

# The Almanac

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

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## Private preschool programs see impacts of transitional kindergarten expansion

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

At Menlo-Atherton Cooperative Nursery School, Director Kristy Roost-Taylor is heartbroken about her current pre-kindergarten class size of eight students, where she's been a Pre-K teacher for 25 years. A couple of years ago, her classroom was thriving with a full roster of 20 students.

This year, she's already lost three students to transitional kindergarten (TK) and expects to lose a couple more the following year. In January, she passionately wrote a newsletter titled, "Just Say No to TK" hoping to dissuade parents from enrolling their children in TK.

Preschools across the Peninsula are seeing fewer students registering after the state began to roll out free universal TK in public schools in 2021. The program is designed to provide all 4-year-olds with a year of free early childhood

education by 2025.

Preschools are also contending with decreased enrollment because of lower birth rates since the pandemic and recent mass layoffs in the tech industry have tightened parents' budgets, explained Kelly Shaw, communication's chair for Woodside Parents' Nursery School.

### Benefits of play-based learning on social and emotional development

Many preschool programs emphasize the importance of a play-based approach to early education. For example, students could use Play-Doh to improve their fine motor skills, which will help with future practices such as holding a pencil. Teachers incorporate hands-on activities, outdoor play and allow their students to guide their own learning to strengthen social and emotional



Natalia Nazarova

Circle time at the Menlo-Atherton Cooperative Nursery School on Feb 12.

See **PRESCHOOL**, page 17

## EPA Mayor Antonio López is biggest spender in the Board of Supervisors District 4 race

He spent nearly \$60K from Jan. 21 to Feb. 17

By Angela Swartz

Coming in at nearly \$60,000, East Palo Alto Mayor **Antonio López** spent the most in the race for the Board of Supervisors District 4 seat, according to the latest round of campaign finance filings.

With the March 4 primary election less than two weeks ago, four of the five candidates filed their latest round of finance reports for the San Mateo County District 4 Board Supervisor. The period covers contributions and expenses made between Jan. 21 to Feb. 17.

The winner would replace outgoing supervisor and board President Warren Slocum, who terms out in November. There is the possibility of a general election on Nov. 5 if no candidate secures more than 50% of the primary vote.

López spent \$57,419. His largest expense was to Washington, D.C.-based DS Political, a voter targeted digital ad network for \$30,000 for T.V. or cable airtime and production costs.

He raised \$36,757 during the timeframe. His biggest contributors gave \$1,000 each. They were: Dr. Aaliya Yaqub of Atherton; East Palo Alto

resident Katherine Mason; Iomas W. of Henderson, Nevada; Palo Alto Sereno Group realtor Jennifer Smith; Sunnyvale resident Mossab Bagdouri, principal data scientist at Walmart Global Tech; San Jose resident Ameena Reza and Juan Garcia of Morgan Hill.

Elected officials contributed. South San Francisco Council member James Coleman gave \$950 and Berkeley City Council member Terry Taplin gave \$100.

Atherton Deputy City Manager/City Clerk Anthony Suber gave \$100.

He also has a mix of contributions from students, tech

workers and other community members.

His campaign has spent \$80,249 and raised \$44,281 this year.

East Palo Alto Council member **Lisa Gauthier** spent the second most in the race (\$29,662).

Her biggest expenses were for campaign services from BMW Campaigns, including creating campaign literature and mailings and launching a text messaging campaign.

She raised \$14,485 during the period. Her biggest contributions are from the California Real Estate PAC gave (\$1,000), Dignity CA SEIU Local

2015 (\$1,000), Plumbers and Steamfitters Local #467 PAC (\$1,000), and Atherton resident and Google employee Jonathan Rosenberg (\$1,000).

She pooled support from local elected officials as well. Hillsborough Mayor Christine Krolak and his colleagues, Vice Mayor Sophie Cole, and council members Leslie Ragsdale and Alvin Royse, each gave \$250. San Mateo Mayor Lisa Nash also gave \$250. Belmont Mayor Julia Mates and Council member Robin Pang-Maganaris each contributed \$100.

See **SUPERVISORS**, page 17

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**2024**

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**7edu.org** **(408) 876-2144**

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**EmersonMontessori.com** **Emerson: (650) 424-1267**  
**Hacienda: (925) 485-5750**

### Harker Summer Programs **San Jose**

Harker summer programs for preschool - grade 12 children include opportunities for academics, arts, athletics and activities. Taught by exceptional, experienced faculty and staff, our programs offer something for everyone in a safe and supportive environment. Register as soon as possible.

**Harker.org/Summer** **(408) 553-5737**

### Lydian Academy **Menlo Park, Burlingame**

Lydian invites 6th-12th Neurodiverse learners, 2E students, and those in need of credit remediation or advancement to complete UC-approved courses in our personalized 1:1 setting in as few as 2.5 weeks. Executive Functioning, Personal Finance, and Life Skills electives are popular, in addition to our Design Thinking and Engineering (STEAM) camps and Middle School day camps.

**LydianAcademy.com/Admissions/Summer-at-Lydian/** **(650) 405-1312**

### Pinewood School Summer Festival of Learning **Los Altos**

Pinewood's two- or four-week program offers half-day or full-day options in both academic and enrichment classes designed to meet the needs of a variety of students. Specialized teachers and small academic classes maximize the summer school experience for grades K-8. Our curriculum emphasizes academic achievement as well as participation in the arts, technology and athletics.

**Pinewood.edu/SummerPrograms**



## ACADEMICS

### STANFORD EXPLORE: A Lecture Series on Biomedical Research **Stanford**

Explore biomedical science at Stanford through lectures from Stanford professors and graduate students about diverse topics in biomedical science including bioengineering, neuroscience, immunology and other topics. July 8-26 Registration begins March 1st. The program is virtual.

**Explore.Stanford.edu** **explore-series@stanford.edu**

### Summer@Stratford **Palo Alto/Bay Area**

Stratford infuses its STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Math) curriculum into an innovative and enriching summer camp experience. Younger campers engage in hands-on learning projects, while elementary-age students collaborate to tackle real-world problems. At the middle school level, individual subject-based enrichment classes are offered and tailored for each grade level.

**StratfordSchools.com/Summer** **(650) 493-1151**

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**Camp.Integem.com** **(408) 459-0657**

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**CaptivatingDanceByNona.com/Summer-2024** **(650) 339-0034**

### Castilleja Summer Camp for Girls **Palo Alto**

Casti Camp offers girls entering grades 2-6 a range of age-appropriate activities including athletics, art, science, writing, crafts, cooking, drama and music. Leadership program available for girls entering grades 7-9.

**Castilleja.org/SummerCamp** **(650) 470-7833**

### City of Sunnyvale **Sunnyvale**

Offering 100+ camps for ages 2-17 featuring traditional, visual arts, performing arts, theater, sport and STEM camps. Full and half day options run June 10 - Aug. 9. Check out swim lessons for all levels also starting in June and enjoy recreation swim at our aquatic facilities.

**Sunnyvale.ca.gov/Activities** **(408) 730-7350**

### Community School of Music and Arts **Mountain View**

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**Arts4All.org** **(650) 917-6800 ext. 0**

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**HiddenVilla.org/SummerCamp** **(650) 949-8650**

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**OFJCC-JCamp.com** **(650) 223-8622**

### Riekens Center **Menlo Park**

Explore all your interests this summer with Riekens Summer Camps! Enrolling now for camps in Nature, Music, Art, and Digital Media. There's something for every camper! For ages 5-18 with locations across the Peninsula.

**RiekensSummerCamps.org** **(650) 364-2509**

### Stanford Jazz Workshop **Stanford**

Stanford Jazz Workshop week-long jazz immersion programs for young musicians in middle school (Giant Steps Day Camp, starts July 8), High School (Jazz Camp, starts July 14 or July 21), and adults/advanced teens (Jazz Institute, July 28). All instruments and vocals. On the Stanford campus!

**StanfordJazz.org** **(650) 736-0324**

### Ventana School Summer Camp **Los Altos**

Keep your child inspired all summer long at Ventana's Elementary Summer Camp! With engaging week-long themes, campers will immerse themselves in hands-on activities that will boost their creative confidence and stimulate their minds. Join us for one or all of the following weeks: Masterchef Junior, Arts & Crafts, Game Creation, Mad Scientist, Musical Theater and Wonderful Water. Open to students who will have completed K-5th grade by the summer.

**VentanaSchool.org/Elementary-Summer-Camps-2024** **(650) 948-2121**

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**BaldEagleCamps.com** **(888) 505-BALD**

### Maccabi Sports Camp **Atherton**

Maccabi Sports Camp is an overnight Jewish sports camp. We welcome campers entering grades 3-11 with programs dedicated to building strong character and Jewish community through sports.

**MaccabiSportsCamp.org/wp** **(415) 997-8844**

### Spartans Sports Camp **Mountain View**

Spartans Sports Camp offers a wide variety of sports and academic enrichment camps for kids entering grades 1-9. Experienced staff ensures everyone has fun. Daily on-site swimming is offered for all camps. Camps run weekly from June 10 - August 2 at Mountain View High School. The camp is run by MVHS coaches and student-athletes and all proceeds benefit the MVHS Athletic Department. Lunch and extended care are available.

**SpartansSportsCamp.com** **(650) 479-5906**

### Stanford Water Polo Camps **Stanford**

New to water polo or have experience, we have a camp for you. Half day or full day options for boys and girls ages 7 and up. All camps provide fundamental skills, scrimmages and games. Session 1 - June 10-13, 2024. Session 2 - June 17-20, 2024.

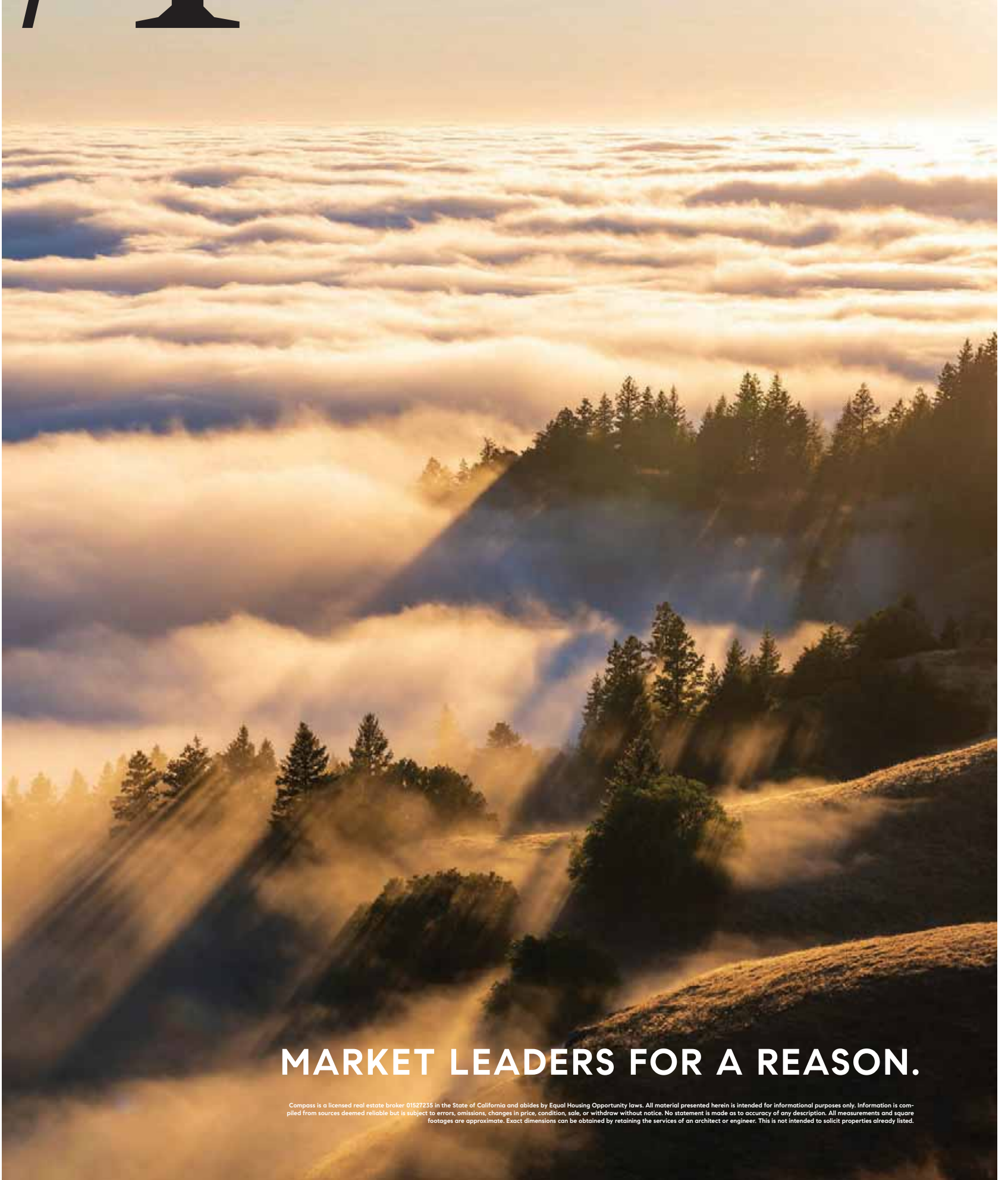
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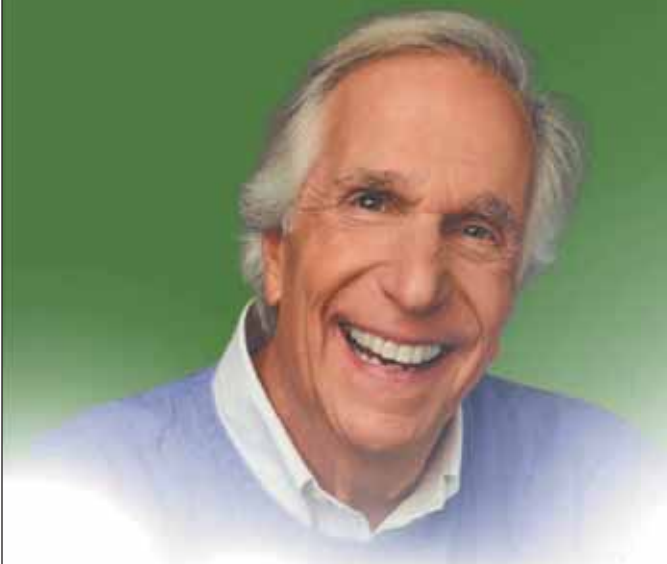
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# Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY



Courtesy Patrick Ang Photography

Boys & Girls Clubs of the Peninsula CEO Jenny Obiaya high-fives her way through lines of BGCP youth before taking the stage to deliver her speech.

## East Palo Alto youth speak on challenges and triumphs

By Michelle Iracheta

Four youths presented their stories before a panel of Silicon Valley executives.

Azaria James, Makasini Broussard, Johanna Castillo, and Anderson Ortiz were chosen to speak about the impact of the Boys & Girls Club of the Peninsula (BGCP) on their lives.

The event took place on Feb.

15 at the Boys & Girls Club's East Palo Alto Clubhouse.

Azaria James, a student at East Palo Academy, shared her experiences with racism, dyslexia, and bullying and how BGCP helped her navigate these challenges. She discussed her aspirations to become a filmmaker and how BGCP has supported her journey.

Makasini Broussard from Woodside High School talked about overcoming personal

obstacles such as his mother's deportation, racial trauma, and juvenile detention. He credited BGCP for playing a significant role in his recovery and personal growth.

Johanna Castillo, a student at Middle College, where she is both a high school senior and a college sophomore, spoke about her struggles with imposter syndrome and how being

See **YOUTH OF THE YEAR**, page 7

## Students settle into new facilities in Portola Valley

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Portola Valley School District's Ormondale Elementary School and Corte Madera School students are thriving with their new facilities that opened last year, according to Superintendent Roberta Zarea.

The school district celebrated the completion of their \$49.5 million construction funded by Measure Z with a ribbon cutting in October 2023 and since then students, teachers and parents have been enjoying the new facilities.

Along with a new STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts, math) center, art room with a kiln and music classroom, Ormondale Elementary and Corte Madera have both incorporated more flexible learning spaces, allowing students to have more choices in where they want to learn.

The Almanac toured the new facilities in February to get a first-hand look.

### Ormondale Elementary School

Ormondale's sensory garden opens up an outdoor learning space where students can bring their reading and education into a natural environment, expanding outside the traditional classroom.

Next to the sensory garden are multiple plots with fennel, citruses

and carrots, teaching children more about vegetables and gardening. The space expands their garden program into a central area of the school, where students can freely pick pieces of fennel to snack on.

"One thing that I really love about this garden program is that the kids are learning to eat vegetables," said Lynette Hovland, principal of Ormondale Elementary. "They eat things that, when I was this age, I would have never even thought about."

Ormondale's new facilities are opening more opportunities for students to be creative, move around, and get messy. In what Hovland calls the "lab area," the STEAM center, science, art and music classroom are located in a hub that inspires student creativity.

The new STEAM center is equipped with ceiling electrical outlets and large workstations for students to build and tinker. For 40 minutes a week, teachers bring their classes into the STEAM center where students learn about computer science, robotics, sewing and more. On select days the room is open for students during mornings, lunch and recess for kids to build and create in their free time.

The science and art room offer students an open space for

See **SCHOOL FACILITIES**, page 16

## History refurbished: Restoring the iconic Fitzhugh home

By Ashwini Gangal

When Crystal and John Ciancutti were honored by the town on Jan. 10 for the restoration of their home, which is part of the William Fitzhugh Estate on Grove Court, they thought it was nice to be appreciated. After all, restoring a historic property is a burdensome process, full of rules and restrictions.

But this was not the first time they received gratifying validation for their efforts. Several years ago, after their restoration work was complete, they invited its former occupants over. "They said it felt like the

house they grew up in, but still felt new," said Crystal, about the Simpsons, who put the house on the market in 2009 after the passing of their mother Helen "Tommy" Simpson who ran Portola Valley's hardware store.

The Simpsons lived on the property for over 50 years, after buying it from the Fitzhughs in the 1950s.

The Ciancuttis in turn bought the house from the Simpsons in 2013, started construction in 2014 and moved in in 2016.

"It was a long process; the town was happy we were doing it, but we needed exceptions," said Crystal, referring to the building guidelines in Portola

Valley that limit how tall a house can be and how it's supposed to fit into the hillside. "Portola Valley wants to maintain the rural feel."

Looking at photos of the house from the 1920s, and talking to town historian Nancy Lund as well as neighbors and temporary occupants of the house, helped them understand the blueprint of the place.

At any rate, they were free to change things on the inside as they pleased. "The requirements of the town were that you keep the outside of the house looking the same," Crystal said.

The house is on a hill, which is why it's two stories high from

the front, but three at the back due to the elevation. "The town really worked with us for the adjustments we needed to make to make it a modern house," she said, grateful for the support. "The staff at the time were advocates for the work we were doing, bringing it through the committee process."

Built in 1917, this was the second house on the Fitzhugh property. The other one, which is next door, was built in 1914.

"The guests of the Fitzhughs would stay in tents on platforms under the oak trees," she said, who believes her house was built to create more space for visitors.

"We didn't buy it because it

was a historic house, but we liked a lot of things that came with it being a historic house," she said, referencing aspects like the staircase and the old wood — first-growth Douglas fir and first-growth redwood, no less.

"We had a deep connection to the wood and the wood paneling. That was the big attraction for us," she said.

A lot of the wood in the house, such as the redwood boards in the dining room, had to be stripped, re-finished and put back up. "When we were taking the house apart, we saw that one of the boards had a Wells Fargo

See **FITZHUGH HOME**, page 10

# Gordon Russell, entrepreneur and Portola Valley resident, dies at 89

By Joshua Picazo

Gordon W. Russell, an entrepreneur and Portola Valley resident whose philanthropy assisted countless people across the Peninsula and the country, passed away on Nov. 25, 2023, after a short illness. He was 89.

Russell, the son of Anne and Leonard Russell, was born on May 16, 1933, and raised in Arlington, Massachusetts. He majored in history and played hockey at Dartmouth College, where he was a member of Casque and Gauntlet, Phi Gamma Delta, Newman Club and AFOTC. Before starting his entrepreneurial career, he worked in the electronics division of the Air Force.

For over two decades, he served as a general partner at Sand Hill Road-based Sequoia Capital, holding various executive roles in the biomedical and health care sectors.

Russell was a board member and advisory council member for the Ravenswood Family Health Center in East Palo Alto, which assists locals with access to health care. Russell was part of the organization since its inception in 2002, where most patients are low-income or from minority backgrounds.

“It basically comes down to his mother, who always said, ‘They need it. You have it,’” said

Tina McAdoo, his widow, about where his passion to give back came from.

That effort to give back also led to the Portola Valley resident receiving a “Lifetime of Achievement” award for his contributions to the community by the nonprofit Palo Alto-based Avenidas, which serves older adults of the Midpeninsula and their families.

“He just decided after 20 years of accumulating wealth in the venture business, he didn’t feel he needed any more money, so what he wanted to do with his time is serve,” McAdoo added.

He also supported his alma mater, Dartmouth College, with significant donations. These included endowments to the Native American Program, an athletic excellence fund, the Dartmouth Center for the Advancement of Learning and an academic chair at the medical school.

His dedication to Dartmouth extended to serving as chair of the Board of Overseers for 10 years, and he also contributed as a member of the Native American Visiting Committee. In recognition of his numerous contributions, Dartmouth awarded him an honorary Doctor of Humane Letters.

McAdoo also reflected on Russell being a good listener who gave thoughtful feedback



Courtesy Ravenswood Family Health Network

Gordon Russell at the Ravenswood Family Health Network board retreat, second on the right, in 2013.

without interrupting.

An avid reader who got his love of literature from his mother, Anne. Gordon created the Anne A. Russell Trust Fund in her honor to support special services and programs for children at a library in his hometown of Arlington.

Showcasing his love for books and family, he would read “A Child’s Christmas in Wales” to his sons every Christmas, which was a tradition passed down from his mother. Other books that Gordon often returned to were “Paddle-to-the-Sea” by Holling C. Holling and “Treasure Island” by Robert Louis Stevenson.

“It’s not just that he cared about others; it’s that he was someone who noticed,” McAdoo said when asked how Gordon would have liked to be remembered. “And what is the need for an individual? Or an organization? And he would contribute to meeting that need, whether it was emotional support or

financial assistance.”

Gordon’s family said that he lived a full and happy life, evidenced by the memories he left his family with.

“When I ask myself if I have helped make life better for one person that day and the answer is yes, then I have done what my mother would have wanted me to do,” McAdoo quoted him as saying in his obituary.

He is survived by his wife Tina; his son, Justin Russell; his stepsons, Gregor and Patrick Robertson; and Miles and Anders Pedersen and their families; and his sisters Elizabeth Bilafer and Claire Murphy and their families, according to his obituary.

In lieu of flowers, his family asks to donate to the Ravenswood Family Health Network and the Hawaii Community Foundation. ■

*Email Contributing Writer Joshua Picazo at [joshuadpicazo@gmail.com](mailto:joshuadpicazo@gmail.com).*

# YES on Measure E for Woodside Elementary raises \$52K

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

YES on Measure E for Woodside School, raised \$52,000 in support for the \$36 million bond that will fund the creek stabilization project, building repairs and improvement of classrooms at Woodside Elementary School, according to their recent campaign finance report.

The largest contribution of \$30,000 for the period, from Jan. 21 to Feb. 17, was made by Woodside School Foundation,

which raises money to supplement the budget at the school. Additional contributors donated an amount of \$3,000 or \$5,000.

Contributions were made by individuals including Marc Tarpenning (\$5,000), venture partner at Spero Ventures, Cindy Goldberg (\$5,000), co-owner of Urban Market Bags, Michelle Boyers (\$3,000), CEO of the Give Forward Foundation, Amanda Peiffer (\$3,000) and Melody Westervelt (\$3,000). Woodside School PTA also contributed \$3,000 to the campaign.

Measure E will be included on the March 5 ballot for the primary election. The measure requires a 55% majority for approval. ■

*Email Staff Writer Jennifer Yoshikoshi at [jyoshikoshi@almanacnews.com](mailto:jyoshikoshi@almanacnews.com).*



Magali Gauthier

A ballot drop box outside a vote center at the Town Center in Portola Valley in 2022.

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# Woodside council approves contract to install solar panels on Town Hall and Independence Hall

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Woodside Town Council voted 5-1 to approve a 20-year resolution to partner with Peninsula Clean Energy (PCE) to install solar panels on Town Hall and Independence Hall during its Feb. 27 meeting.

Peter Levitt, programs manager for PCE, presented details about solar energy, financial elements, and why PCE is working to expand renewable energy.

The benefits of the program include “no upfront cost to any of the participating agencies” and the town’s ability to execute the option to purchase the solar array after six years and again in 20 years.

Levitt explained that PCE’s energy prices are expected to stay the same over a 20-year period and this proposed contract will offer the town an energy price that is lower than what it is currently paying. PCE will also be using all union labor for the construction of the project.

The town will only be paying for the power produced by the solar arrays with a guaranteed flat rate over the contract period. At the end of the contract term, the town will have the option to extend the contact by five or 10 years, purchase the array at market value or to end the contact with PCE and have the panels uninstalled.

Upon the town’s agreement to the contract, PCE will have

engineers and construction vendors assess and evaluate the design of the rooftop panels before approving the project. Levitt’s presentation highlighted that if the design requires any additional costs, the price will be capped at 5%.

“It’s estimated that the simple savings over the 20-year term would be \$168,800, which is an average savings of \$703 per month,” said Brandi deGarmeaux, Woodside’s senior management analyst, in a presentation to the council.

DeGarmeaux also discussed that the roof of Independence Hall is at the end of its life and will need a replacement prior to

See **SOLAR PANELS**, page 18



Angela Swartz

Woodside's Independence Hall on Jan. 29.

## East Palo Alto nears state approval of housing element

By Gennady Sheyner

East Palo Alto is on the cusp of winning approval for its housing plan after the state Department of Housing and Community Development determined that the city’s latest submission largely complies with state law.

HCD’s determination that the city’s housing element is now in “substantial compliance” means that the council will only have to make some minor revisions before its housing element is deemed completed. The plan, which every city in California is required to submit, lays out the city’s strategy for adding 829 housing units between 2023 to 2031.

The city council had adopted the housing element in February 2023 but was subsequently notified by HCD that it needs to revise the document. Paul McDougall, senior project manager at HCD, informed the city in a Feb. 20 letter that its latest submission “will substantially comply with State Housing Element Law when it is re-adopted, submitted to, and approved by HCD.”

HCD approval is an important milestone for cities throughout California in light of recent laws that have turned what was once an academic exercise into an increasingly consequential one. Cities that have not received HCD approval remain vulnerable to the “builder’s remedy,” a previously obscure provision of state law that allows developers in cities that do not have compliant housing plans to effectively circumvent local zoning laws and development standards.

In Palo Alto, which has twice seen its housing element submission rejected by HCD, developers have proposed numerous builder’s remedy projects along a stretch of El Camino Real, south of Page Mill Road. And in Menlo Park, a developer is invoking the law for a plan to build a 421-foot-tall tower at the former site of Sunset Magazine at 80 Willow Road.

East Palo Alto, for its part, is preparing to go well beyond its state mandate of 829 units. The city already has projects totaling 1,001 dwellings in its development pipeline, according to the housing element,

and it plans to add 817 more in “opportunity sites” such as the Ravenswood Business District/Four Corners, a roughly 200-acre area with a mix of retail and residential uses. The city is now updating its specific area plan for this area to encourage more housing.

If things go as planned, East Palo Alto would add 1,933 new residences by 2031, a number that includes 115 accessory dwellings units, according to the housing element.

East Palo Alto’s Planning Commission plans to discuss the revised housing element on March 11 before the document goes to the city council for formal approval on March 19, according to a statement issued by City Clerk James Colin.

“The housing element is an important policy document that reaffirms East Palo Alto’s commitment to fairly and equitably meet the housing needs of all existing and future residents,” Mayor Antonio López said in a statement. ■

Email Staff Writer  
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gsheyner@paweekly.com.

### YOUTH OF THE YEAR

continued from page 5

around other ambitious students at BGCP helped her stay motivated in pursuing a medical career.

Anderson Ortiz, attending Oxford Day Academy, recounted his adjustment to a new life

in the U.S. after immigrating from El Salvador in 2019. He highlighted how BGCP provided a supportive community that helped him excel academically and as a soccer coach for younger players.

The panel included Bianca Gates (Birdies CEO), Mamoon Hamid (Kleiner Perkins

Partner), Aaron Levie (Box CEO), Marissa Mayer (Sunshine CEO), and Ryan Roslansky (LinkedIn CEO), who evaluated the speeches. This event highlighted the crucial support BGCP offers to young individuals facing various challenges. ■

Email Editor Michelle Iracheta at miracheta@rwcpulse.com.

### FIRE MARSHAL'S SAFETY CORNER LITHIUM-ION BATTERIES



Lithium-ion batteries are commonly found in cell phones, e-bikes, laptops, and e-scooters. Improper use and storage can cause fires. If you observe a lithium-ion battery fire, leave the area, CLOSE the door, and call 911.

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- Keep lithium-ion batteries at room temperature away from direct sunlight and heat
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#### Storage Tips

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- Charge your e-bike away from direct sunlight and tripping hazards
- Keep batteries away from small children, liquids, and flammable sources

#### Disposal

- Dispose lithium-ion batteries at a battery recycling location
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### Fire Marshal's Safety Corner Event – March 13th ~ Come learn more about fire and life safety ~

Stop by at our pop-up Fire Marshal’s Safety Corner event outside Peet’s Coffee at 899 Santa Cruz Ave, Menlo Park from 3:00pm-4:00pm on Wednesday March 13th. Come meet the Fire Chief, Fire Marshal, and potentially see one of our fire engines.

## Proposed fire mitigation ordinance worries Woodside, Portola Valley residents

By Neil Gonzales

Residents in Woodside, Portola Valley and surrounding communities understand the need to guard against wildfires given the high-vegetation area in which they live.

But a proposed ordinance that would require property owners to create what's known as a defensible space around a building to lessen the risk of a fire spreading has residents concerned about costs, penalties, where responsibility lies and other issues.

During a meeting on Tuesday, Feb. 27, the Woodside Fire Protection District board introduced a draft of the ordinance that would establish measures

to mitigate fuel-burning hazards around a property.

At the heart of the ordinance if ultimately adopted is a requirement that property owners clear brush and other combustible vegetation or material within 100 feet of any structure — theirs or someone else's on adjacent land.

"As a community, we greatly appreciate the big picture efforts to keep us safe and healthy," Daniel Warren of Ladera said, addressing the board. "I believe this draft has been created and discussed with good intentions from all parties."

However, Warren took issue with part of the ordinance stipulating that the owner of a parcel where potentially dangerous fire conditions exist within 100 feet

of a structure on a neighboring property is still responsible for creating the defensible space.

He raised the question of fairness, particularly if the structure on the other property is not up to code.

"Unpermitted and noncompliance structures on a neighboring parcel shouldn't cause us to degrade the value of our properties by removing plants when the structures should first be remediated according to established building and planning department processes," he said. "Doubling down on that sort of inappropriate behavior is a recipe for trouble."

He contended that the structure's owner should pay for clearing the hazards around his or her building.



Veronica Weber

Woodside firefighters Jonathan Irizarry, right, and Danny Dempsey, left, use the department's chipper to clear dry brush debris outside a home in Ladera.

Otherwise, the district is "taking something away from one property due to the actions of their neighbors," Warren said. That approach "will generate

endless conflicts between neighbors and with the district."

Portola Valley Council

See **FIRE**, page 16

## Portola Valley council talks next steps for housing element

Council also approves permanent contract for town attorney

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

The Portola Valley town council meeting on Feb. 14 approved a contract for a permanent town attorney, an automatic license plate reader (ALPR) audit and discussed the need to urgently develop the Opt-In Single-Family Rezoning Program and zoning designations following the approval of their housing element.

Portola Valley's 2023-31 housing element was approved on Jan. 30 by the state Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD). According to Portola Valley Town Manager Sharif Etman, the next steps are for the town to develop the Opt-In program to provide development standards, including height limits, lot coverage limits and

parking requirements. The Opt-In program is aimed at dispersing additional residential units throughout the community and providing a greater diversity of types of housing units available.

Following completion of the Opt-In program, the Planning Commission will need to review zoning regulations and changes to building codes which the town's staff and a consultant team are working on. The drafts will be reviewed by the planning commission in March and they will develop a recommendation to the town council.

During the meeting, Etman estimated that the Opt-in program will be completed in no more than two months.

He hopes for zoning regulations to be reviewed by the council in April following the Planning

Commission's reviews which will take more than one meeting to review, said Etman to the Almanac.

"Those two things are of priority," said Etman. "The state and HCD are literally watching us to make sure we get those done in short order."

### ALPR audit

The town council also looked over the mandated ALPR audit submitted by the town manager, Public Works Director Howard Young and the sheriff's office.

Council member Jeff Aalfs explained that the audit is intended to verify that the information in the ALPR system is secure and that there are no unauthorized searches or abuse of the data to protect people's privacy.

Young and Council member Craig Taylor discussed whether

there are better ways for the town to assess the value of the ALPR system.

### Permanent town attorney hired

Later in the meeting, the council voted to approve a contract with Shute, Mihaly & Weinberger to make Interim Town Attorney Catherine Engberg the permanent town attorney. Engberg has been serving as the interim town attorney since May 2023.

The contract includes reductions in general rates ranging from \$10 to \$15 per hour for non-litigation services based on the attorney's seniority and a reduction of \$40 per hour for the town attorney's attendance of up to six town meetings per month, according to a staff report.

Engberg, as a law firm partner,

will cost the town \$330 per hour for non-litigation services and \$290 for six monthly meetings.

Upon a unanimous approval to adopt the contract, Engberg expressed excitement about continuing her role as town attorney.

"Catherine has been nothing but a joy to work with and removing the interim title for the town is a huge step for stability," said Etman. "I think she fits within our culture and we're lucky to have her." ■

Email Staff Writer Jennifer Yoshikoshi at [jjoshikoshi@almanacnews.com](mailto:jjoshikoshi@almanacnews.com).



Catherine Engberg

## Atherton approves plan to improve crosswalk safety in Lloydlen Park

By Joshua Picazo

Atherton's City Council unanimously approved a plan to significantly

**LEHUA GREENMAN**



*"One person can make a difference, and everyone should try."*

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change a busy crosswalk in the Lloydlen Park neighborhood for safety reasons during a Feb. 21 meeting.

The changes include an extension to the sidewalk on Lloydlen Drive from the entry to Lloydlen Park, which may consist of a raised crosswalk elevated to provide a speed table to slow down speeding vehicles, a pedestrian-activated light beacon, known as a Rectangular Rapid Flashing Beacon for safety, and a solar street light.

"This is a very complicated intersection," said Vice Mayor Elizabeth Lewis, excitedly about the project's changes put forward.

The crosswalk on Lloydlen

Drive and Fair Oaks Lane is a three-way intersection further complicated by sitting near the Caltrain railway.

With the project design completed, the city will seek solicitation of construction bids then meet again to approval final plans.

The project's estimated cost is \$270,000, including approximately \$111,000 associated with green infrastructure components.

The plans also include stormwater treatment facilities, landscaping and irrigation. The 2022-23 Capital Improvement Program budget allocated \$175,000 for the project, with extra funding in the Green Infrastructure budget for

related enhancements.

"The biggest danger on this is coming from the Town Center across to Lloydlen Drive because of the way the road curves," said Lloydlen Park resident Walter Robinson at the meeting, approving of the plans. "You can see almost nothing until you get right out in the street."

"The stop sign doesn't work that way, so people coming from east to west can come as fast as they want, and there's nothing to stop them, so it's extraordinarily dangerous."

Residents in attendance at the meeting supported the changes because they'd bring increased safety to a frequently visited area,

where the town administrative building, Post Office, Atherton Library, and Police Department all sit.

"This is a project that has been on the minds of the council for a while, with the opening of the town center, to increase and improve pedestrian access, particularly from the north side of the town," said Public Works Director Robert Ovadia.

A conceptual design was presented to the Bicycle and Pedestrian Committee at its March 2023 meeting. ■

Email Contributing Writer Joshua Picazo at [joshuadpicazo@gmail.com](mailto:joshuadpicazo@gmail.com).



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## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

**Kindergarten class learns about farm animals at UC Elkus Ranch**

Kindergarten students at the Los Robles-Ronald McNair Academy took a field trip to the UC Elkus Ranch Environmental Education Center in Half Moon Bay. They had the opportunity to take their learning outside the classroom and do hands-on learning. Students were able to meet different animals including chickens and donkeys, learn about what they eat and how they are protected from predators and weather.

**M-A High School PTA seeks donations for prom closet**

On March 7 from 8:15-10 a.m. and 6-7:30 p.m., the Menlo-Atherton High School PTA will be collecting dresses, suits, ties, costume jewelry and any prom attire for their first official prom closet at the M-A PAC Cafe.

This effort will provide for the 27% of economically disadvantaged students at M-A who are not able to afford prom attire.

PTA co-president, Paige Winikoff, hopes to collect at least 100 dresses and 50 suits of all sizes that students will get to keep. They are also looking for volunteers that know how to sew and make alterations. Dresses and suits should be cleaned and ready to wear before donating.

The PTA is also open to publicizing local retailers, tailors or dry cleaners that can donate to their nonprofit. Donations will be accepted until April 5. Contact [presidents@maptabears.com](mailto:presidents@maptabears.com) with any questions or to schedule donations.

**Learn how to be a walk audit facilitator**

San Mateo County Safe Routes to School and national walkability expert, Mark Fenton, will be hosting a walk audit facilitator training to train community members about how to conduct and host a walk audit in their own community.

Over multiple sessions starting on Feb. 29 to March 26, school administrators, teachers, staff and community members are invited to audit facilitator training events. The events will cover general information, fundamental principles of walk audits, scouting locations and attending a walk audit:

- Learn about walk audit fundamentals on March 13 in a facilitator training webinar from 10 a.m.-noon.

- On March 25, join Mark Fenton for an in-person lunch and work on scouting walk locations

- From March 26 to 28, attend a walk audit around different school neighborhoods

Register for the walk audit facilitator training on [tinyurl.com/WalkAuditFacilitator](http://tinyurl.com/WalkAuditFacilitator).

**Menlo Park is awarded by the American Public Works Association**

The city of Menlo Park received accreditation from the American Public Works Association. This recognition is aimed “to promote excellence in the operation and management of a public works agency, its programs and employees,” according to a Feb. 20 press release by the city.

The Menlo Park Department of Public Works is the sixteenth agency in the state to be formally awarded this accreditation. Other agencies include Bakersfield, Oakland, Palo Alto, city and county of San Francisco, and more.

“The public works staff works hard to serve our residents and businesses in Menlo Park. This accomplishment showcases that commitment in service to the community,” said Menlo Park City Manager Justin Murphy, in the press release.

**San Mateo County Health offers in-home STI test kits for eligible residents**

Residents of San Mateo County can receive free in-home test kits for sexually transmitted infections when they participate in a free screening program in response to the increase of STIs in recent years, according to a press release by the county on Feb. 26.

San Mateo County Health is participating in the TakeMeHome program, which allows county residents to receive free test kits, return them by mail, and see test results in an online portal. Kits are available for HIV, gonorrhea, chlamydia, syphilis, and Hepatitis C.

Results from the test kits will be shared with County Health and residents may be contacted to answer follow up questions or receive next steps for treatment. Residents can start the process to order test kits at [takemehome.org](http://takemehome.org). ■

—Jennifer Yoshikoshi

**FITZHUGH HOME**

*continued from page 5*

shipping label on it,” she said, acknowledging the hidden history of lumber mills inherent in the structure. “It was shipped to the port of Redwood City and then brought to the house.”

The work also included taking off all the board and batten on the outside and removing a lot of the wood paneling on the inside, while reusing all the good parts. As for the bits that could not be reused, luckily, her father-in-law has a wood salvage business in Mendocino and was able to provide supplemental wood for the process.

Taking an entire house “down to the studs,” adding new bedrooms, bathrooms, coatrooms and pantries to it, while honoring its original footprint, is a difficult task.

“There was no foundation,” Crystal said.

The process involved digging to create a foundation, re-doing the lower level of the house completely and then putting the house back on top of it.

“We lifted the top two floors of the house up on what looked like Jenga blocks,” she said. “You don’t know what you’re getting into with an old house till you take it apart, and once you take it apart, you don’t have a lot of options on how you put it back together.”

Challenges ranged from the mundane to the outlandish.

There were a hundred thousand bees living in the walls, that had to be relocated, a job for which the Ciancuttis sought the services of famous beekeeper Art Hall. The process was not without incident — some of the professionals conducting a soil test got attacked by the bees while working.

The attic no longer smells of beeswax, but there are many hexagon-themed tiles in the house, in homage to the re-homed bees.

Another big addition the Ciancuttis made was an indoor



*Courtesy Crystal Ciancutti*

Crystal Ciancutti talks about her experience restoring Fitzhugh home in Portola Valley, which involved building the physical foundation from scratch while honoring its historic foundation.

entrance to the downstairs area. Previously, one had to go down a “rickety outdoor staircase” to get to the lower level, which was originally an area used to do laundry and servants’ quarters.

The Fitzhugh kitchen and sunroom area used to be a deck. The Ciancuttis had the area reconfigured and did away with asbestos in the space. In fact, some of these changes were actually a way of reverting to the old structure. “We added a small deck off the primary suite upstairs, but according to someone who lived in the house in 1950s, there had been a deck up there back then,” she said.

While they got rid of the giant chimney that went through the center of the house they kept the original fireplace. “We couldn’t touch the staircase, because it wasn’t to modern code,” she said.

“So it got lifted up and put back down.”

Somewhere around 2014 or so, while the restoration was underway and the house was up on stilts, there were two earthquakes in the area, one of which was centered in Ladera. The Ciancuttis — who lived close by in the Woodside Highlands neighborhood, in a house they’d purchased in 2006 — happened

to be traveling out of state at time. No damage was done, “but it made us nervous!”

Though most of their neighbors were supportive of the project, a few locals made things difficult and claimed they were changing the feel of the area. They stifled restoration efforts by protesting, for instance, when the Ciancuttis tried to connect to the sewer.

Of course, the naysayers didn’t deter the Ciancuttis from doing what they needed to do.

“We have a lot of pride in the house. It does make us feel more connected to Portola Valley,” she said, appreciating the introspection and decision making the restoration brought with it. “When you build or renovate a home from scratch, it makes it yours in a way that moving into a home that’s already made doesn’t.”

The Ciancuttis like belonging to a small community. Her grandparents lived in Portola Valley so growing up she was familiar with the town and cherishes her ties to the town.

Today, their home is a modern house with over a 100 years of history. They don’t have any of the power and insulation-related problems of an old house, but nonetheless enjoy the story, the feel and the history attached to it. After all, there’s a lot to be said for a gas fireplace with a remote control nestled within an ancient house with solar panels on the garage, isn’t there?

“The balance is nice,” she said, delighting in the “happy medium” between old charm and contemporary convenience.

Though the mammoth task of restoring Fitzhugh Home is behind them, the Ciancuttis still have plans for the outdoor space on the property, like an accessory dwelling unit and a pool. ■



*Courtesy Crystal Ciancutti*

Crystal and John Ciancutti.

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# County supervisors to meet with AT&T over landline services

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

In response to AT&T's decision to end landline services in California, San Mateo County Supervisor Ray Mueller requested the county Board of Supervisors to vote to issue a legislative subpoena to AT&T during a Tuesday, Feb. 27, meeting, according to a press release.

During the meeting, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors shared that they are asking AT&T officials to provide documents and to testify regarding

how their decision to end landline services will affect 911 and emergency services. AT&T has agreed to comply with the request and meet over the next two weeks to provide documents and information that identify where landline service cuts would impact residents, according to a press release issued after the meeting.

In March 2023, AT&T applied to end its Carrier of Last Resort (COLR) obligations which promises telecommunication services to all customers within their territory. If this application is approved

by the California Public Utilities Commission, the company will no longer be required to offer landline services in areas they are currently required to serve.

AT&T will be sending a representative to the next Board of Supervisors meeting to answer any questions but if the county finds the consultation unsatisfactory, the county retains the power to issue a subpoena.

"The county has an urgent need to hear from AT&T because they alone know exactly how many residents would be impacted, where

those residents live and, importantly, if there is even cell service available in many of those areas," said Mueller, in the press release.

Mueller, who represents District 3, argues that cutting access to landline services will have impacts on rural and coastal communities that are out of reach of reliable cellular access, especially during natural emergencies. The subpoena will call on AT&T representatives to provide information and evidence on the company's knowledge of how many landline customers who

lack reliable cellular access would be impacted if their application were approved.

"By understanding the scale of the issue and identifying the individuals who will be left isolated and vulnerable, San Mateo County can begin to plan for and implement effective measures to ensure the ongoing health and safety of our residents," said Mueller in the press release.

The release emphasizes that if AT&T's application is approved, thousands of state residents will lose their landline services. ■

## John Mack Casterman

1941 – February 19, 2024

John Casterman left us peacefully on February 19, 2024. John was an intense and challenging man, and he was well-loved.

John grew up in Pittsburg, Kansas where his family ran the local Coca Cola Bottling Plant. He graduated from the University of Kansas with a Fine Arts degree. He volunteered for the Vietnam War and served three tours in combat with the 11th Armored Cavalry — the legendary Blackhorse Regiment.

The Regiment did not have its own shoulder patch. While training his unit to ship to Vietnam, John used the library at Ft. Meade, Maryland to research the history of the Regiment and military heraldry and with that, he designed the now-famous Blackhorse patch. With the able assistance of men in his platoon, John got the patch officially adopted in 1967.

As a young tank commander in Vietnam, John earned the extreme loyalty and lifelong friendship of his soldiers by being brave and bold and by fiercely looking out for each of his men. John was severely wounded in action in 1967 and spent two years recuperating in Walter Reed Military Hospital in Maryland. Upon his release, John returned to Vietnam to his combat unit, M Company, 3rd Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

John was a recipient of the National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Medal, Vietnam Service Medal, Parachute Badge, Army Ranger Tab, Bronze Star with "V" Device, Vietnam Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star, two Overseas Bars, Jungle Expert Badge, Bronze Star Medal (1st Oak Leaf Cluster), and the Purple Heart for Wounds Received in Combat. He completed the Armor School, Jungle Survival School, U.S. Army Infantry School, Jungle Operations Course, Army Ranger School, and Airborne Training. John was honorably discharged in 1971.

Even outside of combat, John had an extraordinary appetite for adventure. He skied the world, insisting on using his ragged, old-fashioned gear to descend infamous peaks. To decompress from the war, he acquired a barn-find 1935 Ford panel delivery truck and drove it through the United States and into Mexico, producing the kinds of stories one might imagine and then some. He later traveled the world as a Tour Manager, taking distinguished



travelers to exotic destinations.

During John's travels, he encountered Carol, then a stewardess for Pan Am Airlines. The effect Carol had on John caused him to manipulate his itinerary for several subsequent years, so he could frequently cross paths with her while they both traveled, as he would later shamelessly admit. He succeeded in marrying Carol and having two sons, in whose raising he found a new, unshakable purpose. In lieu of conventional family va-

cations, John took his family on rugged wilderness trips, setting off from Kennedy Meadows Pack Station on horseback to spend weeks camping in the beautiful and remote Sierras.

When his sons started school, John focused on improving the entire district. In early days, when many local families did not have computers, John convinced Apple executives to donate rooms full of computers, so the students would not be left behind. He organized ski trips and ensured that all students who wanted to go would be sponsored. Those who knew John would agree he did not fit neatly into any ordinary personality boxes. He was confidently original, practical, and hyper-social. His sons recall that it took John a very long time to run errands, because he was interested in every person he saw and would stop to chat with each, whether it was the mayor, the janitor, the older lady down the street, or the police officer on the beat. He effortlessly related to people whom others did not see, and he believed that everyone had a story worth hearing.

John is survived by his beloved wife Carol Woodward Casterman, his sister Julie Newlin and her children and grandchildren, his son and daughter-in-law Mack and Sara Casterman and their daughters, his son David Casterman and Dave's love Amanda Carpenter, his brother and sister-in-law Patrick and Joan O'Connell, his brother and sister-in-law Dr. Paul and Donna Woodward, and his brother-in-law Neil Woodward.

Those who went before him include his father and mother John Jules and Doris Catherine Casterman, his sister Leslie Cates, and his brother-in-law John Newlin.

There will be a Memorial Mass on March 6, 2024, at 11 a.m. at St. Charles Catholic Church, San Carlos, California. A Military Honors Ceremony and interment of ashes will take place March 7, 2024, at 11 a.m., at San Joaquin Valley National Cemetery in Santa Nella, California.

PAID OBITUARY

## OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include:

**Andrew "Andy" Pierson**, 46, of Mountain View died on Jan. 22, 2024, following a battle with glioblastoma. Andy was a Cornell University alum, holding both a Bachelor's and Master's in Engineering, and also earned a Master's in Project Management from Rochester Institute of Technology. He made significant contributions to the tech industry through his work at TiVo, Harris RF, Amazon, and Meta.

**Dick McEwen**, 98, a Palo Alto resident who pursued an extensive education, earning degrees in mechanical and electrical engineering from Cal Tech and Stanford, and later becoming one of the first in the U.S. to receive a Ph.D. in chemical engineering in 1950. His career included impactful work as a petroleum recovery scientist and in biomedical instrumentation, notably in ultracentrifugation and protein/peptide sequencing. Beyond his professional achievements, McEwen was deeply involved in his community through volunteer work with the Palo Alto police department and local disaster preparedness initiatives. He was also a passionate musician, known for playing the piano, guitar, and trumpet. McEwen enjoyed hiking in the Bay Area with friends and hated gardening.

**Jeanne Greenawalt Johnson**, 97, a Los Gatos resident whose involvement in 4-H during seventh grade sparked her interest in home economics, leading to a BS degree from Kansas State University and a BA from San Jose University in home economics and education. Johnson received several honors and scholarships throughout her academic career. As an active member of the Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, Johnson participated in various church activities and volunteered at Hope House.

**Linda Kane**, 70, a Mountain View resident who grew up exploring the Stanford campus with her brother Jeff, enjoying activities like swimming in Lake Lagunita and hiking to the Stanford Dish. An avid traveler and culture enthusiast, she was fluent in Italian and passionate about opera, classical literature, and reading widely. Linda worked at Stanford University, particularly with the Stanford Instructional Television Network (now SCPD), as a student services specialist. Her career was interrupted by cancer, leading to health challenges she faced with dignity and courage.

**Arlene Schupp**, 89, a Palo Alto resident who was born in Japan to missionary parents, and later graduated from Occidental College in 1956 and later attended McCormick Seminary. Arlene became actively involved in the First Presbyterian Church of Palo Alto, particularly advocating for LGBTQ membership and embracing social justice causes. She was instrumental in coordinating the South Bay Sanctuary Covenant and led 37 delegations to El Salvador to support education and economic aid efforts while bringing international attention to the region.

**Zhiwei David Xiao**, 51, a Palo Alto resident who was born in China and was the trailblazer for his family, being the first to attend college. Zhiwei graduated from Huazhong University of Science and Technology and Tsinghua University, where he met his wife, Hongxia. Pursuing opportunities in the United States, he moved to the Bay Area and worked in the Silicon Valley tech industry for over two decades, including at Cisco, Broadcom, Amazon, Zingbox, Palo Alto Networks, and Apple.

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



# ADVERTISEMENT FOR BIDS

## TOWN OF ATHERTON

### STATE OF CALIFORNIA

**Notice:** The Town of Atherton (Town) hereby gives notice that it will accept bids for construction of the following public work:

## FAIR OAKS LANE/LLOYDEN DRIVE/DINKELSPIEL LANE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS

**Project Number: 56093**

1. **Scope of Work:** The scope of work consists of pedestrian improvements including tree trimming, tree removal, sidewalk, pathway grading, signing, striping, street lighting, solar powered RRFB implementation, solar powered streetlight, curb and gutter, curb ramp, milling, AC Tabletop, bioswale and bioretention area construction; including planting and irrigation system installation.
2. **Plans & Specifications:** Plans & Specifications may be obtained at the Town of Atherton's website at: <http://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/bids.aspx> at no cost. Additional information is contained in Town of Atherton Standard Specifications, which are available at: <http://www.ci.atherton.ca.us/DocumentCenter/View/285>. Contractor shall be responsible for any addendums that may be posted on the Town's website. **No Plan holders list will be made be available.**
3. **Project Schedule:** The work shall be completed within FORTY FIVE (45) working days from the First Day of Construction, exclusive of procurement periods, as defined in the Notice to Proceed. Contractor will be given sixty (60) calendar days for custom poles procurement time after the City's authorizes a Notice to Procure.
4. **Bid Submission:** SEALED BIDS will be received at the office of the City Clerk, 80 Fair Oaks Lane, Atherton, California 94027, **until 1:30 p.m.** Pacific Daylight Time **March 28, 2024**, at which time bids will be publicly opened and read aloud. All proposals must be submitted not later than the date and time prescribed. The Bidder is wholly responsible to ensure its Bid is submitted on the date and at the time and place designated for the opening of bids. Any Bid received after the time and date specified shall not be considered. Any Bid may be withdrawn prior to the scheduled time for opening bids.
5. **Engineer's Estimate** for the project is: **\$255,451.11**
6. **Bid Requirements:** Bids must be for the entire work and shall be submitted in sealed envelopes clearly marked: "Bid of (Contractor) for **FAIR OAKS LANE/LLOYDEN DRIVE/DINKELSPIEL LANE INTERSECTION IMPROVEMENTS, Project No: 56093**", along with date and time of bid opening.  
Bidders shall refer to the Bid Requirements section of the project Plans and Specifications for additional information and requirements.
7. **Required Contractor's License:** Bidder must possess a current **California Class "A" General Engineering** contractor's license issued by the State of California, at the time the Bid is submitted. The Contractor and all subcontractors shall be licensed by the State of California in the class appropriate for the work contemplated. Failure of Contractor or his/her subcontractors to possess such current license at the time of bidding may be deemed sufficient cause for rejection of the bid.
8. **Portion of Work to be Performed by the Contractor:** The General Contractor shall perform, with his own organization, work of a value amounting to not less than 50% of the total contract, excluding specialty items as may be indicated on the bid schedule.
9. **Department of Industrial Relations Registration:** A Contractor or Subcontractor shall not be qualified to bid on, be listed in a bid proposal, subject to the requirements of Public Contract Code 4104, or engage in the performance of any contract for public work, as that term is defined in Division 2, Part 7, Chapter 1 of the Labor Code, unless currently registered and qualified to perform public work pursuant to Labor Code Section 1725.5. (<http://www.dir.ca.gov/Public-Works/PublicWorks.html>)
10. **Reservation of Rights:** The Town reserves the right to reject any or all bids; to make any awards or any rejections in what it alone considers to be in the best interest of the Town and waive any informalities or irregularities in the bids. If there is a reason to believe that collusion exists among any bidders, none of the bids of the participants in such collusion will be considered and the Town may likewise elect to reject all bids received.
11. **Substitution of Securities:** The successful bidder may substitute securities for retention monies withheld to ensure performance of the contract, in accordance with California Public Contract Code, Section 22300.
12. **Prevailing Wage Rates:** Bidders are hereby notified that provisions of California Labor Code regarding prevailing wages and apprentices are applicable to the work to be performed under this contract. Pursuant to Section 1773 et seq. the general prevailing wage rates have been determined by the Director of the California Department of Industrial Relations and appear in the California Prevailing Wage Rates. Copies are on file at the office of the City Engineer and are available to interested parties upon request. The successful bidder shall post a copy of the wage rates at the job site.
13. **Bid Preparation Cost:** Bidders are solely responsible for the cost of plan and specification printing and preparing their Bids.
14. **Town Contact:** Questions regarding the project should be directed to Robert Ovadia, PE, by written Requests for Information (RFI) to: Public Works Department, 80 Fair Oaks Lane, Atherton, CA 94027, no later than eight (8) business days before bid opening. RFIs may be emailed to [rovadia@ci.atherton.ca.us](mailto:rovadia@ci.atherton.ca.us).
15. **Understanding:** By submitting a bid in response to this advertisement for bids, the bidder shall be conclusively deemed to have read, understood and agreed with all of the information and materials contained in the bid documents, including but not limited to the standard specifications, the special provisions, the required nature and amount of insurance and the documentation evidencing said insurance.
16. **Bid Protests:** The lack of a prompt procedure to resolve disputes regarding the bidding process would impair the Town's ability to carry out its purpose of constructing this project in a timely manner. Therefore, to the maximum extent authorized by law and notwithstanding any other procedures specified in documents referenced herein, all disputes and/or protests regarding the bidding process shall be subject to the following procedure. In submitting a Bid to the Town for this project, the Bidder agrees to comply with and to be bound by this procedure.  
Any Bid protest must be submitted in writing to the Office of the City Clerk, Atherton Town Hall 80 Fair Oaks Lane, Atherton, CA 94027, before 5:00 p.m. on the fifth (5th) working day following Bid opening.  
The initial protest document must contain a complete statement of the basis for the protest, and all 5 supporting documentation.  
The party filing the protest must have actually submitted a Bid for the Work. A Subcontractor of a party submitting a Bid for the Work may not submit a Bid protest. A party may not rely on the Bid protest submitted by another Bidder, but must timely pursue its own protest.  
The protest must refer to the specific portion of the Contract Documents which forms the basis for the protest.  
The protest must include the name, address and telephone number of the person representing the protesting party.  
The party filing the protest must concurrently transmit a copy of the initial protest document and any attached documentation to all other parties with a direct financial interest which may be adversely affected by the outcome of the protest. Such parties shall include all other Bidders who appear to have a reasonable prospect of receiving an award depending upon the outcome of the protest.  
The Town will give the protested Bidder five (5) working days after the receipt of the protest to submit a written response. The responding Bidder shall transmit the response to the protesting Bidder concurrent with delivery to the Town.  
The procedure and time limits set forth in this paragraph are mandatory and are the Bidder's sole and exclusive remedy in the event of Bid protest. The Bidder's failure to comply with these procedures shall constitute a waiver of any right to further pursue the Bid protest, including filing a Government Code Claim or legal proceedings.  
If the Town determines that a protest is frivolous, the protesting Bidder may be determined to be nonresponsible, and that Bidder may be determined to be ineligible for future contract awards.
17. **List of Subcontractors:** Each Bidder shall set forth in its Bid (on the form provided herewith) the following information in accordance with the provisions of Public Contract Code sections 4100-4113: The name, Contractor's license number, public works Contractor registration number and the location of the place of business of each Subcontractor who will perform work or labor or render service to the prime Contractor in or about the construction of the work or improvement, or a Subcontractor licensed by the State of California who, under subcontract to the prime Contractor, specifically fabricates and installs a portion of the work or improvement according to the Contract Documents, in any amount in excess of one-half of one percent (0.5%) of the prime Contractor's total Bid, or ten thousand dollars (\$10,000.00), whichever is greater.  
The portion of the work which will be done by each such Subcontractor. Only one Subcontractor shall be listed for each such portion of the work as defined in the Bid.  
The Bidder is considered the Prime Contractor and shall perform at least fifty percent (50%) of the work, as determined by a percentage of the value of the work.  
If the Bidder fails to specify a Subcontractor for any portion of the work to be performed under the Contract, the Bidder agrees to perform that portion of the work itself.

By: \_\_\_\_\_

Robert Ovadia, P.E., City Engineer

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**SCHOOL FACILITIES**

*continued from page 5*

students to learn, experiment and create with others. Larger classroom spaces allow more partner work between students, especially for “buddy classes,” a program at Ormondale that pairs older and younger students.

“I love the light and I love the size because it’s very flexible,” said kindergarten teacher Linda Clark. “I think it’s really good for individual and group work. I can come in here with a buddy class so you can easily fit two classes at the same time.”

In the new music classroom, music beams out of the doors as students learn about song and dance in a spacious carpeted room. During music class, students learn cultural dances, folk songs, rhythm and prepare for the school’s musical production — this year will be the “Little Mermaid.” Because of the extra space, students don’t bump into each other while dancing and moving around, Hovland said.

Outside of the classrooms is a courtyard with tables and chairs laid out for students to be able to spend their time outside.

“An important part of the design was for the kids to be able to spill out from inside and work outside as well,” said Hovland. “

In addition to the new classrooms, a new garden space was constructed to provide students with a larger area to meet the needs of all student groups. A variety of vegetables and flowers are grown in the garden including rainbow chard, nasturtium, peas, basil and radish.

**Corte Madera School**

In the recent construction that was completed during the spring and summer of 2023, Corte Madera School opened up a new atrium, a new playground, amphitheater and what they call the 500 wing, an outdoor space that overlooks the Frog Pond.

“What’s beautiful about this is that it ties into nature and the aesthetics of Portola Valley,” said Roberta Zarea, superintendent of PVSD.

The 500 wing houses the fourth and fifth grade science classrooms, which are also used for their afterschool program. The close proximity to the creek allows students to use the natural environment in their science experiments and observations.

On the other side of the campus, the newly built atrium stands out as a fully modernized building. Its floor to ceiling windows provide a clear view of the Windy Hill in the distance, creating a bright and open space for students as they



Magali Gauthier

Second graders rehearse a dance number from Ormondale Elementary School’s production of “The Little Mermaid” in Portola Valley on Feb. 15.

learn in their new classrooms, according to Zarea.

The new building creates a flexible learning environment that students and teachers can utilize during or outside of class time. Decorated with bean bags and a long central table, students have different choices in where they want to do their work.

During classes, teachers are able to bring their students outside the classroom to do interactive lessons in a bigger indoor space. They can also allow their class to work in the classroom or in the atrium’s central hallway where they can still supervise from inside the room.

Within the atrium is the new STEAM center, art room, science class, Spanish class, study rooms and more. This modernized building creates a space for the school to hold art exhibitions, science fairs and other school events that used to be held in their multi-use room (MUR) and interrupt the gym class, according to Kristin Shima, principal of CMS.

“All we had was the MUR, so even when it rained everybody had to be housed in the MUR. They had to eat there, had to stay in here and now we can open this space, even in the rain,” said Shima.

Similarly to Ormondale, the

STEAM center is used to teach coding, robotics, sewing and building. Corte Madera uniquely has a green room where students can film videos and learn video editing skills. Within the STEAM center and art room is a garage door that opens up one side of the classroom to a shaded outdoor area, expanding the learning space outside.

The students are enjoying the many options and the freedom to access different spaces to learn, said Shima. They can bring their chairs outside, sit on the carpet and bean bag chairs. Instead of a traditional desk, children at CMS are able to move around as they continue their learning in different places.

A new playground was added next to the field and atrium, which Shima said was designed by the students. In the center of the campus, the new amphitheater provides an outdoor stage for school events and performances with an open area for guests to bring their lawn chairs and blankets.

“Kids are so lucky to see nature right where they go to school and there’s real pride on the campus,” said Zarea. ■

*Email Staff Writer  
Jennifer Yoshikoshi at  
jyoshikoshi@almanacnews.com.*

**FIRE**

*continued from page 8*

member Craig Taylor also spoke up during the public comment portion of the meeting, echoing much of what Warren expressed.

“Obviously, this ordinance represents a lot of hard work by the

current fire marshal and the previous fire marshal,” Taylor said. “And it’s also clearly something that we need for our communities. We are kind of overdue, but I’d also say that equally important is that we bring the community along as willing partners.”

Like Warren, Taylor was not

keen on having a property owner put in a defensible space for someone else’s building.

“The adjacent-property clause seems pretty problematic,” Taylor said. “It’s using the district’s authority to compel neighbors to take on an unknown, potentially significant cost based on

conditions that are outside their control.”

The clause should be stricken from the ordinance, he said.

Furthermore, he recommended holding off enforcing the ordinance until the district could finish its first round of inspecting defensible spaces. “This will give the district time to better quantify the risks,” he said. “It’ll give the community time to better understand what’s necessary (and) the associated costs.”

Doing so, Taylor said, “we’re likely to get people to be more willing partners, and it’ll give us an opportunity to maybe understand if there are unintended consequences here and make sure as we go forward we get the right results.”

He and Warren are also worried about what they described as harsh penalties for noncompliance.

“The rules are really draconian,” Warren said. “They’re very punitive, what’s written.”

The ordinance would deem a violation a public nuisance and subject a noncompliant property owner to an administrative citation or legal action to compel him or her to abate the fire hazards.

In addition, under the ordinance, the offender would be guilty of an infraction or a misdemeanor involving state health and safety rules.

But district board President

Matt Miller sought to reassure residents that fire officials would work in partnership with them and not be out targeting possible violators at every bend.

“They’re not going to be storm-troopers, descending on your property (and) tagging trees,” Miller said during the meeting. “This is a multi-year process with an individual assessment of each property by our folks with you to try to make the environment safer.”

The ordinance would have “multiple cycles of inspection,” he said. “The first time we would come, (the district would) help you see what should be done on your property.”

The objective is not to force residents “to cut down mature trees (or) butcher everything you planted,” he said. Rather, the goal is to “reduce the vegetation that could someday stop a wildfire from moving 60 miles an hour through the shrub, spreading embers a mile ahead of itself.”

Miller pointed out that the district will continue to study, and take public input on, the proposed ordinance before any board vote could occur.

“So we’re trying to take our time,” he said. “Nobody’s made a decision whether what happens next. ... There’s no attempt here to jam this thing through. This is really important, and it takes some time.” ■



**VACANTES ACTUALES DEL ÓRGANO CONSULTIVO DE LA CIUDAD**

¡La Ciudad tiene vacantes en varias comisiones y comités! Ayude a examinar los problemas de interés de la comunidad y proporcionar orientación al Concejo Municipal.

**VACANTES ACTUALES DEL ÓRGANO CONSULTIVO**

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- Parques y Ocio – 2
- Planificación – 2

Desarrollando líderes dentro de la comunidad

**REQUISITOS DE ELEGIBILIDAD**

- Aplicar antes de las 5 p. m., miércoles 27 de marzo
- Debe ser residente en Menlo Park
- Mayor de 18 años
- Comprometido a asistir a las reuniones programadas

**PARA MÁS INFORMACIÓN**

- Visite [menlopark.gov/commissions](http://menlopark.gov/commissions)
- Escriba a [jaherren@menlopark.gov](mailto:jaherren@menlopark.gov)
- Llame al 650-330-6620

**PRECHOOL**

*continued from page 1*

development, according to Shaw.

“It’s hard to develop social-emotional skills when you’re in a quiet environment,” said Woodside Parents’ Nursery School’s Shaw, referring to TK.

TK curriculums tend to be more focused on introducing early academics to prepare students for kindergarten, preschool directors told this news organization.

In order to stay competitive against TK programs, Woodside Parents’ Nursery School has started to incorporate playful academic lessons in counting, addition, subtraction and writing, according to Shaw.

Other schools are trying to stay true to their play-based philosophy, despite losing enrollment to TK programs, like Roos-Taylor. She said that TK is not the best choice for children emotionally, socially and developmentally.

“Teachers love the kids who come from our school because they might not be as advanced academically but they are advanced emotionally and socially,” she said.

Despite some of the backlash against TK programs, Jammie Behrendt, Menlo Park City School District’s associate superintendent of Educational Services, says that the TK curriculum has changed to mirror preschools and are very student-centered.

MPCSD is also home to an Early Learning Center for 2- to 5-year-olds, a tuition-based preschool program. ELC students transition well into TK programs, according to its director Chana Stewart.

MPCSD’s early education program is unique in that they embrace a play-based approach to learning, using hands-on activities for lessons on early math and counting, according to district officials. Although not all TK classrooms are the same across school districts, MPCSD states it is committed to following preschool guidelines and encouraging students to “drive their own education through wonder.”

**‘Teachers love the kids who come from our school because they might not be as advanced academically but they are advanced emotionally and socially.’**

MENLO-ATHERTON COOPERATIVE NURSERY SCHOOL DIRECTOR KRISTY ROOS-TAYLOR

Woodside Elementary School TK teacher Sonja Virgallito follows preschool standards with the addition of academics. She introduces math and literacy through singing, rhyming and play, adapting based on collective needs.

By the end of TK, students are expected to know life skills in self regulation, social-emotional learning and self care, which includes taking responsibility for actions, building an attention span and using conflict resolution, she said.

“We teach them how to be in a group, pack up their backpacks and learn to communicate,” she said.

And there are proven academic and social benefits of TK down the line. For example, a five-year study published in 2017 by the American Institutes for Research found that California’s TK program did have positive impacts on students’ literacy and math skills going into kindergarten.

It also found that kindergarten teachers rated TK students as more engaged than their peers who didn’t attend TK. TK has a particularly strong impact on the English language skills of English learners and on math skills of low-income students, according to the study.

**Public vs. private early education**

Being on bigger elementary school campus helps TK students learn to become independent, according to MPCSD’s Behrendt.

While their focus is on maintaining a play-based education, TK students are introduced to more structure in an elementary school setting, TK directors argue.

Currently, the MPCSD offers a half-day TK program. Parents are increasingly asking for full day programs and although the district would love to provide one, it can’t afford to do so, according to the district.

Stewart of ELC acknowledges that there are “many options for parents” to choose from and for working families, a private preschool with a full-day program might work better for them and their child.

At Woodside Elementary, parents of TK students are offered the option for a later pick-up time at 2:30 p.m. after the first trimester. This is the same time

that kindergarteners get out of school, mirroring a schedule that TK students will follow the next year.

**Losing teachers to TK programs**

Maria Rodriguez, director of Toddle, a flexible preschool program in Menlo Park, said that not only are preschool programs slowly losing students, they’re also losing qualified teachers.

She has gotten creative in how she recruits new teachers — posting job listings on Nextdoor, which is typically used for neighborhood communications, selling items and sharing interests.

She invests in people who are passionate about early childhood education but might not have the typical qualifications of a preschool teacher. This means offering jobs to nannies and college graduates, while helping them get into college courses for teaching and reimbursing their tuition.

“If we’re offering a high quality program we have to have a high quality staff and that can’t stop at just community college education,” said Rodriguez.

In addition to tuition reimbursement, Windmill School is trying to be competitive in the retention of teachers by offering benefits and paying attention to teacher well-being.

“We can’t compete with state funding because we’re funded by tuition,” said Jane Garvey, Windmill’s director of operations and admissions.

**High quality child care is indicator for success later**

High quality child care is the indicator for higher success later in life, according to David

Fleishman, executive director of 4C’s of San Mateo County (Child Care Coordinating Council).

Studies have shown that the majority of brain growth happens during preschool years, when children develop social-emotional skills, he said.

Although sending kids to school is important for child development, many parents struggle with accessing quality care, according to Dayna Chung, co-founder and executive director of Community Equity Collaborative, a Menlo Park-based nonprofit that supports early childhood learning programs.

A 2022 San Mateo County Child Care Needs Assessment found that 73% of parents turned down work due to child care challenges.

Although TK provides free child care to families, Fleishman argues the programs can be disruptive to the early childhood education field.

Expanding TK to all 4-year-olds will pull away a large age group from private care programs they are already enrolled in, he said. It forces private preschools to adjust their business models to the loss of students and pushes them to enroll younger students who require more staffing, an issue they already struggle with, he explained. ■

*Email Staff Writer Jennifer Yoshikoshi at jyoshikoshi@almanacnews.com.*

What do you think about the benefits of TK versus preschool? Write to us at letters@almanacnews.com.

**SUPERVISORS**

*continued from page 1*

Her campaign has spent \$45,394 and raised \$21,785 this year.

Maggie Cornejo, director of government and community relations at Boys and Girls Club of the Peninsula, spent \$25,348 during the period. Her biggest expense was \$19,973 to Petaluma-based campaign advisors Indie Politics for campaign literature and mailings.

She raised \$6,460 during the period. Her biggest contribution, \$1,000, came from Belmont resident Rachel Pastorelli. Fund Her PAC, a political action committee focused on helping elect “phenomenal” women to local and state government, contributed \$500. San Carlos Council member Laura Parmer-Lohan also received a contribution from the PAC.

San Mateo County Deputy Carlos Tapia gave \$500 to

Cornejo’s campaign. Susie Castoria, a legislative aide in District 4, gave \$100. Randy Torrijos, a legislative aide in District 1, gave \$250.

Paul Bocanegra, a juvenile Justice Delinquency Prevention commissioner and legislative coordinator for San Mateo County, raised \$1,175 during the period. His biggest contributor was David Vallerga of Redwood City, who gave \$500. He didn’t spend any money during the timeframe.

He has raised \$5,175 since the start of the year.

Celeste Brevard, a project manager at Stanford University, has not yet filed her campaign finance report for this round. ■

*Email Editor Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com.*

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**ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS**

- Apply by 5 p.m., Wed., March 27
- Menlo Park resident
- Over 18 years of age
- Committed to attending scheduled meetings

**FOR MORE INFORMATION**

- Visit [menlopark.gov/commissions](http://menlopark.gov/commissions)
- Email [jaherren@menlopark.gov](mailto:jaherren@menlopark.gov)
- Call 650-330-6620

Developing leaders within the community

# Public Notices

CANDY LAND HOME DAYCARE  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-296686

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

1.) CANDY LAND HOME DAYCARE , located at 1909 Cooley Avenue, East Palo Alto, CA 94303, San Mateo County.

Registered owner(s):  
EVELYN XIOMARA CABRERA CONTRERAS  
1909 Cooley Ave  
East Palo Alto, CA 94303

This business is conducted by: an Individual. Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 04/17/2018.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 16, 2024.

(ALM Feb 23, Mar 1, 8 and 15, 2024)

EMPRESA SAVI

SAVIE  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-296750

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

1.) EMPRESA SAVI , 2.) SAVIE , located at 2056 PULGAS AVE, EAST PALO ALTO, CA 94303.

Registered owner(s):  
IMELDA LLANOS  
2056 PULGAS AVE  
EAST PALO ALTO, CA 94303

This business is conducted by: an Individual. Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 06/03/2019.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 23, 2024.

(ALM Mar 1, 8, 15 and 22, 2024)

GULFSTREAM 1978

GULFSTREAM 1979  
LEEDEY DRILLING VENTURES  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-296664

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

1.) GULFSTREAM 1978 , 2.) GULFSTREAM 1979 , 3.) LEEDEY DRILLING VENTURES , located at 7 LLOYDEN DRIVE, ATHERTON CA 94027.

Registered owner(s):  
JUDITH ANN MASSEY  
7 LLOYDEN DRIVE  
ATHERTON CA 94027

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA  
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 February 15, 2024.

(ALM Mar 1, 8, 15 and 22, 2024)

B COMMA

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-296641

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

1.) B COMMA , located at 580 Remillard dr., Hillsborough, CA 94010.

Registered owner(s):  
SAERA BAIK  
580 Remillard dr.  
Hillsborough CA 94010

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA  
This business is conducted by: an Individual. Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 05/02/2023.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 13, 2024.

(ALM Feb 23, Mar 1, 8 and 15, 2024)

ELLIE MENTAL HEALTH

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-296608

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

1.) ELLIE MENTAL HEALTH , located at 1775 Woodside RD, Suite 203, Redwood City, CA 94061.

Registered owner(s):  
CYPRESS HEALTH LICENSED CLINICAL SOCIAL WORKER INC.  
1775 Woodside Rd, Suite 203  
Redwood City, CA 94061

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA  
This business is conducted by: a Corporation. Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 12/01/2023.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 12, 2024.

(ALM Feb 23, Mar 1, 8 and 15, 2024)

WALNUT1 DESIGN

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-296365

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

1.) WALNUT1 DESIGN , located at 79 Santa Maria Ave, Portola Valley CA 94028.

Registered owner(s):  
LISA ANDERSON HILL  
79 Santa Maria Ave  
Portola Valley CA 94028

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA  
This business is conducted by: an Individual. Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 12/1/2023.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 19, 2024.

(ALM Feb 9, 16, 23 and Mar 1, 2024)

RL LOGISTIX

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-296632

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

1.) RL LOGISTIX , located at 90 South Spruce Ave., Suite B, South San Francisco, CA, 94080.

Registered owner(s):  
AQUARIUZ LLC  
90 South Spruce Ave., Suite B  
South San Francisco, CA, 94080

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA  
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company. Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 2/13/24.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 13, 2024.

(ALM Feb 23, Mar 1, 8 and 15, 2024)

GLS LAWN CARE AND LANDSCAPE

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-296515

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

1.) GLS LAWN CARE AND LANDSCAPE , located at 364 3rd Ave, Redwood City, CA 94063.

Registered owner(s):  
GUILLERMO LOMBERA-SANCHEZ  
264 3rd Ave  
Redwood City, CA 94063

This business is conducted by: an Individual. Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 3/6/2021.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 31, 2024.

(ALM Feb 9, 16, 23 and Mar 1, 2024)

CRUZELIA'S HOUSE CLEANING

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-296336

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

1.) CRUZELIA'S HOUSE CLEANING , located at 1133 Berkelie Ave , Menlo Park, CA 94025.

Registered owner(s):  
CRUZELIA OROZCO AGUILAR  
1133 Berkelie Ave  
Menlo Park, CA 94025

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA  
This business is conducted by: an Individual. Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 01/01/2004.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 17, 2024.

(ALM Feb 9, 16, 23 and Mar 1, 2024)

SARAH ALLEN CONSULTING

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-296568

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

1.) SARAH ALLEN CONSULTING , located at 714 Upton Street, Redwood City, CA 94061.

Registered owner(s):  
SILICON VALLEY CONSULTING LLC  
714 Upton Street  
Redwood City, CA 94061

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 February 07, 2024.

(ALM Feb 16, 23, Mar 1 and 8, 2024)

HECTOR'S GOPHER CONTROL  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-296586

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

1.) HECTOR'S GOPHER CONTROL , located at 2645 ILLINOIS ST, EAST PALO ALTO, CA 94303.

Mailing Address: PO BOX 50701 Palo Alto, CA 94303.

Registered owner(s):  
HECTOR DAVID MAGANA RODRIGUEZ  
2645 ILLINOIS ST  
EAST PALO ALTO, CA 94303

This business is conducted by: an Individual.

Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 02/07/2024.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 07, 2024.

(ALM Feb 16, 23, Mar 1 and 8, 2024)

BEARS CLEANING SERVICES

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-296369

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

1.) BEARS CLEANING SERVICES , located at 2761 FLEETWOOD DR, SAN BRUNO CA. 94066.

Registered owner(s):  
OSCAR OSORIO NAVA  
2761 FLEETWOOD DR  
SAN BRUNO CA. 94066

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA  
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 January 19, 2024.

(ALM Feb 9, 16, 23 and Mar 1, 2024)

LEENZART

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-296493

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

1.) LEENZART , located at 245 7th Ave #6, San Mateo, CA 94401.

Registered owner(s):  
KATHLEEN LAURIE BRIEN  
245 7th Ave #6  
San Mateo, CA 94401

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 January 30, 2024.

(ALM Feb 16, 23, Mar 1 and 8, 2024)

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

Case No.: 24-CIV-00406

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

Petitioner: Duncan Anderson King filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

DUNCAN ANDERSON KING to DUNCAN ANDERSON KING GRENIER

THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING: 04/09/2024, 9:00 AM, Civil Department of the Superior Court of California, County of San Mateo, located at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063.

A copy of this ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county:

ALMANAC

Date: 02/07/2024

Jonathan E. Karesh

JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT

(ALM Feb 23, Mar 1, 8 and 15, 2024)

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

Case No.: 24-CIV-00755

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

Petitioner: Birdie Kiet Nguyen filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

BIRDIE KIET NGUYEN to BIRDIE KIET NGUYEN

SHARIFI

SUMMER SHARIFI to SUMMER SAFIYA SHARIFI  
MATEEN ADAM SHARIFI to ZAYN ADAM SHARIFI

THE COURT ORDERS that all persons

interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING: 04/10/2024, 9:00am, MC of the Superior Court of California, County of San Mateo, located at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063.

A copy of this ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county:

ALMANAC

Date: 02/15/2024

Lee, Elizabeth K.

JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT

(ALM Mar 1, 8, 15 and 22, 2024)

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

Case No.: 24-CIV-00001

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

Petitioner: Caleb Isreal Albers filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

CALEB ISREAL ALBERS to CALEB ISREAL JOYROAD ALBERS

THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING: 05/06/2024, 9:00 AM, m/c of the Superior Court of California, County of San Mateo, located at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063.

A copy of this ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county:

ALMANAC

Date: 02/13/2024

Elizabeth K. Lee

JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT

(ALM Feb 23, Mar 1, 8 and 15, 2024)

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN MATEO

Case No.: 24CIV00158

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

Petitioner: Anne DeRuyte Bipes filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

ANNE DERUYTE BIPES to ANNE MARIA TERESA DERUYTE

THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING: 03/21/2024, 9:00 a.m., Southern Branch of the Superior Court of California, County of San Mateo, located at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063.

A copy of this ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county:

ALMANAC

Date: 01/25/2024

Elizabeth Lee

JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT

(ALM Feb 9, 16, 23 and Mar 1, 2024)

To place a legal notice visit

[AlmanacNews.com/legal\\_notices/](https://almanacnews.com/legal_notices/)

## SOLAR PANELS

*continued from page 7*

the solar panel installation.

To many of the council members' surprise, Woodside's volunteer History Committee and Climate and Sustainability Committee both submitted their support and approval of the solar PV system.

Council member Dick Brown, who opposed the contract, as well as council member Ned Fluet, raised concerns over the rate of technology change, but was reassured by Levitt that the years of improvement on solar have already passed. Levitt explained that the cost efficiencies haven't gone down in the past 10 years.

Community members during public comment expressed varied opinions on the contract.

In support, Woodside resident Ehsan Farkhondeh pointed out that the alternative to this contract would be to continue to fund and rely on PG&E.

"You're banking on PG&E somehow lowering your rates in the next 20 years. I'll bet my house on the fact that is never going to happen," said Farkhondeh.

Resident Ed Kahl, in opposition to the contract, stated that he would support a solar installation on the ground rather than on the roof.

"Solar systems five years ago are now obsolete and this one will be as quickly obsolete as any other," said Kahl. "It's not green to put solar on the roof. You could take the same amount of money and put twice or three times as much solar on the ground as on the roof."

In agreement with Kahl's public comment, Brown dissented against the contract.

"I think we ought to take another look at some of the flat areas within Woodside that are beneficial places for us to build solar farms," said Brown.

Other council members who were on the fence prior to the presentation voted in approval of the contract.

"My biggest concern was that it's a historical building," said Council member Paul Goeld. "If it's good enough for the history committee, who can be pretty strident about preserving historical sites, I'm good with it."

Along with other benefits of solar energy as mentioned by other council members, Mayor Jenn Wall was additionally in support of the use of local union labor to construct the arrays. ■

*Email Staff Writer Jennifer Yoshikoshi at [jyoshikoshi@almanacnews.com](mailto:jyoshikoshi@almanacnews.com).*

## Learning A Good Lesson From A Bad Lesson

By Nicole Kemeny

### GUEST OPINION

Your Feb. 9, 2024 article reprinted from the M-A Chronicle, “Teachers required to release text messages and more amidst ethnic studies controversy” begins with nine paragraphs describing the unprecedented nature of the request for teaching materials, other details of the request, and one teacher’s negative reaction to the request.

Finally, after a highlighted quote calling the request “crazy,” the reader gets their first glimpse of a reason for the request; unfortunately, this comes in a quote from an advocacy organization, which readers may view as a biased source. Next, the reporters provide some background on the reason for the request, but phrase it this way: “These requests come after multiple alleged issues with anti-semitism in SUHSD (Sequoia

Union High School District) including months of coordinated advocacy against a slideshow presented by two ethnic studies teachers.” It would be hard to write a vaguer expression than “multiple alleged issues,” and the phrase “coordinated advocacy against” inevitably suggests the advocacy is biased, or somehow suspect. Conspicuously missing is the explanation of *why* there is “coordinated advocacy;” the slideshow violated two California education codes in disturbing ways. It was outside the appropriate scope of ethnic studies topics (“histories ... and contributions to American society of ... historically marginalized peoples”), and it presented historically incorrect content likely to promote bias to impressionable students.

The article then cites one

teacher’s contention that she is pushing students to “think critically,” a claim never challenged by citing relevant examples from her lesson. The teacher claims to be “leading with love,” yet there is no mention that her slideshow refers to Hamas using the benign term “group” instead of the more accurate “U.S. State Department designated Foreign Terrorist Organization.” Where, exactly, is the love?

In the next paragraph the teacher expresses her “disappointment” with the records request. The disappointment felt by M-A (Menlo-Atherton High School) parents whose children received the biased and erroneous lesson is never mentioned.

Associate Superintendent Hansen is “saddened” by blanket requests for information from teachers’ “personal phones,” but apparently isn’t saddened by the rule-breaking lessons taught to children in a school under her supervision

by public employees.

The reader is eventually reminded that teachers are government employees who work for the people. The reader gets two more paragraphs of a teacher bemoaning her inability to express her private opinions without fear of reprisal, before the refreshingly sensible statement, “if teachers feel like they need to hide the materials they are teaching, they should not be teaching it.”

We never hear from other concerned parties: Parents who have been working with the M-A and SUSHD staffs for months on their concerns regarding the biased lessons; Jewish students at M-A who may feel threatened; staff who believe this lesson violated educational standards, and others who object to educators teaching inappropriate material. The preponderance of ink goes to educators’ discomfort about having their teaching scrutinized, without adequate context

or counterbalance.

While a reader may be more forgiving of high school reporters, the same allowances cannot be made for professional journalists.

Not only is the teaching of this particular, inaccurate material about the founding of Israel threatening to your Jewish neighbors, it also points to a bigger issue: when teachers take liberties which violate district policy and state education codes, calling them to account is in everyone’s interest. While some may not be especially bothered by this rogue lesson, there may come a day when some truth close to their hearts will be violated by a teacher who doesn’t follow the rules.

If that day comes, I hope The Almanac will provide more balanced reporting. ■

*Nicole Kemeny is a Menlo Park resident. She is a former Menlo-Atherton High School parent.*

### LETTERS

Our readers write

#### Community renewable energy program

In the Almanac’s Feb. 23, 2024 interview with Shawn Marshall, CEO of Peninsula Clean Energy, there was no mention of the Community Renewable revolution recently launched by California’s AB 2316 to dramatically lower the cost of solar energy.

It’s a simple concept that takes advantage of economies of scale to produce less expensive power. Over 39 other states are already doing this. It would involve building many solar farms on sunny inexpensive marginal land throughout California and eventually other western states. It would supply a far greater amount of cheap solar energy from our sunny western states for placement into our western electrical grid. The distances of transmission don’t matter since electricity travels at the speed of light.

Solar can also become an “always on” source of energy today without impossibly expensive batteries. To do this electricity from solar farms could be sent to existing power plants to make hydrogen with electrolysis

for future use to generate electricity without emissions.

California has one of the greatest potentials to produce low-cost solar electricity than any other state.

*Ed Kahl*

*Whiskey Hill Road, Woodside*

#### Open letter to state Sen. Josh Becker

Senator Becker,

Again, congratulations on the new appointment to the Senate Appropriations Committee!

Along with chairing the Budget Subcommittee on Resources, Environment and Energy, you are now on truly crucial committees in our state. I hope you can affect critical systems in your district, including:

■ The belated funding of a Dumbarton light rail connection between Redwood City and Union City — a real connection to affordable housing for the Peninsula

■ The investigation and prosecution of the Caltrans debacle — the San Mateo County 101 toll lane/repaving fiasco

■ Rejection of the P&GE rate increase requests intended to bail out stockholders from the intentional, long term maintenance deferrals and resulting fires

■ The restructuring of the corrupt PUC (California Public Utilities Commission) (see PGE, above)

■ The coexistence of natural gas with new (if unreliable) electrical power for all

Big challenges, real challenges — your constituents’ daily challenges.

Thank you for all you do.

*Henry Riggs*

*Callie Lane, Menlo Park*

#### Clean up downtown Menlo Park

I walked the city many times during the week and see our city councils lack of effort to clean up our downtown area of Santa Cruz Ave. and the historical train station. They need to take a walk once in a while around this portion of our city.

They spend money like the nearly \$120,000 on each of the

three Tesla police cars that the police don’t even want. Downtown Santa Cruz Avenue remains filthy with empty storefronts and dirty sidewalks. It’s no wonder that businesses are moving out of the area and less people frequenting the restaurants and businesses. One of the biggest neglects is the train station. It’s falling apart needs paint and repairs. It’s a disgrace to see many new buildings going up in our city, but not much happening on and around Santa Cruz. The City Council needs to take a walk around our downtown area.

*James Collins*

*Sharon Park Drive, Menlo Park*

### What’s on your mind?

From City Hall politics and the schools to transportation and other pressing issues, The Almanac aims to keep readers informed about their community. But we also want to hear from you.

Tell us what’s on your mind by sending your letters to [letters@AlmanacNews.com](mailto:letters@AlmanacNews.com). Or snail-mail them to: The Almanac, 450 Cambridge Ave., Palo Alto, CA 94306.

Letters should be no longer than 300 words.

You can also submit a longer piece of 450 to 600 words for consideration to publish as a guest opinion column.

Questions? Email [editor@AlmanacNews.com](mailto:editor@AlmanacNews.com), or call 650-223-6537.

## Employment

Element Energy, Inc. has openings for the Sr. Member of Technical Staff, Systems Engineering position in Menlo Park, CA. Salary Range \$180,000/yr-\$208,000/yr. Limtd travl reqrd (under 15%, dmstic). To apply, email resume & cover letter to [HR@elementenergy.com](mailto:HR@elementenergy.com) and reference job title. EOE. Principals only.

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**The submission deadline is Sunday at 11:59 pm.**

## Italian summers and American dreams

Ahead of her show at Redwood City's Club Fox, country singer-songwriter Sofia Claire talks about her musical journey — so far and ahead.

By Ashwini Gangal

It tells a story. It's about the life of everyday people. The occasional heartbreak notwithstanding, it has no negativity. It's raw, relatable, authentic and uplifting.

That's largely how 25-year-old Sofia Claire describes country music, a genre she has chosen as her profession.

Claire's talent for music was evident when she was a child. The story goes that her mother, while doing the laundry, happened to hear her 7-year-old daughter sing while playing with Barbies. She turned around and asked her where she learned to sing like that. An unsuspecting Sofia said she learned it from her music teacher at school, but her mother knew she had heard something special.

"She immediately started looking for avenues for me to cultivate that," said Claire, crediting her mother for setting her on her musical journey.

Claire signed up for her first musical when she was in the fourth grade. "At first I didn't really like it," she said. It was more like a children's theater show with a lot of acting but not much music.

But things changed when she switched schools in the sixth grade, from Roy Cloud to St. Pius, and got involved with the

musical theater program and parish shows there.

"My mom signed me up for 'Annie' and it was like pulling teeth to get me to that audition," she said. "I started singing one day in rehearsal and the director made a funny face. She cocked her eyebrow and said 'Do you think you could sing a little bit more without anybody else singing behind you?'"

That's how Claire landed her first solo performance. "I remember the day I got on stage in front of an audience and just never wanting to look back," she said. "It was very powerful."

She continued doing shows all through middle school. At Woodside High School, she got involved with community theater and regional companies like Broadway by the Bay. Eventually, she found her niche in country music.

Last year Claire released "Forever Ago," a single she believes is the best representation of her writing so far. It's a ballad about what it feels like to be loved and then left. "I went about that knowing I wanted something powerful and deep and descriptive," she said.

The inspiration behind the song is "1883," a TV drama series about American settlers in Montana. Claire had been a

fan of the show's predecessor, "Yellowstone," a neo-Western story about a disputed cattle ranch, set in the modern era. Though "1883" was released after "Yellowstone," it was created as a prequel that took the audience into the ancestry of the characters.

"When I got in the writing room at Nashville with two of the other writers on the song, we were all talking about what a great story it was," she said. Once every few months she goes to Nashville to write and record her songs.

Besides the visual aesthetic of the show, Claire specifically identified with the character Elsa Dutton, played by actor Isabel May. "She's such a passionate, strong woman, deeply in love," she said about her favorite character. "'Forever Ago' is about heartbreak. Elsa had to deal with her lover dying, so I felt like I could make something out of that connection."

That's how inspiration works anyway. It comes from unlikely places and touches artists in surprising ways. For instance, it was a heady blend of her upbringing in Redwood City and dozens of Italian summers that helped Claire segue into a career in country music to begin with.

Her father is from the small Italian town of Cagli. Her mother was born in California to Cuban and Sicilian immigrants.

"Spending a lot of time on my grandparents' and uncles' farm in Italy has influenced my music a lot, country music is about agriculture, farming, riding horses," she said. "I felt like country music very much reflected my own roots and identity which is about tradition, family values, religion, faith."

She found similar landscapes here in California in places like Arnold and Red Bluff. "There's a lot of farming land up there," she said. "And a country music audience too."



Courtesy Jordyn Moore

Singer Sofia Claire performs at a country music festival.

Inspiration came from other places as well. Growing up, getting into her mom's or aunt's car was nothing short of a lesson in country music, they loved listening to singers like George Strait, Keith Whitley, Kenny Rogers and Shania Twain. In fact, the first concert Claire ever went to, as an 11-year-old, was Toby Keith. "I was so upset when he recently passed," she said.

In general, her two elder brothers inadvertently played a role in steering her towards music, an unconventional professional choice for "somebody of my demographic."

"I was used to being 'Enzo and Oki's sister' and not 'Sofia'. I found my individuality in music," she said. "I found myself and found my femininity in creativity."

Claire has a busy life outside of music. After studying musical theater at San Diego State University for a year she spent another year at Foothill College, before getting a degree in business marketing from Menlo College. She presently works as marketing manager at Devil's Canyon Brewing Company.

She is also a beauty pageant enthusiast; she finished as second runner-up at the recent Miss

California pageant at Hermosa Beach, Los Angeles.

"Everything I do needs to help me with my overarching goal of being successful in my music career," she said. Her degree will help her market her skills better in the competitive world of music and winning the pageant will give her a chance to meet with Red Street Records and potentially land a record deal.

"Music is something I've never stopped wanting," she said, insisting that everything she does is in service of the little 7-year-old girl who was serendipitously discovered by her mother. "I would regret letting that girl down."

Her next performance is in Redwood City at Club Fox on March 1. It's special not just because the show is a local staple but also because this is the first time Claire will be headlining it.

"I feel most fulfilled on stage," she said. ■

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Sofia Claire Band with special guest J. Canchola plays March 1 at Club Fox, 2209 Broadway, Redwood City. Doors open at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$15-\$20. clubfoxrwc.com.



Courtesy Jordyn Moore

Sofia Claire takes part in an interview during the Golden Sky country music festival in Sacramento last fall.

# Runway ready

Student group Stanford FashionX hosts show capping off campus' inaugural fashion week

By Heather Zimmerman

Stanford University's Memorial Church has seen plenty of performances over the years, but on Feb. 22, the campus landmark became the center of something new: Stanford's inaugural fashion week.

A sold-out crowd of 1,200 filled the sanctuary to watch the Stanford FashionX runway show, with student models showcasing a variety of designs by fellow students.

The show was the culmination of Stanford's first fashion week, planned by student-run organization Stanford FashionX.

Formed in 2019, the group hosts events and projects that prepare members to work in the fashion industry. FashionX gives members experience in both the creative side of the work as well as practical essentials, such as business, sustainability, marketing and design.

"From our annual runway show and our quarterly flea markets that feature student creators, to our creative technology projects and executive speaker series that provide industry exposure, FashionX has been instrumental in bolstering the creative scene at Stanford, which often lacks defined opportunities on-campus," Stanford FashionX Co-President Olivia Wang said in an email.

FashionX has organized talks with fashion executives and business owners. According to the FashionX website, the group hosted a Q&A with Michael Mente, founder, and Raissa Gerona, chief brand officer, for fashion retailer REVOLVE and a tour of the San Francisco headquarters of online clothing retailer Everlane, where members talked with company founder Michael Preysman.

Projects have included designing, producing and marketing "Beat Cal" merchandise to sell ahead of the annual Big Game against football rival University of California at Berkeley.

In 2021, members of FashionX published a book in partnership with Data, But Make it Fashion. The book, "Fashionable Data," explored how fashion can be "quantified and qualified" by analyzing runway shows and social media to identify trends and other key data points.

FashionX also emphasizes innovative technologies, as seen most recently in the augmented reality fashion show



Top: Christelle Millos-Lopez walks at the runway show held by Stanford FashionX at Stanford Memorial Church in Stanford on Feb. 22. Above: Student models and designers stand together on stage at the Stanford FashionX runway show's finale. Photos by Natalia Nazarova.

that took place Feb. 20 as part of fashion week. With the theme "ARchitecture," the show, presented in partnership with ZERO10 augmented reality company, featured the work of 10 designers who used 3D modeling and augmented reality to design digital pieces that took inspiration from artists such as Frank Gehry. The resulting pieces can be "tried on" using the ZERO10 app. ■

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For more information about Stanford FashionX, visit [stanfordfashionx.com](http://stanfordfashionx.com) or @stanfordfashionx on Instagram. Visit [almanacnews.com/arts-culture](http://almanacnews.com/arts-culture) to see more photos from the FashionX show.

## Worth a Look



Courtesy Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra

Director Emeritus Ben Simon returns to conduct Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra's senior orchestra on March 2.

### Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra

A familiar face returns to Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra's (PACO) podium: Director emeritus Ben Simon, who stepped down after the 2022-23 season after 20 years with PACO, is back as guest conductor. He leads PACO's senior orchestra through a program of Handel's Concerto Grosso Op. 6, no. 2, Entr'acte by Caroline Shaw and Dvořák's Serenade for Strings in E major, Op. 22. Entr'acte is the first string quartet by Shaw; it was written in 2011, two years before the young American composer would become, at age 30, the youngest-ever recipient of the Pulitzer Prize in Music. And in the program notes, Simon describes the Handel work as an "all-time favorite. ... It's challenging for our young players in different ways than the Shaw or Dvořák. ... It's a piece that can be read through with relative ease, but to perform it well takes work." The concert also features three chamber groups performing works by Ravel, Beethoven and Dvořák.

March 2, 7:30 p.m. at Cubberley Theatre, 4000 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto, free (donations encouraged). [pacomusic.org](http://pacomusic.org).

### Kaki King and Tamar Eisenman

Composer/virtuoso musician King is renowned for her technical prowess and boundary-pushing guitarwork. In the performance piece "SEI" (named for the Italian word for six, a la a guitar's six strings), music and movement come together in innovative, physical ways, with the artists using their whole bodies, exploring choreography and utilizing multiple guitars strategically spaced across the stage. King is joined by acclaimed musician Tamar Eisenman for the performance.

March 1-2, 8 p.m., Bing Studio, 327 Lasuen St., Stanford, \$50, [live.stanford.edu](http://live.stanford.edu).

### Traci Chee

In the world of Traci Chee's "Kindling," seven magic-wielding teen warriors — the titular kindlings — whose skills and powers have been outlawed must come together for one last battle. Chee will present the new YA fantasy, recommended for ages 14 and up, at an event alongside fellow local YA authors Randy Ribay, Parker Peevyhouse and Emily Skrutskie. Along with conversation there will be trivia games and snacks. Chee is also the author of "The Reader Trilogy," "We Are Not Free" and "A Thousand Steps into Night." Readers who pre-order "Kindling" through Linden Tree will also receive a signed bookmark.

March 1, 6 p.m., Linden Tree Books, 265 State St., Los Altos, RSVP requested. [bit.ly/TraciCheeLindenTree](http://bit.ly/TraciCheeLindenTree).

### 'Queen'

In San Jose-born Madhuri Shekar's environmental drama "Queen," the latest main stage production by TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, two best friends and doctoral candidates Sanam and Ariel dream of breaking the glass ceiling in academia as well as helping protect the planet through their scientific findings. The two face a tough decision on how to proceed when a flaw appears in their research on honeybee colony collapse. The show is directed by Miriam A. Laube, stars Uma Paranjpe and Kjerstine Anderson, and is presented in collaboration with South Bay theater company EnActe Arts. A discussion before the March 7 performance will feature a conversation with Laube, TheatreWorks Artistic Director Giovanna Sardelli and EnActe Arts Founder/Artistic Director Vinita Sud Belani.

March 6-31, Lucie Stern Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto, \$27-\$100, [theatreworks.org/mainstage/queen/](http://theatreworks.org/mainstage/queen/).

# Food & Drink

## Yes, Chef!

Meet the new executive chef at Michelin-starred Chez TJ

By Adrienne Mitchel

Chez TJ's new executive chef bikes 45 miles to work and then works 10 to 14 hours "because it's fun." When asked if he bikes back home after work, Stanley Michalski laughed.

"I take the train back," he said. "I'm not sadistic. I'm not nuts."

Technically, it's masochistic, but I get what he means (kinda). Michalski took over Michelin-starred contemporary French restaurant Chez TJ Jan. 11 following stints as chef de cuisine at Michelin-starred Dovetail in New York and sous chef at three-starred Quince in San Francisco. His answer for coming to Chez TJ in Mountain View was simple: "The power to have power."

With that power, Michalski hopes to offer a less expensive dining option for guests "who don't want to spend a gazillion dollars" on dinner while also bringing Chez TJ a second Michelin star. While some fine-dining restaurants and chefs have pivoted to more casual concepts, like Burlingame's Saffron (formerly the Michelin-starred

Rasa), the now-closed Baumé in Palo Alto and David Kinch, who closed Los Gatos' Manresa to focus on his more casual eateries, Michalski wants to retain Chez TJ's concept while simultaneously offering a less expensive option for diners.

"The goal is to have a three- or four-course menu ... something smaller for people who don't want to spend \$225 on food," he said. "Making it more friendly but still not alienating the people who want to come and spend that money too."

Michalski said his cooking style focuses on allowing fresh ingredients to shine instead of weighing down dishes with unnecessary heavy flavors.

"I think there's this notion where it's like: classic French, classic French, Chez TJ," he said. "But realistically, Chez TJ has classic French influences, but we're in California, and a lot of people in California don't want to eat super heavy, super dairy."

In fact, Michalski said he doesn't eat dairy at all, with two exceptions: dessert (because he has "a really bad sweet tooth") and pizza.

"There's just something about



Adrienne Mitchel

Stanley Michalski was chef de cuisine at Michelin-starred Dovetail in New York and sous chef at three-starred Quince in San Francisco prior to taking on the role as executive chef at Chez TJ.

a slice of pizza," he said. "It could be a Costco pizza, I don't care. I just love pizza."

Michalski's first job was making pizza in his hometown of New Jersey, which was his first time in the kitchen. He didn't have an interest in cooking growing up and didn't think he would pursue a culinary career.

"I was 16," he said. "I just wanted some money."

But as pressure grew to figure out what was next after high school, he thought back to his time making pizza and decided to attend culinary school. It was his experience as a line cook

at L'Espalier in Boston, which had a farm just outside of the city, that developed his passion for local ingredients and farm-to-table cooking. That passion continued when he moved to San Francisco to work at Quince, which had a farm in Bolinas.

"(It was) a full-circle moment," he said.

And now, Michalski is planning on growing baby tomatoes, green asparagus, peas, fava beans, lemon verbena and other produce in Chez TJ's garden. Michalski said he gets his green thumb from his mom, who

would grow a vegetable garden every year in New Jersey. He said moving to California was eye-opening in terms of produce and admits that the West Coast is the best coast.

"The produce out here is the best in the country," he said. "Every day, I'm still like a kid in a candy shop."

In addition to featuring produce grown at Chez TJ, dishes showcase local ingredients from Star Route Farms in Bolinas, Full Belly Farm in Guinda, Toscano Family Farm in San Joaquin Valley, Fiddler's Green Farm in Tancred, Front Porch



Courtesy Chez TJ

Stanley Michalski's favorite dish he's created for Chez TJ is this Broken Arrow Ranch quail with honey nut squash and red cabbage.



Courtesy Chez TJ

Michelin starred restaurant Chez TJ is located in a historic Victorian home in Mountain View built circa 1894.

Farm in Healdsburg and Longer Table Farm in Santa Rosa.

Michalski's favorite dish he's created so far at Chez TJ is quail with honeynut squash and a vegetable tart.

"It has a little tart with all the vegetables inside, and they're all cooked different ways, like some are grilled, some are cooked in their own juice," he said. "It just has this nice almost barbecue flavor to it with the sweetness from the squash."

Michalski said his favorite part of cooking is "to see the joy on someone's face when they have a good meal," and his favorite part of working at Chez TJ is how "it's like cooking for your 40 closest friends."

In a way, cooking is like biking, he said.

"At a Michelin-star restaurant, it needs to be perfect," Michalski said. "If you're riding a bike, like if you're going down the mountain at 40, 50 miles an

hour, you need to be dialed in and focused because one wrong turn, and that's it. So it's kind of the same mentality. Like one wrong meal for somebody can ruin a restaurant."

Michalski looks forward to the different types of produce that spring will bring. Short term, he hopes to be busy every night,

and long term, he hopes to earn a second Michelin star for Chez TJ. He said he plans to do that "with a lot of hard work."

"Everything matters from the moment someone walks in the door to the very end," he said. ■

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Chez TJ, 938 Villa St.,  
Mountain View;  
650-964-7466,  
Instagram: @chez.tj.  
Open Tuesday through  
Thursday, 5:30-8:30  
p.m., and Friday through  
Saturday, 5-8:30 p.m.



Courtesy Chez TJ

Chez TJ, a contemporary French restaurant in Mountain View, offers dishes like this Sacramento sturgeon with Royal Caviar, hearts of palm and Full Belly Farm green garlic.



Adrienne Mitchel

Chez TJ's new executive chef Stanley Michalski prepares a quail for one of his new dishes at the contemporary French Michelin-starred restaurant.

## The local's guide to the Bay Area food scene.

Read about hot spots, restaurant trends and the lifestyles of those who love everything about food.

Stay tasty,  
*Adrienne*  
Editor, Peninsula Foodist

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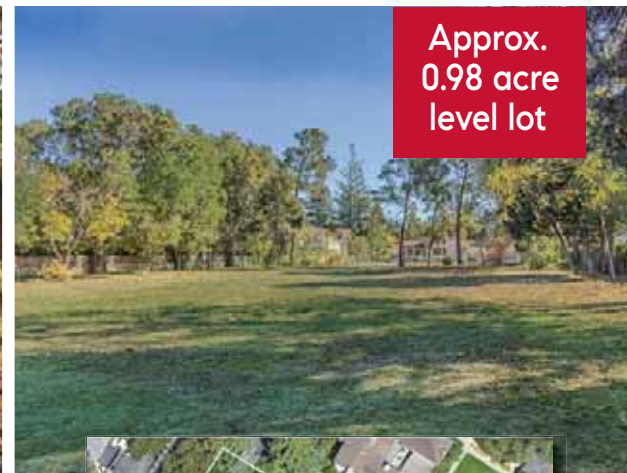


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