your previous attorney may not be representing you in this matter.  
IF YOU WISH TO HIRE AN ATTORNEY, please retain one as soon as possible to represent you in this proceeding. If you need help finding an attorney, you may call the Oregon State Bar's Lawyer Referral Service at (503) 684-3763 or toll free in Oregon at (800) 452-7636.  
IF YOU CANNOT AFFORD TO HIRE AN ATTORNEY and you meet the state's financial guidelines, you are entitled to have an attorney appointed for

you at state expense. TO REQUEST APPOINTMENT OF AN ATTORNEY TO REPRESENT YOU AT STATE EXPENSE, YOU MUST IMMEDIATELY CONTACT the Jackson County Circuit Court at 609 W 10th Street, Medford, OR 97501, phone number 541-776-7171, extension 585, between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m. for further information..  
IF YOU ARE REPRESENTED BY AN ATTORNEY, IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH YOUR ATTORNEY AND TO KEEP YOUR ATTORNEY ADVISED OF YOUR WHEREABOUTS.  
(2) If you contest the petition, the court will schedule a hearing on the allegations of the petition and order you to appear personally and may schedule other hearings related to the petition and order you to appear personally. IF YOU ARE ORDERED TO APPEAR, YOU MUST APPEAR PERSONALLY IN THE COURTROOM, UNLESS THE COURT HAS GRANTED YOU AN EXCEPTION IN ADVANCE under ORS 419B.918 to appear by other means including, but not limited to, telephonic or other electronic means. An attorney may not attend the hearing(s) in your place.  
**PETITIONER'S ATTORNEY**  
Kimberly S.T. Bolen  
Sr. Assistant Attorney General  
Oregon Department of Justice  
1555 E. McAndrews Rd, Suite 200  
Medford, OR 97504  
Phone: (541) 414-1030  
ISSUED this 8th day of November 2023.

Issued by: /s/ Kimberly S.T. Bolen, OSB # 964420  
Senior Assistant Attorney General  
(ALM Nov 17, 24 and Dec 1, 2023)

SUMMONS Case No. 21STCV37482  
(CITACION JUDICIAL)

NOTICE TO DEFENDANT: Jessica Schatz, an individual; (A VISO AL DEMANDADO): Joel Cameron Buchsdrucker, an individual, and DOES 1 to 20, Inclusive YOU ARE BEING SUED BY PLAINTIFF: Fatemeh Beikzadeh, an (LO ESTÁ DEMANDANDO EL DEMANDANTE): individual

NOTICE! You have been sued. The court may decide against you without your being heard unless you respond Within 30 days. Read the information below. You have 30 CALENDAR DAYS after this summons and legal papers are served on you to file a written response at this court and have a copy served on the plaintiff. A letter or phone call will not protect you. Your written response must be in proper legal form If you want the court to hear your case. There may be a court form that you can use for your response. You can find these court forms and more information at the California Courts Online Self-Help Center ([www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/)) your county law library, or the courthouse nearest you. If you cannot pay the filing fee, ask the court clerk for a fee waiver form. If you do not file your response on time, you may lose the case by default, and your wages, money, and property may be taken without further warning from the court.  
There are other legal requirements. You may want to call an attorney right away. If you do not know an attorney, you may want to call an attorney referral service, If you cannot afford an attorney, you may be eligible for free legal services from a nonprofit legal services program. You can locate these nonprofit groups at the California Legal Services Web site ([www.lawhelpcalifornia.org/](http://www.lawhelpcalifornia.org/)), the California Courts Online Self-Help Center ([www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/](http://www.courtinfo.ca.gov/selfhelp/)) or by contacting your local court or county bar association. NOTE: The court has a statutory lien for waived fees and costs on any settlement or arbitration award Of \$10,000 or more in a civil case. The court's lien must be paid before the court will dismiss the case. IAVISOI Lo

han demandado. Si no responde dentro de 30 días, la corte puede declid/r en su contra s/n escuchar su versión. Lea la Información a continuación  
Tiene 30 DIAS DE CALENDARIO después de que le entreguen esta citación y papeles legales para presentar una respuesta por escrito en esta code y hacer que se entregue una copia a/ demandante. Una carta o una llamada te/efánica no lo protegen. Su respuesta por escrito tiene que estar en formato legal correcto si desea que procesen su caso en la cone. Es posible/e que haya un formulario que usted pueda usar para su respuesta. Puede encontrar estos formularios de la corte y más información en e/ Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California ([www.sucorte.ca.gov/](http://www.sucorte.ca.gov/)), en la biblioteca de leyes de su condado o en la corte que le quede más cerca. Si no puede pagar la cuota de presentación, pida al secretario de la cone que le dé un formulario de exención de pago de cuotas. Si no presenta su respuesta a tiempo, puede perder e/ caso por Incumplimiento y la corte le podrá quitar su sueldo dinero y bienes sin más advertencia.  
Hay otros requisitos iega/es. Es recomendable que llame a un abogado inmediatamente. Si no conoce a un abogado, puede llamar a un servicio de remisión a abogados. Si no puede pagar a un abogado, es posible que cumpla con los requisitos para obtener servicios legales gratuitos de un programa de servicios legales sin fines de lucro Puede encontrar estos grupos sin fines de lucro en el sitio web de California Legal Services, ([www.lawhelpcalifornia.org/](http://www.lawhelpcalifornia.org/)), en el Centro de Ayuda de las Cortes de California, ([www.sucorte.ca.gov/](http://www.sucorte.ca.gov/)) o poniéndose en contacto con la corte o el colegio de abogados locales. A VISO: Por ley, la corte tiene derecho a reclamar las cuotas y los costos exentos por imponer un gravamen sobre cualquier recuperación de \$10,000 más de valor recibida mediante un acuerdo o una concesión de arbitraje en un caso de derecho civil. Tiene que pagar el gravamen de la corte antes de que la corte pueda desear e/ casa e name an a resso e cou s: (El nombre y dirección de la corte es);

CALIFORNIA SUPERIOR COURT  
312 N. SPRING STREET  
LOS ANGELES, CA 90012

The name, address, and telephone number of plaintiff's attorney, or plaintiff without an attorney, is:  
(El nombre, la dirección y el número de teléfono del abogado del demandante, o del demandante que no tiene abogado, es):  
Michael H. Moghtader, Esq. (SBN 206421) (818) 996-9600 (818) 996-1700 Christine Ava kian, Esq. (SBN 319921)  
MHM LAW GROUP, APLC, 16530 Ventura Blvd., Suite 606  
Encino, California 91436  
DATE: 1 212021 Clerk, by H. Flores-Hernandez, Deputy (Fecha) (Secretario) (Ad/unto)  
NOTICE TO THE PERSON SERVED: You are served as an Individual defendant.

(ALM Nov 3, 10, 17 and 24, 2023)

**The Almanac is adjudicated to publish in San Mateo County.**

- Fictitious Business Name
- Abandonment of Fictitious Business Name
- Name Change
- Partnership Withdrawal or Dissolution
- Petition to Administer Estate - Probate Hearing
- Notice of Bulk Sale
- Legal Summons
- Trustee Sale

**The deadline is Sunday at 11:59 pm. Visit [AlmanacNews.com/legal\\_notices/](http://AlmanacNews.com/legal_notices/) For assistance email [LegalNotices@AlmanacNews.com](mailto:LegalNotices@AlmanacNews.com).**

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- 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
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HERE'S WHAT SOME OF THE JUDGES OF THE 2022 CALIFORNIA JOURNALISM AWARDS ARE SAYING ABOUT OUR WORK —

**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

Please help support the local journalism and the award-winning team that is driven by the desire to bring you fresh, original reporting.

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The Almanac

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# Menlo Park to gather data on impact of Middle Avenue traffic safety pilot project

By Cameron Rebosio

Menlo Park's Middle Avenue pilot project is getting a mixed reaction, so commissioners at a Nov. 8 Complete Streets meeting came up with a plan to track its success and conduct outreach.

The City Council voted to remove street parking along sections of Middle Avenue in September. The pilot project aimed to increase street safety, particularly for cyclists who could be injured by a car door opening into the bike lane.

Residents complained about a perceived lack of community outreach, many of whom showed up to council meetings to say they hadn't heard about the parking removal proposal until the last few council meetings held on the topic.

Staffers said they had received several emails from people who

use Middle Avenue about the pilot project, with about half positive and half negative. Many of those concerned questioned whether the project was accomplishing anything, and wondering how many cyclists benefited.

The commissioners said that they saw a community survey as an opportunity to also inform residents about Menlo Park's Vision Zero plan, which aims to reduce collision-related fatalities in the city to zero and injuries by 50% by 2040.

The city plans to collect data about the pilot project, including traffic volume, in early 2024 with a focus on February. The timing of data collection was a concern because fewer families use Nealon Park, located on Middle Avenue, in the winter, while fewer children are biking in the summer as school is out.

The commission also set out to survey residents in early 2024,

saying that they heard from 700 residents last time. Since a core goal of the pilot project is to protect children who bike to and from school, the commission decided to work with schools to reach them.

The data collected will aid city staff in determining whether the changes to Middle Avenue should become permanent.

City staff will also evaluate parking occupancy to ensure that the removal of parking isn't overly detrimental to residents and users of Middle Avenue. City staff are also planning two community meetings for early 2024, one in-person and one online.

The Middle Avenue pilot project is currently in effect for a minimum of six months, but does not have a specific end date. ■

Email Staff Writer Cameron Rebosio at [crebosio@almanacnews.com](mailto:crebosio@almanacnews.com).

# Santa Clara Valley used to produce apricots. Today, these city-run orchards serve as relics of a bygone era

by Julia Gentin /  
TheSixFifty.com

My grandparents have lived in their house in the Los Altos Highlands neighborhood for over 50 years, built on an apricot orchard in what was then unincorporated Santa Clara County. My grandfather maintains various fruit trees, from pomegranate and grapefruit to plum. But his Blenheim apricot trees are the originals and most reminiscent of the Valley of Heart's Delight, what Silicon Valley was known as due to its fertile soil and plentiful orchards.

The orange- and pink-tinged fuzzy fruits are mostly sweet with a hint of sour. They are tangy and juicy, dripping down your arm after a ripe first bite. But the fruit, which must be handpicked, is also fragile. Its harvest season is short, lasting only a few weeks starting anywhere from late May to early July.

"You can't go into the store and buy what you eat right off the tree," said Matthew Sutton, founder of Orchard Keepers, an organization that installs and maintains home orchards, hobby orchards and edible gardens throughout Santa Cruz and Santa Clara counties. "Apricots that are bought in-store are picked early and their sugars haven't developed properly. Even if they soften on the counter at home,



Courtesy Matthew Sutton

The Saratoga Heritage Orchard is the largest city-owned apricot orchard at 14 acres of land.

they're not going to have that same syrupy, sugary sweetness as a sun-ripened fruit at its peak. It's a treasure to be able to get a tree-ripened fruit at the right time."

From the 1850s to the 1970s, Santa Clara Valley was the center of apricot production, dominated by family-owned orchards.

While Silicon Valley is no longer an agricultural epicenter, nearly 75% of the apricots grown in the United States still come from California, according to the Agricultural Marketing Resource Center. (Although the harvest was small this year due to a harsher winter that blew blossoms off the trees during their

approximately two-week bloom.)

Today, the three city-owned heritage apricot orchards in Saratoga, Sunnyvale and Los Altos are remnants of a history that has been preserved despite challenges due to climate change and increased development in Silicon Valley.

## A fruitful past

Robin Chapman, a journalist and author of three books, including "California Apricots: The Lost Apricots of Silicon Valley," grew up on the site of a former apricot orchard

See **ORCHARDS**, page 29

## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

### First Lady holds fundraiser in Atherton

First Lady Jill Biden was scheduled to visit Atherton on Wednesday, Nov. 15, for a presidential reelection campaign event while her husband, President Joe Biden, was in San Francisco for the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit.

The event for the "Biden Victory Fund" was hosted by Doug and Lisa Goldman and former state Controller Steve Westly and philanthropist Anita Yu Westly. The Westlys hosted an event for President Biden in June. The Goldmans run the nonprofit Lisa and Douglas Goldman Fund, which supports organizations that promote democracy and civil liberties, education, literacy and the environment.

Ticket prices ranged from \$250 to the top-tier \$10,000 "host" tickets, which included a photo with the first lady.

### Peninsula Clean Energy hires new COO, CFO

Peninsula Clean Energy, a community choice energy program that San Mateo County formed in February 2016, has hired a new chief operating officer (COO) and chief financial officer (CFO), according to a Nov. 14 press release.

PCE's new COO is Shalini Swaroop, former chief legal and policy officer at MCE Clean Energy. Nick Bijur is the new CFO.

Bijur formerly worked at Pacific Gas and Electric Company (PG&E), where he was vice president of finance and treasurer.

As COO, Swaroop will help lead internal efforts toward meeting Peninsula Clean Energy's strategic plan and will oversee the agency's regulatory and legislative affairs, energy programs and marketing/community outreach departments. She will also provide executive leadership for the agency's recently adopted diversity, equity, access and inclusion plan.

Bijur will manage the PCE's more than \$350 million annual operating budget and investment portfolio, stand up a new enterprise risk management function and help the agency balance decarbonization goals with the mandate of affordable clean energy at competitive rates, according to the press release. That includes continuing to implement electric generation rates that are at least 5% lower than generation rates charged by PG&E.

PCE's most recent CFO was Kristina Alagar Cordero, who served in the role from August 2022 to April 2023, according to a PCE press release and Alagar Cordero's LinkedIn page.

Shawn Marshall previously served as the PCE COO before stepping into the CEO role in July.

### M-A Bears return home for NCAA Women's Soccer game

Menlo-Atherton High School alums Lexi Quinn and Evie Calhoon are coming to Stanford University for the second round of NCAA Women's Soccer competition at 3:30 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 17, at Cagan Stadium.

The women play for the Brown University Bears and will face off against Mississippi State University.

Calhoon, a senior at Brown, is one of the captains of the Bears. Quinn, a junior at Brown, started playing soccer in Menlo Park AYSO.

Brown achieved a 7-0 Ivy League record this season and Brown's fourth Ivy League title in four years, according to a press release.

The two hope to defeat Mississippi State and play Stanford University on Sunday, Nov. 19.

— Angela Swartz



Courtesy Brown University team photographer

Menlo-Atherton High School graduate Lexi Quinn plays soccer for Brown University.

**WOODLAND SCHOOL**

*continued from page 5*

School, asked the board to “try to represent its constituents as aggressively as possible in this lease negotiation.”

“Keep in mind that this is about the health and wealth welfare of the children in this community, which is one of your core missions as the school board,” she said.

**‘I also understand how shocking and upsetting it must have been to learn recently that things changed in regard to the lease back in 2017.’**

HEATHER HOPKINS,  
LAS LOMITAS TRUSTEE

The petition states that Woodland’s play areas are the only public open space for play and recreation within our neighborhood or even within close proximity to the neighborhood. Laderans are calling on the school board to amend the lease to open the play areas to the public at 3:30 p.m. on weekdays and maintain unrestricted use of the areas on weekends, public school holidays and during winter, spring and summer break. They also want to amend the lease to prohibit the construction of a parking lot on the play areas.

In October, leaders of Woodland, which has about 300 students in preschool through eighth grade, cited safety as a key reason for trying to keep general neighborhood use of the recreational areas to after school hours. But they also expressed appreciation for community members and a willingness to work with them on their concerns.

Trustees also considered a change to a board policy to state that although school facilities are available for community use when the activity does not interfere with the district’s instructional programs, leased properties like Woodland that have spelled out agreements for use of facilities would be exempt. The board voted to table the policy change, acknowledging that, given feedback from Laderans, it didn’t make sense to even be presenting it at this time. Interim Superintendent Shannon Potts said the policy was drafted to make the existing facilities policy more explicit.

**What sparked the recent upheaval**

Dan Lopez, who’s lived in Ladera for over 20 years, said his 11-year-old son who attends La Entrada Middle School in the district, was told to leave Woodland’s field.

“What burned a lot of people is they started running people off the field,” he said.

He alleged that the school has more consistently violated the lease terms by using the field as a parking lot and not properly managed its traffic.

**District parents believe the district should charging Woodland more**

The school paid \$941,865 to the district to lease the land in 2022, according to a 2022 district financial audit. The district’s lease with private school Phillips Brooks Academy brought in about \$1.3 million that year for its campus.

Residents contend that although the district is bringing in money from the Woodland lease, the private school should be charged far more than what they consider to be its current below-market rate rent.

“It’s woefully undervalued land,” Lopez said. “The district has an obligation to lease at market value to private parties. They haven’t been keeping up on the increases in rent they’re allowed to. ... It’s almost like the school district is gifting this to Woodland.”

A lot of factors are considered when determining lease agreements, according to district spokesperson Kelli Twomey. For example, Woodland School pays for the maintenance and capital improvement of the property.

“Rates change over time based on many factors,” she said in a Thursday, Nov. 9, email. “Comparing the rental cost of a property leased today to the rental cost of a similar property leased 11 years ago is an inapposite comparison. At the time the lease was signed in 2012, we believe it was set at a reasonable rate.”

**Lack of clarity in play area usage hours**

Much of the contentiousness and confusion involves conflicting information from different but related documents about the operating hours at Woodland, which has a lease agreement with the district for the former Ladera School campus going back to the early 1980s. Ladera School itself closed in 1979.

Woodland’s student and family programs run from 7:30 a.m.



Andrea Gemmet

Woodland School, at 360 La Cuesta Drive in Ladera, leases its campus from Las Lomitas School District.

to 6 p.m., according to Head of School Jennifer Warren.

But a 2017 lease amendment, approved by the school board on Dec. 13, 2017, according to meeting minutes, twice states Woodland’s school hours being 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. But in another section, it indicates the hours are 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Signs posted around the school state the campus is closed to the public until 5:30 p.m. on weekdays.

**‘It’s almost like the school district is gifting this to Woodland.’**

DAN LOPEZ, LADERA RESIDENT

Warren previously told The Almanac in an email that “the intended lease term” was 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. After an Oct. 30 special school board meeting, the school made the following fixes to address residents’ concerns, Warren said on Wednesday, Nov. 8: fixing the right turn exit out of Woodland School to make it safer for oncoming traffic and changing the signs on the fences saying that campus access begins at 5 p.m. on weekdays. School officials modified the gym lighting to face downwards to decrease light pollution, she said.

However, she said Woodland’s existing conditional use permit (CUP) with the county goes to 5:30 p.m. Woodland should have asked the county to align the CUP hours with the lease, said Warren, who was not head of school at the time.

While Woodland has a Portola Valley mailing address, it’s located in unincorporated San Mateo County.

“This would have extended the hours from 5:30 p.m. to 6 p.m. by the county of San Mateo,” she said. “We now are requesting this

amendment in the current CUP renewal process.”

But an attorney representing the Ladera alliance said that the conditional use permit from the county limits play area use only until 3 p.m. This news organization has submitted a Public Records Act request for the document to verify this claim, but has not yet received it.

Laderans want access to be more in line with the regular hours at the district’s Las Lomitas and La Entrada schools, which typically let out at about 3 p.m.

District board members believe a resolution to the community’s concerns needs to balance safety considerations with providing places for residents, particularly local children, to recreate.

However, they said, the matter warrants much further study, including the effort to clarify details in the lease.

The district’s legal counsel, Gina Beltramo, advised that seeking any clarification in a contract likely requires another lease amendment.

**More on the potential facilities policy change**

Trustees unanimously spoke out against amending the facilities policy. Board President Jason Morimoto apologized for bringing the policy update to the board, noting that there should have been more context given about the reason for bringing the change to the board.

“The redline policy appears to endorse a different standard for public property that is subject to a lease or license,” said Trustee Paige Winikoff. “As an elected person ... I do not approve of any policy that subjects constituents to different standards, depending on where they live. I’m surprised by this. I do not want to vote for it now or ever unless something changes.”

Trustee Laura Moon agreed, noting that she has received an “outpouring” of feedback from

Ladera residents over the last few months regarding Woodland vSchool play areas use and, more recently, the board policy amendment.

“I’d like to assure their constituents that we hear you and that we recognize our responsibility to act on your behalf,” she said.

**Legal action threatened**

Laderans say they are “considering all options,” including legal action, if the play area restrictions are not lifted.

Andrew Pierce of Pierce & Shearer, an attorney representing the Equitable Access Rights Alliance, said that his client will be taking legal action against the district if it doesn’t amend the lease. He noted that the outdoor play areas within school were not offered to the public through the state’s Naylor Act (which only applies to property that has been used entirely or partially for school playgrounds, playing fields, or other outdoor recreational uses) so they are governed by the Civic Center Act which states that every public school facility is considered a civic center for citizens.

“We urge the district to take these things into account in negotiating and potentially modifying the lease,” Pierce said.

Lopez said community members “look at this as a much bigger issue than Ladera (and Woodland School).”

“It’s privatizing public land and having the steward of that land be complicit in it,” he said.

Woodland School Board of Trustees Chair Sharon Chang said that the district and school have made good progress in their discussions.

Ladera Community Association President Wynn White said Laderans needs to know that the district is representing the interest of the community and not just its tenant. ■

Email Staff Writer Angela Swartz at [aswartz@almanacnews.com](mailto:aswartz@almanacnews.com).

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**FAKE NEWS**

*continued from page 10*

gave students two articles on the origins of the coronavirus. One was an opinion piece from the New York Post, a tabloid, and the other was from a scientific journal. He asked students which they thought was accurate. More than 90% chose the Post piece.

"It made me realize that we need to focus on the skills to understand content, as much as we focus on the content itself," Chang said.

He now incorporates media literacy in all aspects of his lesson plans. He relies on the Stanford History Education Group, which offers free media literacy resources for teachers, and took

part in a KQED media literacy program for teachers.

In addition to teaching students how to evaluate online information, he shows them how to create their own media. Homework assignments include making TikTok-style videos on protein synthesis for mRNA vaccines, for example. Students then present their projects at home or at lunchtime events for families and the community.

"The biggest impact, I've noticed, is that students feel like their voice matters," Chang said. "The work isn't just for a grade. They feel like they're making a difference."

Ormsby, the Los Angeles County librarian, has also been promoting media literacy for years. Librarians generally have

been on the forefront of media literacy education, and California's new law refers to the Modern School Library Standards for media literacy guidelines.

Ormsby teaches concepts like "lateral reading" (comparing an online article with other sources to check for accuracy) and reverse imaging (searching online to trace a photo to its original source or checking if it's been altered). She also provides lesson plans, resources and book recommendations such as "True or False: A CIA analyst's guide to spotting fake news" and, for elementary students, "Killer Underwear Invasion! How to spot fake news, disinformation & conspiracy theories."

She's happy that the law passed, but would like to see librarians

included in the rollout and the curriculum implemented immediately, not waiting until the frameworks are updated.

The gradual implementation of the law was deliberate, since schools are already grappling with so many other state mandates, said Alvin Lee, executive director of Generation Up, a student-led advocacy group that was among the bill's sponsors. He's hoping that local school boards decide to prioritize the issue on their own by funding training for teachers and moving immediately to get media literacy into classrooms.

"Disinformation contributes to polarization, which we're seeing happen all over the world," said Lee, a junior at Stanford who said it's a top issue among his

classmates. "Media literacy can address that."

In San Francisco Unified, Ricardo Elizalde is a teacher on special assignment who trains elementary teachers in media literacy. His staff gave out 50 copies of "Killer Underwear!" for teachers to build activities around, and encourages students to make their own media, as well.

Elementary school is the perfect time to introduce the topic, he said.

"We get all these media thrown at us from a young age, we have to learn to defend ourselves," Elizalde said. "Media literacy is a basic part of being literate. If we're just teaching kids how to read, and not think critically about what they're reading, we're doing them a disservice." ■

**SUPERVISORS**

*continued from page 9*

"I think Mr. Canepa's right when he talks about taking the politics out of it, we've already seen it here this morning with Mr. Mueller," Slocum said, before he was cut off.

"I take offense to that, Mr. Slocum," Mueller said, arguing that he was making a policy

suggestion, not a political one.

"Thank you for your opinion, appreciate it," said Slocum sarcastically.

Shortly after the exchange, Mueller said he was done with the side comments that he felt were directed at him.

"I have to say, in my time on this board I've taken quite a bit of disparagement," said Mueller, who objected to accusations of

caring more about ambition, or the politics of the decision, rather than the policy.

"And I'm going to start telling my colleagues, I'm not going to take disparagement like that anymore. I'm not going to take side comments. I don't do that to you, so please don't do it to me," he said.

Corzo likewise said she disagreed with a policy that could

potentially make the board's first member who is a woman of color ineligible to serve as president in her first term.

Canepa was undeterred and offered the motion to approve the rotation policy anyway, saying he hoped "that collegiality and sanity prevail, and not one's ambitions."

"There's no need for disparagement like that, Supervisor

Canepa," said Mueller.

"Let's all stay focused on the issues," said Supervisor Dave Pine.

Pine offered a replacement motion to work with Mueller to create an alternative policy that could be considered at a later meeting, which was agreed to by a vote of 3-2, thus delaying the implementation of any formal policy for now. ■

**MEETING**

*continued from page 5*

the strained relationship while hoping the meeting would lead to cooperation.

"Coming here I thought of your trip to China when I was the vice president of China. We had a meeting; it was 12 years ago. I

still remember our interactions vividly. A lot has happened since then," Xi said, mentioning the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent economic recovery.

"The China-U.S. relationship is the most important bilateral relationship in the world," Xi added.

Xi also said that the world is big enough for the two countries

to succeed and said he hoped the two nations would coexist and find a path to get along, believing the future of the bilateral relationship will improve.

According to a White House senior official, the closed meeting will touch on issues such as Taiwan, the South China Sea, the Russian invasion of Ukraine and

conflicts in the Middle East.

Xi arrived in the U.S. on Tuesday, Nov. 14, for the high-stakes meeting with Biden during the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation summit taking place in San Francisco this week. Biden flew into San Francisco International Airport Tuesday afternoon.

It's been an eventful couple of

years for Filoli, which saw the estate's popular gardens host the long-running PBS series Antiques Roadshow in 2022. The Almanac has reached out to Filoli for comment on hosting the bilateral summit between the two world leaders, but did not get a response by its Wednesday afternoon press deadline. ■

**ORCHARDS**

*continued from page 27*

off Covington Road in Los Altos. Although she worked in broadcast journalism around the country, she "always felt like a Californian," returning to Los Altos in 2009 to take care of her parents. Following their deaths, she wrote about Silicon Valley history as a way to process her childhood and their deaths.

"I had new eyes and much love," Chapman said. "I was reconciling life as a child with adult life and the beauties of California."

Technology had passed agriculture in local impact in 1973, about when she left, Chapman said, a time when Ames Research Center and Lockheed Martin helped transform the area into Silicon Valley. In response to the changes and disappearance of most of the agriculture, Chapman's book sought to investigate how the orchards flourished in Santa Clara Valley in the first place.

Stone fruit originally came from Japan and China. It later reached the Mediterranean region, which was surrounded by sea and bay, just like Santa Clara Valley, Chapman said.

When Junipero Serra and other missionaries came to California, they brought Mediterranean fruit trees with them as vestiges of the lives they left behind. With the aid of irrigation techniques developed by North African countries, Chapman said, missionaries cared for the apricot trees they had brought over, and 1792 was the first year of a significant apricot crop in California. And during the Gold Rush, the growing population noticed the good weather and success of fruit in the neglected mission gardens and accelerated the development of the orchards.

"Great weather and soil were ingredients for an (apricot) industry, just like in technology, when innovators, entrepreneurs and ideas were ingredients for an industry, even if it was a different medium," Chapman said.

The 1850s marked the start of 120 years of success for apricot orchards in Santa Clara Valley, spurred by smaller family-owned plots. As railroad production increased, orchardists were able to move produce quickly and establish the agricultural economy. Apricot production reached a peak of 160,000 tons annually from almost 24,000 farms and orchards in Santa Clara Valley,

Chapman said. (By comparison, total U.S. apricot production was 41,740 tons in 2021.) In the 1920s, Santa Clara Valley grew 8 million fruit trees each spring.

Apricots grow on shallow-rooted trees in deep, sandy soil and require 850 hours a year at temperatures under 45 degrees, which is why the Central Valley is too hot for apricots, said Orchard Keepers founder Sutton. Blenheim apricots are ideal for drying but aren't easily shipped because of their fragility.

Dried apricots were used in World War I and II as soldiers began to appreciate the fruit in their diet, Chapman said. The fruit was often picked by children and their schools, aware of the labor, delayed fall start dates as a result. "It was only when we grew up and moved away that we realized how exotic and how scarce these apricots were everywhere else we lived. How lucky we were to enjoy them in such abundance!" Chapman wrote in "California Apricots."

**Where to find the orchards**

In addition to the three city-owned heritage orchards, other privately owned apricot orchards are located around Silicon Valley,

including Novakovich Orchard, Packard Foundation Orchard and Alta Mesa Memorial Park. Here is a list of remaining apricot orchards we've compiled:

**Los Altos Heritage Orchard:** The Los Altos Heritage Orchard is run by the city and historically preserved. They are in the process of hiring a new orchardist. The fruit is sold at DeMartini Orchard store across the street.

Address: 1 N. San Antonio Road, Los Altos.

**Saratoga Heritage Orchard:** The Saratoga Heritage Orchard is run by the city, maintained by Orchard Keepers and historically preserved. The apricots are not sold, but Saratoga residents can come to Community Harvest Days or volunteer to pick fruit to be donated with Village Harvest.

Address: 13650 Saratoga Ave., Saratoga.

**Sunnyvale Heritage Orchard:** The Sunnyvale Heritage Orchard is run by the city and historically preserved. It is maintained by 88-year-old Charlie Olson, who is a third-generation orchardist. The fruit is sold at a barn next to the orchard.

Address: 560 E. Remington Drive, Sunnyvale.

**Novakovich Orchard:**

Family-owned Novakovich Orchard sells fruit on-site, and the family used to also maintain the Saratoga Heritage Orchard down the street.

Address: 14251 Fruitvale Ave., Saratoga.

**Packard Orchard:** The Packard Foundation Orchard is a privately owned 60-acre orchard in Los Altos Hills operated by the Lucile and David Packard foundation.

Address: 26580 Taaffe Road, Los Altos Hills.

**Alta Mesa Memorial Park:** Apricot trees surround the Alta Mesa Cemetery, where Steve Jobs, a famous apricot fan, is buried.

Address: 695 Arastradero Road, Palo Alto. ■

**LEHUA GREENMAN**



*"Give thanks not just on Thanksgiving Day, but every day of your life. Appreciate and never take for granted all that you have."*

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**RESTRUCTURING**

*continued from page 5*

also the loss of connection, institutional knowledge and the ability to provide services to the public. Staff turnover and the continued needs of the community and our residents, in turn, have caused stress for the remaining staff as they continue to serve the town.”

Etman just recently filled one of those vacancies when he took the reins as the town manager on Aug. 30.

The staff report noted that the assistant town manager, town attorney, and building and planning director also had left.

Among Etman’s immediate actions as town manager was hiring Jon Biggs as interim building and planning director, staff said. But Biggs is a retired annuitant, meaning he can only serve for a certain number of hours on a short-term basis due to California Public Employees’ Retirement System guidelines. The hope is that a permanent building and planning director can be hired before Biggs is expected to leave around late February.

Other recent hires are an administrative operations employee at the front counter, a second senior accountant and a contract finance technician, staff said. As of Nov. 1, the town still had vacancies for a senior management analyst, an associate planner, a development review technician and a maintenance worker.

Part of the town’s endeavor to regroup is to have existing staff undergo professional development and training with the goal of improving service to the community.

This training, which the town calls “P.V. Refresh,” will begin Monday, Nov. 13, and go until Nov. 22. Things it will cover include:

- Getting to know other staff members and the council.
- Creating a statement of values.
- Emergency preparedness.
- Going over systems or software related to business licenses, permitting and finance.
- Completing state-mandated and other critical training.

Early next month, the town is planning a community event where residents can meet all the staff.

**Fixing financial functions**

The staff shortages, new software and lingering effects of the pandemic have set the Finance Department and its operations behind in a number of ways over recent years, staff said in its report.

**‘We are not broke. Our finances are fine. We are just behind, and so we need to get up-to-date.’**

SHARIF ETMAN, TOWN MANAGER,  
PORTOLA VALLEY

The setbacks have included delays in the town’s financial reporting and completion of annual audits and have “impacted other important operations,” staff said.

But despite that, the town manager told the council Portola Valley remains in good financial shape.

“We are not broke,” Etman said. “Our finances are fine. We are just behind, and so we need to get up-to-date. But we are not running out of money. We are not

bankrupt. We just need to get caught up, up-to-date, in compliance and get us our reporting that we need and the things that we need to get done.”

Those tasks are many and varied, however. Among the findings and recommendations in the Krisch report are:

■ Annual audit reports: The town is several years behind on producing audited financials. But the town will not be able to do this until other issues identified by the Krisch review are addressed.

■ Bank reconciliations: The town is several months behind on these and should complete them immediately. Moving forward, the town should install procedures to perform reconciliations in a timely manner.

■ Budget-to-actual reports: These documents are not being provided to town management or the public as they should. Town staff should compile these quickly to make sure it’s on budget and to let the public know of revenue and expense trends.

■ Cash-handling procedures: Portola Valley should institute a formal, townwide process sooner rather than later.

■ Software installation: The town put in new accounting software in 2020, but setup issues remain and should be resolved as soon as possible.

■ Fee reporting and remittance: The town is behind in state reporting of fees paid with business-license taxes. The town should bring this reporting up to speed.

“This is hard to hear, hard to understand in the moment,” Council member Judith Hasko said of the staffing and Krisch reports. “It’s a little overwhelming, but it’s a great opportunity for us to get it right going forward. Staff turnover is hard.”

She said that while the town is making great steps, they still have a way to go.

“The actual financial situation, I understand the community’s concern about how did we get here. I really do. Very serious concerns have been raised, and I would say each of us (on the council) has had a little time with this information more than the public so if we’re not asking all kinds of questions and pounding the table part of it is that we’re already starting to process in our minds,” Hasko said.

Town resident Karen Vahtra, for one, applauded the town for laying out the problems with its financial functions.

“Krisch & Company have found many serious process concerns in our financial procedures,” she said in an email to the council as part of public comments for the meeting. “I suspect that many of these items have been missing in our town procedures for many years. I also appreciate the approach of honesty and transparency that Sharif Etman is bringing to our town. As we become more transparent, even if the news is bad, we can openly discuss problems and hopefully reduce the tension in the town.”

Mayor Aalfs spoke about how the town has been trying to take on its operational shortcomings for a while now.

“There’s a long history here,” he said. “And it’s a history of really trying to essentially modernize our finances and other operations. I’ve been watching this over the last several years.”

At the Nov. 8 meeting, the council also approved spending \$135,000 to continue to engage Krisch regarding the financial matters until June. ■

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

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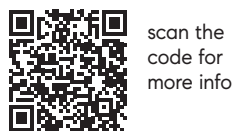


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**COMMUNITY CAMPUS**

*continued from page 8*

Haven as a neighborhood.

Mayor Jen Wolosin stated her concerns that the name Onetta Harris Community Campus was greatly supported by the public and recommended by the Library and Parks and Recreation Commissions. She said that “to ... not use that process in the end, is something I’m really struggling with.”

Council member Drew Combs said that electing to go with another name did not negate the efforts of all those who contributed to the naming process of the community campus.

“To not accept the recommendation of a commission, or to go in a different direction, which we do all day long, does not negate the value of that process, does not suggest that somehow there is not legitimacy to that process,” Combs said.

Taylor said that she had several constituents who were not present at the public meetings, whom she enumerated as “tens,”

reach out to her to request a name other than Onetta Harris for the campus.

Doerr said that she was in favor of naming the campus after Harris due to her legacy in the community.

“There’s so many leaders in our community that have done so much,” Doerr said of Harris. “But she is one of those leaders, and I just want to acknowledge the impact that I think it can have to have someone’s name on a full building.”

The council voted 4-1 to name the new structure the Belle Haven Community Campus, with the five major programs named the Onetta Harris Community Center, Belle Haven Pool, Belle Haven Library, Belle Haven Senior Center and Belle Haven Youth Center, with Doerr dissenting. The council also gave staff direction to pursue a documentary on Belle Haven and a dedication plaque for the Belle Haven Community Campus with the names of those who donated and made the project come to fruition. ■

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**SWASTIKA**

*continued from page 7*

and school culture.

“Students also engage in restorative practice conversations, have access to wellness centers on campus, and benefit from the district’s partnerships with community-based organizations,” he said.

The district also launched the Say Something anonymous reporting system in all of its schools at the beginning of this school year. Students and staff can use the system to report warning signs and threats by submitting text tips to the Say Something mobile app or website.

Staff has received professional development training on issues such as implicit bias and mediation and conflict resolution within the past year from the district’s outside community partners, he said.

When asked what repercussions the student faces regarding defacing or vandalizing the school outside of the symbol issues, Wilkie said the district can’t legally release information regarding students. The sheriff’s office did not return requests for comment regarding its investigation and findings, nor whether the student faces vandalism charges. ■

*Email Staff Writer SueDremann at sdremann@paweekly.com.*

# Artscene

PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCES IN ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

## Coming to town

Performers and community groups are bringing cheer to a venue near you

By Heather Zimmerman

Whether it's a choir singing carols, dancers pirouetting to Tchaikovsky's "The Nutcracker" or bands bringing their spins to holiday favorites, it's one of the most musical times of the year.

After all, "the best way to spread Christmas — or holiday — cheer is singing loud for all to hear," to paraphrase Buddy the elf. The elf himself is coming to the stage at Los Altos Stage Company and Peninsula Youth Theatre with a musical inspired by the film "Elf," while Theatre-Works spells out the songs in middle-school misfits' hearts in "The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee."

Meanwhile, a lot of artists are presenting holiday-themed shows, like vocalist Storm Large celebrating a "Holiday Ordeal" at Stanford Live or The Maccabeats bringing Hanukkah fun to the Oshman Family JCC. And heading home for the holidays is Palo Alto-born Molly Tuttle, who with band Golden Highway brings a holiday show for four nights to The Guild.

Some artists are presenting their 2023 updates on favorite annual shows, from Smuin Contemporary Ballet to Peninsula Lively Arts, and ensembles such as Kitka, Oakland Interfaith Choir and Chanticleer. To wrap it all up on Christmas Eve, one popular local tradition is returning after a long break, as the Stanford Theatre hosts its first showing of "It's a Wonderful Life" since 2019.

Read on for our roundup of holiday fun.

### Concerts

**Majestic Masses:** The Bay Choral Guild performs Franz Schubert's Mass No. 2 in G and Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's Mass in C minor, K. 427. Nov. 18, 7:30 p.m. at First United Methodist Church of Palo Alto, 625 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto. \$10-\$30. baychoralguild.org.



Courtesy Casa Circulo

Santa waves to the crowds as his sleigh pulls in front of the Fox Theatre during the parade held as part of Hometown Holidays in Redwood City. This year's event takes place Dec. 2 at Courthouse Square.

**Mads Tolling & The Mads Men:** Danish jazz violinist Mads Tolling and his ensemble present "Cool Yule - A Nordic Christmas," featuring musical tributes to the tales of Hans Christian Andersen, Santa Claus and yuletide songs from Denmark, Sweden, Norway, Finland, Iceland. Nov. 26, at The Guild Theatre, 949 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. \$37-\$52. guildtheatre.com.

**Berlin:** Berlin, led by Terri Nunn, plays a holiday show at The Guild Theatre. The band is known for its new wave '80s hits, but has made forays into contemporary electronic dance music. Dec. 2, 8 p.m. at The Guild Theatre, 949 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. \$82-\$112. guildtheatre.com.

**Christmas Comes Again:** Soli Deo Gloria performs Baroque favorites by Bach, Vivaldi, and Buxtehude plus a newer work by Anders Öhrwall. Dec. 2, 3:30 p.m. \$25-\$30. Grace Lutheran Church, 3149 Waverley St., Palo Alto. sdgloria.org.

**Ragazzi Boys Chorus:** The chorus performs "Light and Love," a program featuring several prominent contemporary composers including Susan LaBarr, Katerina Gimón, and Kim André Arnesen. The following week, the chorus performs its winter recital. "Light and Love" takes place Dec. 2, 7 p.m.; winter recital is held Dec. 9, 1 p.m. Both performances are at First United Methodist Church,

625 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto. \$25-\$45. ragazzi.org.

**The Christmas Story:** California Bach Society revisits a favorite program, "Weihnachtshistorie (The Christmas Story)," Artistic Director Paul Flight's compilation of sacred works by Baroque composer Johann and works by early Baroque master Heinrich Schütz, performed in arrangements for chamber choir and Baroque instrument ensemble. Dec. 2, 8 p.m. at All Saints' Episcopal Church, 555 Waverley St., Palo Alto. \$10-\$35 in advance/\$10-\$40 at the door. calbach.org.

**Winter Hymns:** iSing Silicon Valley, a choir for girls in grades 1 through 12, performs the world premiere of composer Shara

Nova's "Winter Hymns" and Benjamin Britten's "Ceremony of Carols." Featuring harpist Jieyin Wu and violist Lesley Robertson.

Dec. 2, 7 p.m. at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 600 Colorado Ave, Palo Alto. \$15-\$50. isingsv.com.

**Holiday Roulette: A Mezzo Mashup** Music at Kohl Mansion presents San Francisco Opera mezzo-sopranos Nikola Printz and Gabrielle Beteag with pianist and producer Ronny Michael Greenberg performing traditional seasonal holiday tunes, opera classics and favorite songs from Broadway, cabaret and jazz. The audience can spin a roulette wheel to select the songs. Dec. 3, 7 p.m. at Kohl Mansion, 2750 Adeline Drive, Burlingame. \$55-\$75. musicatkohl.org.

**Stanford Medicine Orchestra and Chorus:** A concert of holiday music performed by a chorus and orchestra made up of faculty, staff and students from Stanford Medicine, Stanford Hospital and Lucile Packard Children's Hospital. Dec. 5, 7:30 p.m. at Bing Concert Hall, Stanford. \$20. live.stanford.edu.

**A Candlelit Homecoming:** The Peninsula Women's Chorus performs contemporary and classical works celebrating winter, including R. Murray Schafer's "Snowforms," Veljo Tormis' "Talvemustrid" (Winter Patterns) and Carol Barnett's "Winter, Snow." Dec. 7, 8 p.m. at First United Methodist Church, 625 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto. Tickets are \$10-\$50. pwchorus.org.

**Bel Canto Flutes:** The Mountain View Library hosts the Bel Canto Flutes performing

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## COMING TO TOWN

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a holiday concert with music that spans the ages across several cultures, including many favorites. The group is an all-flute ensemble with flutes of all sizes and shapes.

Dec. 7, 6:30 p.m. at the Mountain View Public Library, 585 Franklin St., Mountain View. Free; registration is required. [mountainview.libcal.com](http://mountainview.libcal.com).

**Six Centuries of Christmas Music:** Philharmonia Baroque Orchestra performs a program highlighting a wide variety of music celebrating Christmas, from Baroque to Romantic to contemporary, including the debut of a new piece by Roderick Williams, written especially for the concert.

Dec. 8, 7:30 p.m. Bing Concert Hall, Stanford. Tickets start at \$30. [philharmonia.org](http://philharmonia.org).

**Storm Large: Holiday Ordeal** Singer-songwriter Storm Large presents a night of music and humor, with songs that include “2000 Miles,” “Hallelujah,” and “Sock it to Me Santa.”

Dec. 8, 7 and 9 p.m., Dec. 9, 7 p.m. at Bing Studio, Stanford. \$50-\$75. [live.stanford.edu](http://live.stanford.edu).

**CSMA Merit Scholars Holiday Concert:** Community School of Music and Arts presents its annual concert highlighting the school’s merit scholar musicians playing holiday favorites in ensembles and solos.

Dec. 9, 5 p.m. at Community School of Music and Arts, 230 San Antonio Circle, Mountain View. Admission is free. [arts4all.org](http://arts4all.org).

**Rob Kapilow’s What Makes It Great:** Rob Kapilow, joined by The Choral Project, presents “Dreaming of a Jewish Christmas,” a performance that explores how many favorite holiday songs were written by Jewish composers.

Dec. 9, 7:30 p.m. at Bing Concert Hall, Stanford. Tickets start at \$32. [live.stanford.edu](http://live.stanford.edu).

**Palo Alto Philharmonic:** The orchestra presents “Paris to Prague,” a program featuring works by Stravinsky, Mozart and Jean Françaix, with soloist Steve Sánchez on clarinet.

Dec. 9, 8 p.m. at Cubberley Theatre, 4120 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. \$10-\$20. [paphil.org](http://paphil.org).

**Carpenters Legacy: A Christmas Portrait** Sally Olson and Ned Mills, Las Vegas impersonators of The Carpenters, play a tribute to the 1970s soft-rock duo’s TV Christmas specials.

Dec. 10, 8 p.m. at the Fox Theatre, 2215 Broadway St., Redwood City. \$36-\$49. [foxrwc.com](http://foxrwc.com).

**Grateful Holiday:** The Terapin Family Band and special guest Nicki Bluhm play a holiday show.

Dec. 10, 8 p.m. at The Guild Theatre, 949 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. \$52-\$123. [guildtheatre.com](http://guildtheatre.com).

**Kitka’s Wintersongs:** Women’s vocal ensemble Kitka performs their annual concert celebrating the holidays and winter solstice, with songs from Balkan, Baltic, Caucasian and Slavic lands.

Dec. 10, 4 p.m. at St. Bede’s Church, 2650 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park. \$25-\$50. [kitka.org](http://kitka.org).



Courtesy Kyle Cavallaro/iSing Silicon Valley

The members of iSing Silicon Valley will perform the world premiere of “Winter Hymns,” a new work by composer Shara Nova at a concert Dec. 2 at St. Mark’s Episcopal Church in Palo Alto.

**A Vagabond Holiday:** Davina and the Vagabonds perform holiday songs infused with jazz and blues.

Dec. 10, 4 p.m. at Bing Concert Hall, Stanford. Tickets start at \$32. [live.stanford.edu](http://live.stanford.edu).

**Molly Tuttle and Golden Highway: Home for the Holidays** Peninsula-born Grammy winning bluegrass artist Molly Tuttle and Golden Highway play a holiday show.

Dec. 14-17, 8 p.m. The Guild Theatre, 949 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. \$48-\$83. [guildtheatre.com](http://guildtheatre.com).

**PACO Holiday Extravaganza:** The Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra presents a holiday fundraising concert featuring all five of its youth orchestras

with special guest artist Chad McCullough and his jazz trio, performing his arrangement of Vince Guaraldi’s “A Charlie Brown Christmas.”

Dec. 17, 3 p.m. at Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College, 12345 El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills. \$25-\$50. [pacomusic.org](http://pacomusic.org).

**A Chanticleer Christmas:** The San Francisco men’s chorus performs their annual holiday show at Stanford Live, featuring a new program every year.

Dec. 14, 7:30 p.m. at Memorial Church, Stanford. \$50-\$90. [live.stanford.edu](http://live.stanford.edu).

**Charlie Brown Christmas:** Stanford Jazz Workshop’s annual holiday tradition features the Glen Pearson Trio with jazz pianist Glen Pearson, bassist Ruth Davies and drummer Lorca Hart playing Vince Guaraldi’s contemporary jazz score for the 1965 TV special “A Charlie Brown Christmas.”

Dec. 15, 7:30 p.m., Dec. 16, 2 and 7:30 p.m., Dec. 17, 2 p.m. at Campbell Recital Hall, Stanford. \$22-\$49. [stanfordjazz.org](http://stanfordjazz.org).

**Sun, Moon and Stars: A Heavenly Christmas** San Francisco Choral Artists perform a program celebrating the Christmas story in the lights of the winter sky, with selections by Poulenc, Nixon, Guerrero, Brahms, Lassus, Hogan and Composer-in-Residence Eric Tuan, and Composer-Not-in-Residence Balázs Kecskés D.

Dec. 16, 8 p.m. at All Saints Episcopal Church, 555 Waverley St., Palo Alto. Tickets are \$15-\$35. [sfca.org](http://sfca.org).

**Woodside Village Band Winter Concert:** Woodside Village Band performs a

wide-ranging program, with selections that include “The Best of Beethoven,” “An Irving Berlin Christmas,” “Greensleeves” and “March of the Toys.”

Dec. 16, 3 p.m. at Woodside Village Church, 3154 Woodside Road, Woodside. Admission is free; donations welcome. [windband.org/woodside](http://windband.org/woodside).

**Peace on Earth!** Schola Cantorum choir rings in the holidays with a family concert featuring music and sing-alongs from many faiths and traditions.

Dec. 17, 4 p.m. at Los Altos United Methodist Church, 655 Magdalena Ave., Los Altos. \$30. [scholacantorum.org](http://scholacantorum.org).

**Schola Cantorum Messiah Sing:** The choir holds its 57th annual Messiah Sing, inviting audiences to sing the Christmas section of Handel’s “Messiah” and other favorite movements from the work, with orchestra.

Dec. 18, 7:30 p.m. at First Congregational Church of Palo Alto, 1985 Louis Road, Palo Alto. \$30. [scholacantorum.org](http://scholacantorum.org).

**Oakland Interfaith Choir:** Director Terrance Kelly leads the multicultural, interfaith choir in their annual South Bay concert featuring Kelly’s gospel arrangements of traditional holiday favorites.

Dec. 22, 7:30 p.m. at Mountain View Center for Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. \$35-\$50. [tickets.mvcpa.com](http://tickets.mvcpa.com).

## On stage

**Elf The Musical:** Peninsula Youth Theatre presents a musical based on the favorite 2003



Courtesy Reed Flores

From left, Marcy (Mai Abe), Olive (Maia Campbell), and Chip (Dave J. Abrams) await the spelling showdown in TheatreWorks Silicon Valley’s “The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee,” running Nov. 29-Dec. 24 in Palo Alto.

film "Elf."  
Through Nov. 19 at the Mountain View Center for Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. \$25. [pytnet.org](http://pytnet.org).

**The Wizard of Oz:** Palo Alto Players presents the family favorite musical about Dorothy's journey to the magical land of Oz. Through Nov. 19 at the Lucie Stern Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. \$20-\$60. [paplayers.org](http://paplayers.org).

**The 25th Annual Putnam County Spelling Bee:** TheatreWorks Silicon Valley stages a musical comedy about middle-school misfits vying to be top speller, and on a journey of self-discovery along the way. Nov. 29-Dec. 24 at the Lucie Stern Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Tickets start at \$27. [theatreworks.org](http://theatreworks.org).

**Elf The Musical:** Los Altos Stage Company presents a musical adapted from the film "Elf," about a human raised as an elf in Santa's workshop and the holiday spirit he spreads when he visits New York to find his biological father. Dec. 1-23 at the Bus Barn Theater, 97 Hillview Ave., Los Altos. \$22-\$45. [losaltosstage.org](http://losaltosstage.org).

**The Christmas Ballet:** Smuin Contemporary Ballet presents its annual touring production bringing together classical ballet and contemporary pieces, set to a variety of holiday-themed music. The 2023 edition features world

premieres by Smuin Associate Artistic Director Amy Seiwert and former Smuin artist Nicole Haskins. Dec. 7-8, 7:30 p.m.; Dec. 9, 2 and 7:30 p.m. and Dec. 10, 2 p.m. at Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. \$25-\$109. [smuinballet.org](http://smuinballet.org).

**Peninsula Lively Arts:** The company formerly known as Peninsula Ballet Theatre presents four different "Nutcracker" productions: "Nutcracker Sweet," an abridged production for young audiences; "Hip-Hop Nutcracker," mixing the iconic story and Tchaikovsky's score with hip-hop dance; "Hip-Hop Nutcracker Sweet" abridged for young audiences, and a full-length production of "The Nutcracker." Nutcracker Sweet Dec. 2-3, 12:30, 2:30 and 4:30 p.m. and Hip-Hop Nutcracker Sweet Dec. 9-10, 2-3 12:30, 2:30 and 4:30 p.m. at PLA's Studio One Theatre, 1880 S. Grant St. San Mateo. Nutcracker, Dec. 15, 7 p.m. and Dec. 16, 2 p.m. and Hip-Hop Nutcracker Dec. 16, 7 p.m. and Dec. 17, 2 p.m. at the Fox Theatre, 2215 Broadway, Redwood City. [peninsulalivelyarts.org](http://peninsulalivelyarts.org).

**Pacific Ballet Academy Nutcracker:** Students of Pacific Ballet Academy perform in the company's 32nd annual production of the ballet. On Nov. 26, the company stages a shortened performance for young audiences, featuring just Act I, and



Courtesy Filoli

The Filoli estate's gardens and historic mansion are decorated for the holidays, with more than 25 miles' worth of lights strung throughout the gardens and activities that include Santa visits, holiday teas, fire pit rentals and more, Nov. 18-Jan. 7.

a sensory- and autism-friendly performance of Act II. Nov. 24, 6 p.m., Nov. 25, 1 and 6 p.m.; Nov. 26, Act I performance at noon; sensory- and autism-friendly performance at 2 p.m. at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. Tickets are \$25-\$30 for full performances; \$15 for either Nov. 26 performance. [tickets.mvcpa.com](http://tickets.mvcpa.com).

**Western Ballet Nutcracker:** Western Ballet presents the traditional holiday ballet in a production that lasts 1 1/2 hours. Dec. 1, 7 p.m., Dec. 2, 1 and 7 p.m. and Dec. 3, 1 p.m. at the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. Tickets are \$38-\$43. [westernballet.org](http://westernballet.org).

**Ballet America's Nutcracker:** Academy of American Ballet presents its annual production of the family-friendly ballet. Dec. 2, 2 and 6:30 p.m. and Dec. 3, 1:30 and 4 p.m. at Cañada College Theater, 4200 Farm Hill Blvd., Redwood City. Tickets start at \$20. [americanballet.com](http://americanballet.com).

**Dance Magic Nutcracker:** Dance Magic, a school for dancers ages 2 and up, presents its annual production. Dec 9-10 at Cubberley Community Center Theatre, 4000 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. [dancemagic.org](http://dancemagic.org).

**Ramon Moreno Nutcracker:** Students of the Ramon Moreno School of Ballet perform a traditional production. Dec. 9, 1:30 and 7 p.m., and Dec. 10, 1:30 p.m. at Menlo-Atherton Performing Arts Center, 555 Middlefield Road, Atherton. \$35. [ramonmorenoballet.com](http://ramonmorenoballet.com).

**El Niño: Nativity Reconsidered:** Stanford Live presents the West Coast premiere of American Modern Opera Company's (AMOC) production of contemporary composer John Adams' El Niño: Nativity Reconsidered, a new look at the Christmas story that celebrates Latin American poets and the voices of women. Dec. 13, 7:30 p.m. at Bing Concert Hall, Stanford. Tickets start at \$55. [live.stanford.edu](http://live.stanford.edu).

**Dance Connection Nutcracker and Hip-Hop Nutcracker:** The studio presents its 24th annual production, featuring young dancers ages 5-18. The studio will also stage "Hip-Hop Nutcracker," which puts a modern twist on the holiday ballet, with a cast of dancers ages 6 to adult. Nutcracker Dec. 15, 7 p.m. and Dec. 16, 3 p.m.; Hip-Hop Nutcracker Dec. 16, 7 p.m. at Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College, 12345 El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills. \$25-\$40. [danceconnectionpaloalto.com](http://danceconnectionpaloalto.com).

**Snow Queen:** Bayer Ballet Company presents its annual production of a two-act ballet inspired by a Hans Christian Andersen fairytale about a girl who travels through magical lands to rescue her brother from the Snow Queen. Dec. 16, 6:30 p.m., Dec. 17, 3 p.m. at Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. Tickets are \$38-\$60. [bayerballet.com](http://bayerballet.com).

## Hanukkah

**Donuts for Hanukkah:** Michelle Greenebaum from Together In The Kitchen leads a hands-on cooking class for parents and kids to learn to bake

Jewish holiday favorites. Dec. 3, 4 p.m. at the Oshman Family JCC, 3921 Fabian Way, Palo Alto. \$40 per family. [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com).

**The Maccabeats:** Celebrated a cappella group The Maccabeats perform a special concert for Hanukkah. Dec. 3, 4 and 6:30 p.m. at Oshman Family JCC, 3921 Fabian Way, Palo Alto. \$20-\$35. [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com).

**Tot Chanukah Celebration:** The Jewish Baby Network and Congregation Beth Am host a community menorah candle lighting for young families, featuring snacks and crafts. Dec. 3, 3:30 p.m. at Congregation Beth Am, 26790 Arastradero Road, Los Altos Hills. Admission is free; \$18 donation welcomed. [betham.org](http://betham.org).

**Chanukah Festival:** Redwood City hosts a celebration and Menorah lighting with music and a kids' show, moon bounces, latkes and donuts and crafts. Local dignitaries will be on hand. Dec. 10, 4:15-5:30 p.m. at Courthouse Square, 2200 Broadway St., Redwood City. [redwoodcity.org](http://redwoodcity.org).

**A Hanukkah Miracle Musical:** Israeli children's entertainer Nati leads a musical journey through the Hanukkah story, with a colorful cast of characters from the narrative of the Maccabees. The musical combines holiday songs in both Hebrew and English. Dec. 11, 5:30 p.m. at Oshman Family JCC, 3921 Fabian Way, Palo Alto. \$35. [paloaltojcc.org](http://paloaltojcc.org).

See **COMING TO TOWN**, page 34



Courtesy Chris Hardy

Smuin Contemporary Ballet's "The Christmas Ballet," returns to the Mountain View Center for Performing Arts Dec. 7-10. Shown are Smuin artists Maggie Carey and Yuri Rogers.

## COMING TO TOWN

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## Festivals, tree lightings and events

**Ernie's trains:** John Bianco is continuing his late father's tradition of putting on a holiday model-train display. The engines and cars change daily. *Weather permitting, five tracks will run trains every evening (except Mondays) Thanksgiving Day, Nov. 23, through Dec. 24, from 6:30-9 p.m. at 2387 Adele Ave., Mountain View.*

**BayLUG Holiday Show:** The Bay Area LEGO User Group and BayLTC, the Bay Area L-Gauge Train Club, feature their annual holiday display of miniature scenes and electric trains built from Lego bricks. This year's theme is inspired by the historic trains at Roaring Camp in Felton. *Open Saturdays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m., Dec. 2-Jan. 7 at the Museum of American Heritage, 351 Homer Ave., Palo Alto. \$4 per person (cash only). baylug.org.*

**IlluminOdyssey:** CuriOdyssey hosts a winter light display inspired by the science of light, with interactive exhibits and kid-friendly glowing art. *Open Tuesday-Sunday, 10 a.m.-5 p.m. (early closure at 1 p.m. on Dec. 10 for Sensory Sunday; closed Nov. 23, Dec. 24-25 and Jan. 1) through Jan. 24 at CuriOdyssey, 1651 Coyote Point Drive, San Mateo. Free with museum admission of \$15.95-\$19.95 (plus \$6 park entrance fee). curiodyssey.org.*

**Après Village and Skate Rink:** The Four Seasons Hotel Silicon Valley at East Palo Alto hosts an alpine-themed synthetic skate rink, complete with chalets for groups. A new addition this year is a food truck serving up apres-ski-inspired treats. *Fridays-Sundays, 4-9 p.m. Nov. 17-Jan. 28 at Four Seasons Hotel Silicon Valley at East Palo Alto, 2050 University Ave., East Palo Alto. Skate sessions are \$20-\$30 for 45 minutes. fourseasons.com/siliconvalley.*

**Winter Lodge:** The outdoor ice skating rink is open for public skating. *Open daily, times vary; through April 7 at Winter Lodge, 3009 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. Admission is \$17 per person and skate rental is \$5 per person. Public skating tickets must be purchased online in advance. winterlodge.com/public-skating.*

**Holidays at Filoli:** The Filoli estate's gardens and historic

mansion are decorated for the holidays, with more than 25 miles' worth of lights strung throughout the gardens. Activities include Santa Days (with early hours for families with sensory sensitivities); private fire pit rentals with warm drinks and wine on the terrace; holiday tea in the Garden House, behind-the-scenes house tours, wreath-making workshops and a New Year's Day "hair of the dog" hike. *Open daily, 10 a.m.-9 p.m., Nov. 18-Jan. 7 (closed Nov. 23 and Dec. 24-25) at Filoli, 86 Cañada Road, Woodside. Reservations are required; ticket prices vary. Fire pit rentals are \$750 for up to eight guests, plus \$75 for each additional guest up to a maximum of 16. filoli.org.*

**Stanford Theatre:** The vintage movie palace launches its holiday programming on Thanksgiving Day, bringing double features of holiday classics and other favorites to the screen throughout the season, with films such as "White Christmas," "The Bishop's Wife," "The Shop Around the Corner," "Miracle on 34th Street" and "The Wizard of Oz." The schedule wraps up with the return of a Peninsula holiday tradition: a Dec. 24 screening of "It's a Wonderful Life," back for the first time since the pandemic. The theater has added a 4 p.m. showing along with its usual 9 p.m. showtime for the film. *Double features showing Thursdays-Sundays, screening times vary, Nov. 23-Dec. 23; two screenings of "It's a Wonderful Life" on Dec. 24, 4 and 9 p.m. at the Stanford Theatre, 221 University Ave., Palo Alto. \$5-\$7. Advance tickets sales for "It's a Wonderful Life" start on Dec. 9. stanfordtheatre.org.*

**Gamble Garden Winter Festival:** The historic estate and garden will be decorated throughout the holiday season, starting on Nov. 30. The three-day festival includes a grand opening party Nov. 30, a tree-lighting ceremony, carolers, holiday teas, music and a festive marketplace with more than 20 vendors in the Gamble house and outdoors. *Nov. 30-Dec. 2 at 1431 Waverley St., Palo Alto. Ticket prices vary by event. gamblegarden.org.*

**Los Altos holiday events:** Downtown Los Altos' annual Festival of Lights Parade features floats, marching bands and more. Downtown Los Altos will also hold a tree-lighting celebration Dec. 1, 6-8 p.m. *losaltosparade.org. Parade takes place Nov. 26, 6 p.m. in downtown Los Altos. downtownlosaltos.org.*

**City of Menlo Park Light Up the Season:** Menlo Park



Courtesy William Wayland

Kitka performs their annual "Wintersongs" concert Dec. 10 in Menlo Park.

holds its annual tree lighting event, with a winter wonderland theme, featuring family-friendly entertainment, performances by Menlo Park youth and free hot cocoa. Rain or shine. *Dec. 1, 5:30-7 p.m. at Fremont Park, University Drive at Santa Cruz Avenue, Menlo Park. Free admission. menlopark.gov.*

**City of Palo Alto Tree Lighting:** Enjoy live music and carols, bell ringers and winter treats at this holiday season kickoff. *Dec. 1, 5:30-7 p.m. at Lytton Plaza, University Avenue and Emerson Street, Palo Alto. Also offered virtually. cityofpaloalto.org.*

**Hometown Holidays:** Redwood City Downtown Business Group's 17th annual event includes photos with Santa, carnival rides, food and drink, entertainment, local vendors and community groups, with a parade as the big finale. Rain or shine. *Dec. 2, 10 a.m.-6 p.m. at Courthouse Square, Redwood City. redwoodcitydowntown.com.*

**Redwood City Tamalada:** Chef Steve Cortez of S&C Culinary leads a tamalada, a social gathering to make tamales ahead of the holidays. Cortez will also discuss different tamale traditions in Latin America and beyond and share techniques. *Dec 2, 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. at Highlands Community Club at 1665 Fernside St., Redwood City. \$69 per person. eventbrite.com.*

**Springline Holiday Extraganza:** An event with live music from The School of Rock and The Freshmakers, food, festive cocktails and hot chocolate, a snow playground with real snow,

outdoor screening of "Elf" and fresh wreaths and garlands for sale, to raise funds for at-risk youth.

*Dec. 2, 4-9 p.m. at Springline Menlo Park, 1300 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. Free; registration requested. springline.com.*

**Tree Treasures:** San Mateo County History Museum hosts a day of crafts activities exploring the decorations of a Victorian Christmas tree. Kids can make "gingerbread" ornaments, cornucopias and more. *Dec. 2, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at San Mateo County History Museum, 2200 Broadway, Redwood City. Free admission. historysmc.org.*

**West Bay Model Railroad Holiday Train Show:** Visitors can look at displays of model trains of various types. Club members will be on hand to answer questions.

*Dec. 2, 1-4 p.m. and Dec. 3 from 1 until about 7:30 p.m. at south side of Menlo Park Caltrain station, 1090 Merrill St., Menlo Park. westbaylines@gmail.com.*

**City of Mountain View Tree Lighting:** The city of Mountain View celebrates the winter season with an event featuring performances by local groups, tributes to multicultural traditions, a train ride, games and crafts, the lighting of the community tree,



Courtesy Christian Pizzirani

Andrew Cope plays Buddy, a human raised as an elf at Santa's workshop in "Elf The Musical" at Los Altos Stage Company, Nov. 20-Dec. 23.

an appearance from Santa and refreshments.  
Dec. 4, 5:30-8 p.m. at Civic Center Plaza, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. [mountainview.gov](http://mountainview.gov).

**Wreath Workshop:** The Graduate hosts a holiday wreath workshop with Sève. Each participant can take home their own 18" wreath.  
Dec. 9, 10 a.m. at The Graduate Hotel, 488 University Ave., Palo Alto. \$155 per person. [graduatehotels.com](http://graduatehotels.com).

### Holiday markets and galleries

**Art on the Square:** Visitors can shop for gifts and stocking stuffers made by nearly 30 local artists working in a variety of media, including jewelry, textile art, glass, handmade clothing, accessories, ceramics, paintings and prints.  
Nov. 18, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at San Mateo County History Museum, 2200 Broadway, Redwood City. Admission is free. [artonthesquarerwc.com](http://artonthesquarerwc.com).

**Peace & Social Justice Harvest Fair:** Peninsula Peace & Justice Center and First Presbyterian Church host an event featuring local activist groups offering unique gifts and providing information on their work.  
Nov. 19, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at First Presbyterian Church, 1140 Cowper St., Palo Alto. [peaceandjustice.org](http://peaceandjustice.org).

**Allied Arts Christmas Market:** Shops and vendors at the guild offer gifts and holiday decor. The event also includes an auction of mini Christmas trees.  
Dec. 2, at Allied Arts Guild, 75 Arbor Road, Menlo Park. Admission is free. [alliedartsguild.org](http://alliedartsguild.org).

**Art Center Studio Sale:** The Palo Alto Art Center holds its annual sale featuring jewelry, functional and fine art ceramics, paintings, prints and other artwork created by artists working in the Art Center's studios. The sale raises funds to benefit the artists, studios, and the Palo Alto Art Center Foundation.  
Dec. 2, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. at the Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto. (Foundation members-only presale held Dec. 2, 9-11 a.m.). [cityofpaloalto.org](http://cityofpaloalto.org).

**Gallery House** "Ambience," a show and sale of jewelry, paintings, ceramics, cards and other works in a variety of media by 30 local contemporary artists. The gallery holds a reception on Dec. 8, 5-7 p.m.

Through Jan. 7, Tuesday-Sunday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at 320 S. California Ave., Palo Alto. [galleryhouse.art](http://galleryhouse.art).

**Ukrainian Christmas Festival and Market:** Ukrainian National Women's League of America, Branch 107 hosts an event featuring Ukrainian Christmas foods, crafting workshops, goods from Ukrainian artisans and vendors, a wintry-themed photo booth and live music and dance performances.  
Dec. 9, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at Woodside Village Hub, 3154 Woodside Road, Woodside. Admission is free; food and workshops are for purchase and can be pre-ordered. [branch107.unwla.us](http://branch107.unwla.us).

**The Main Gallery:** "Wonderland," featuring works in a variety of media by the gallery's 15 member artists. The gallery is donating 20% of sales from this show to the American Cancer Society Discovery Shop in Menlo Park. A reception takes place Dec. 10, 4-6 p.m. Through Dec. 23, Tuesday-Sunday, 11 a.m.-5 p.m. at 883 Santa Cruz Ave., Suite 1, Menlo Park. [themaingallery.org](http://themaingallery.org).

**German Holiday Market:** The German International School of Silicon Valley hosts its annual holiday marketplace, with traditional seasonal German treats and chocolate, wooden ornaments, nutcrackers and other holiday items, plus food and music. This year, the market returns to its original location at Mountain View Civic Center. Proceeds benefit the school.  
Dec. 9, 11 a.m.-9 p.m. at Mountain View Civic Center Plaza, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. Free admission. [germanholidaymarket.org](http://germanholidaymarket.org). ■

Find an expanded version of this story with more holiday events at [almanacnews.com/arts/](http://almanacnews.com/arts/)

Email Arts & Entertainment Editor Heather Zimmerman at [hzimmerman@almanacnews.com](mailto:hzimmerman@almanacnews.com).

### About the cover:

Main image: Kelley Hashemi performing in Peninsula Lively Arts' production of "The Nutcracker." (photo courtesy Peninsula Lively Arts); Christmas tree by Getty Images.

Insets, clockwise from top left: Molly Tuttle (courtesy Molly Tuttle); Kitka Women's Vocal Ensemble (courtesy Tomas Pacha); Storm Large (courtesy Opus 3 Artists); Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir (courtesy Oakland Interfaith Gospel Choir).  
Cover design by Paul Llewellyn.

# Worth a Look



Courtesy Laura Reoch

Author Shannon Takaoka shares her new young adult book "The Totally True Story of Gracie Byrne," at a Books Inc. Palo Alto on Nov. 19.

## Shannon Takaoka

Bay Area author Shannon Takaoka presents her new YA novel, "The Totally True Story of Gracie Byrne," at a Books Inc. Palo Alto event this month, in conversation with friend and fellow local author Deborah Crossland ("The Quiet Part Out Loud"). Takaoka's latest book, set in the 1980s, follows an awkward teen who finds she can shape reality by writing about it in a magical journal, and was called "moving and emotionally satisfying" by Publisher's Weekly. Takaoka is also the author of the 2021 YA novel "Everything I Thought I Knew."

Nov. 19, 3 p.m., Books Inc. Palo Alto, Town & Country Village, 855 El Camino Real, #74, Palo Alto. [booksinc.net](http://booksinc.net).

## Anat Cohen with Marcello Goncalves

Renowned jazz clarinetist, saxophonist and bandleader Anat Cohen — whom the New York Times called "a revelation" — returns to the Peninsula, joined by Brazilian guitarist Marcello Goncalves, to perform at Palo Alto's Mitchell Park Community Center. The New York-based, Tel Aviv-born Cohen is perhaps best known to local jazz aficionados thanks to her involvement with Stanford Jazz Workshop, and has a love for Latin music styles. Earthwise Productions, the Palo Alto promoter organizing the event, is offering two seatings for the duo's performances: one at 7 p.m. followed by a second two hours later.

Nov. 17, 7 p.m. and 9 p.m., Mitchell Park Community Center, 3700 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto, \$25. [eventbrite.com](http://eventbrite.com).

## Bay Choral Guild

For the sheer scale of their sound, masses are impressive compositions, but there's nothing that says such a work also has to be ponderously long — or even exist in completed form, for that matter — to be a masterpiece. Bay Choral Guild, a 35-voice community choir, performs two masses from the Classical era that are brisk in length, and bright in sound. The choir's "Majestic Masses" program on Nov. 18 features Franz Schubert's spirit-lifting Mass No. 2, which is not only (relatively) short and sweet but it's said that it took Schubert only about a week to compose. The piece is joined on the program by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart's lush Mass in C minor, K. 427, which is considered one of his greatest works, according to the choral guild's website, even given the fact that some movements are missing. The choir performs Helmut Eder's reconstruction of the mass.

Dec. 18, 7:30 p.m. at First United Methodist, 625 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto. \$10-\$30. The choir performs the same program Dec. 17 in Campbell. [baychoralguild.org](http://baychoralguild.org).

## 'District Merchants' and 'William Shakespeare's Land of the Dead'

The Pear Theatre presents, if you'll forgive the pun, a pair of sharply comedic shows running in repertory, both offering fresh twists on Shakespeare. "District Merchants, an Uneasy Comedy" written by Aaron Posner, reworks "The Merchant of Venice," setting it "among the Black and Jewish populations of an imagined time and place that is simultaneously Shakespearean, Reconstruction-era Washington, D.C., and today," according to the Pear. "William Shakespeare's Land of the Dead," by John Heimbuch, features the Bard himself as a character, defending his new play "Henry V" while a vile plague is sweeping through London and the theater finds itself under quarantine. And yes, there are zombies. Both shows are directed by Pear head Sinjin Jones and are rated PG-13.

"William Shakespeare's The Land of the Dead" runs Nov. 17-Dec. 9. "District Merchants" runs Nov. 18-Dec. 10. The Pear Theatre; 1110 La Avenida St., Mountain View, \$38-40. [thepear.org](http://thepear.org).

## Con Brio

Energetic, seven-piece Bay Area soul-and-funk group Con Brio (the name comes from the musical direction meaning "with spirit"), known for their lively performances, headlines at the Guild, following the October release of their fourth album, "Scream At It." Santa Cruz-raised roots rocker Anthony Arya — a contestant on NBC's "The Voice" in 2018 as a teen — will open the show with his band. His own forthcoming fourth album is due out in early 2024.

Nov. 22, The Guild Theatre, 949 El Camino Real, Menlo Park, 8 p.m., \$33-\$73. [guildtheatre.com](http://guildtheatre.com).

# Food & Drink

# 12

## Peninsula eateries serving to-go Thanksgiving meals and desserts

From Jamaican-style jerk turkey to cannoli, find a range of traditional and unique holiday offerings for your dinner table

By Julia Brown

Looking for a little reprieve in the kitchen this Thanksgiving? Restaurants and bakeries around the Peninsula are selling a range of offerings this holiday season, from side dishes and desserts to complete meals to go. Here's what 12 eateries have in store this year:

### Back A Yard Caribbean Grill, Campbell and Menlo Park:

Back A Yard has a wide range of Thanksgiving dinner packages for eight to 10 people, plus proteins, side dishes and desserts available. Choose from Jamaican-style jerk turkey and maple-glazed roast turkey, beef oxtails, Jamaican curried goat and more meat options. Sides include everything from buttermilk cornbread to fried plantains or macaroni and cheese. For dessert, there's pie, Caribbean black rum cake and sweet potato pudding.

Back A Yard Caribbean Grill, 408-736-7724 Instagram: @backayardgrill Dinner packages range from \$105-\$195 and serve eight to 10 people. Additional prices vary; check website for full pricing and ordering. Place an order by 5 p.m. Nov. 18. Pick up Nov. 22 at 638 N. 13th St., San Jose. [backayard.net](http://backayard.net).

### Manresa Bread, Campbell, Los Gatos, Los Altos and Palo Alto:

The local bakery chain has an extensive menu of desserts, breads and pastries for preorder. Sweets include pumpkin tarts, pistachio cranberry babka, triple chocolate and candied orange panettone and Dutch apple or rye pecan pie. Breads and pastries range from croissants and cookies to loaves of bread and muffins.

Manresa Bread, multiple locations; Instagram: @manresabread. Prices vary; check website for pricing and ordering. Pick up Nov. 21-22. [manresabread.com](http://manresabread.com).

### The Midwife and the Baker, Mountain View:

The Mountain View bakery's Thanksgiving lineup for 2023 includes potato onion dinner rolls, brioche pull-apart dinner rolls, apple gibassier (French-inspired pastries with roasted spiced apples) and a pumpkin pie Danish with whipped cream and candied pepitas. Preorder offerings also include a range of pastries, from cookies and bread to croissants.

The Midwife and the Baker, 846 Independence Ave., Mountain View;



Above: Made out of Dough's Thanksgiving dessert menu for includes pies in flavors like blueberry sour cream custard and double crust bourbon apple. Courtesy Made out of Dough. Top: Quattro Restaurant & Bar at Four Seasons Hotel Silicon Valley offers a four-person takeout feast for Thanksgiving. Courtesy Four Seasons Hotel Silicon Valley.

650-336-7697, Instagram: @themidwifeandthebaker. Prices vary; check website for pricing and ordering. Pick up Nov. 22-23. [themidwifeandthebaker.com](http://themidwifeandthebaker.com).

### Four Seasons Hotel Silicon Valley, East Palo Alto:

Quattro Restaurant & Bar at Four Seasons Hotel Silicon Valley is offering a four-person feast featuring roasted kabocha squash soup; Ouroboros Farm lettuce salad; a roasted whole turkey with pomme puree and cultured butter; stuffing, gravy and cranberry sauce; green bean casserole; and pumpkin pie.

Four Seasons Hotel Silicon Valley, 2050 University Ave., East Palo Alto; 650-566-1200, Instagram: @fspaloalto. The meal is \$550 and serves four people. Place an order on Tock by 5 p.m. on Nov. 18. Pick up Nov. 23 between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m. [fourseasons.com](http://fourseasons.com).

### Made out of Dough, San Mateo:

Made out of Dough is a women-owned bakery that takes custom orders and appears at weekend farmers markets in Foster City and San Carlos. They're offering a wide-ranging dessert menu for Thanksgiving, from pies in flavors like blueberry sour cream custard and double crust bourbon apple to breakfast items like cinnamon rolls and pumpkin cream cheese loafs.

Made out of Dough, 650-753-4999, Instagram: @madeoutofdough. Prices vary; check website for complete pricing and ordering. Preorder by Nov. 17 by emailing [orders@madeoutofdough.com](mailto:orders@madeoutofdough.com). Pick up Nov. 21 from 5-6:30 p.m. in San Mateo and Nov. 22 from 5-6:30 p.m. in Belmont. [madeoutofdough.com](http://madeoutofdough.com).

### Pausa Bar & Cookery, San Mateo:

Pick up a turkey feast to feed four that includes half of a 14-pound turkey with wild mushroom gravy and cranberry sauce; roasted Brussels sprouts; a mixed chicory salad; housemade focaccia; tartufata mashed potatoes; and chocolate travel cake.

Pausa Bar & Cookery, 223 E. 4th Ave., San Mateo; 650-375-0818, Instagram: @pausanmateo. Dinner is \$275 and serves four. Pick up Nov. 22 from noon to 3 p.m. [pausanmateo.com](http://pausanmateo.com).

### Twelvemonth, Burlingame:

Burlingame's vegan restaurant and bakery is offering a dinner kit that feeds a family of four and includes autumn chop salad, butternut squash bisque, green bean casserole, pretzel spoon bread, roasted potatoes and your choice of plant-based turkey with sourdough gravy and cranberry Awesome Sauce or plant-based ham with jus and Awesome Sauce. All dishes are available as sides along with pumpkin sticky buns;

cinnamon rolls with orange blossom glaze; Twelvemonth rolls with furikake butter; and a cookie box.

Twelvemonth, 330 Lorton Ave., Burlingame; 650-443-7111, Instagram: @twelvemonthburlingame. Dinner kit is \$120; Side prices vary; check website for complete pricing and ordering. Pick up between 10 a.m. and 8 p.m. Nov. 22. [twelvemonthburlingame.com](http://twelvemonthburlingame.com).

### Mazzetti's Bakery, Pacifica:

The longtime Coastside bakery has a dozen pie flavors to choose from this Thanksgiving plus cakes, cheesecakes, cannoli, coffeecake and more desserts. You'll also find breads for the dinner table, including focaccia, rolls and whole loaves.

Mazzetti's Bakery, 101 Manor Drive, Pacifica; 650-355-1007, Instagram: @mazzettisbakery. Prices vary; check website for complete pricing and ordering. Preorders for pickup Nov. 21 must be placed by 6 p.m. Nov. 20; preorders for Nov. 22 must be placed by Nov. 21 at noon. Order online, over the phone or in person. On Thanksgiving Day, the bakery will be open at 7 a.m. for walk-in customers only. [mazzettisbakery.com](http://mazzettisbakery.com).

### Fattoria e Mare, Half Moon Bay:

The downtown Italian bistro has a Thanksgiving preorder menu that includes roasted turkey, mashed potatoes, gravy, roasted winter squash, Brussels sprouts and focaccia.

Fattoria e Mare, 315 Main St., Half Moon Bay; 650-342-4922, Instagram: @fattoriaemare. Four people, \$150; whole turkey for eight people, \$280; turkey and ham for 12, \$420. Call 650-342-4922 to place an order until 5 p.m. Nov. 21. Pick up from noon to 4 p.m. Nov. 23. [fattoriaemare.com](http://fattoriaemare.com).

### Pie Ranch, Pescadero:

If you're looking for an excuse to drive out to the South Coast Thanksgiving week, Pie Ranch is offering several pie varieties for preorder, including lemon buttermilk, apple, pumpkin and pecan (the latter two can be made with gluten-free crusts), plus a vegan and gluten-free apple crisp. The farmstand will be open Nov. 22 for preordered pie pickups, as well as beans, preserves and other goods for the holiday.

Pie Ranch, 2080 Highway 1, Pescadero; Instagram: @pie\_ranch. Pies range from \$32-40. Order by 3 p.m. Nov. 18. Pick up at the farmstand from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. Nov. 22. [docs.google.com](http://docs.google.com). ■



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