

# The Almanac

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

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## Sheep vs. robot 'mow off' at Earth Day event highlights ways to curb carbon emissions

By Angela Swartz

This year's Atherton Earth Day celebration, on a sunny Sunday afternoon, featured the ultimate showdown: a "mow off" between sheep and a robotic lawnmower. It was a battle to see who could do a better job clearing out weeds and grass. The winner? The sheep of course (in a vote of 103-to-20).

The competition, though mostly a popularity contest, was aimed at drawing attention to alternative yard clearing technologies that emit fewer greenhouse gases. Sheep and battery-operated robotic lawnmowers can reduce environmental damages to open spaces and air-quality, while contributing to healthier soil, according to the town. It also was a means of drawing attention to the upcoming ban on gas-powered leaf blowers in

town, and the state's ban on the sale of gas-powered lawn equipment, on July 1.

The University of California at Davis Sheepmowers Project supplied the sheep and the robotic lawnmower, a battery-operated Husqvarna (which is guided via satellite, giving the robot precision directions within 1-2 centimeters) for the town's third annual festival on April 21.

"Not to say everyone needs to buy sheep," said UC Davis Landscape Architecture Assistant Professor Anna Haven Kiers on Monday, April 22, who pitched her grazing sheep to voters by saying, "Look how sad the robot is in the corner!" But she notes there's a business model for groups, like neighborhoods or street blocks, to rent out small flocks of sheep. "It was unbelievable how engaged people

See **EARTH DAY**, page 10



Ken Brock, owner of Peninsula Feed Store, center, watches as Julien, left, feeds one of his silkie chickens, Fluffy, at the Earth Day Festival in Atherton on April 21.

Magali Gauthier

## Peek inside Belle Haven Community Campus before May 18 grand opening

By Neil Gonzales

Seeing Menlo Park's new Belle Haven Community Campus emerge out of his neighborhood from start to finish gives Rondell Howard chills of pride and achievement.

"Being from the community — born and raised within East Palo Alto and Belle Haven, I'm just super excited," said Howard, the city's recreation coordinator. "It's bone-chilling ... to see it be developed and brought to life, and now there's an opportunity for people to actually put their hands on it."

With BHCC's construction having wrapped up after more than two years, the city has set a grand-opening celebration for May 18 with a ribbon-cutting

ceremony at 11 a.m., tours of the facility, music, food and other activities.

A polished, sleek two-story complex befitting a high-tech company will greet the crowd at 100 Terminal Ave. in the historically underserved Belle Haven neighborhood.

The 37,000-square-foot campus features state-of-the-art energy-sustaining elements, floor-to-ceiling windows, a full-court basketball gymnasium, two libraries, an event hall and an aquatic center.

BHCC will offer a variety of youth, senior and other programs from Zumba and ceramic-making lessons to job-training and other educational classes — targeted especially for those living

in Belle Haven but also available to the rest of Menlo Park.

Belle Haven residents, who receive discounted rates for BHCC programs, can start registering for them on April 27. Other Menlo Park residents can register starting April 30. Programming begins May 20.

"It's just a step forward for us, moving toward innovation and just having things more accessible for the community," said Howard, who led a media tour of BHCC on Monday, April 22.

"It's time to utilize the amenities," he added. "This is a big deal not just for me but everybody that's involved and that's been a part of the history and the culture that come from here."

Showing the media around,

Howard and city Library and Community Services Director Sean Reinhart highlighted BHCC's top-flight green capabilities, including the large windows and tubular skylights that bring in natural light, onsite renewable-energy generation and battery microgrid to store and release power to the campus.

"Everything is electric," Howard said.

Reinhart noted that the city is pursuing the highest green-building ranking of LEED Platinum certification for BHCC.

Reinhart added that the campus has been built to withstand a major earthquake and is a designated emergency shelter.

The media's sneak preview this week also revealed an aquatic

center that could rival something found at a high-end private recreational club. BHCC's swimming area has two pools, a cabana section, shade umbrellas, lounge chairs and even a splash pad.

In addition, the campus provides a kind of nature preserve in the back with towering mature redwood trees and drought-tolerant native plants.

Inside the slate-styled building, the first floor holds the senior lounge area near the entrance, hall of a capacity for about 150 people, young children's library, gym and locker rooms.

The second floor has the main library, spaces for teen and community programs, and

See **BELLE HAVEN**, page 14

INSIDE

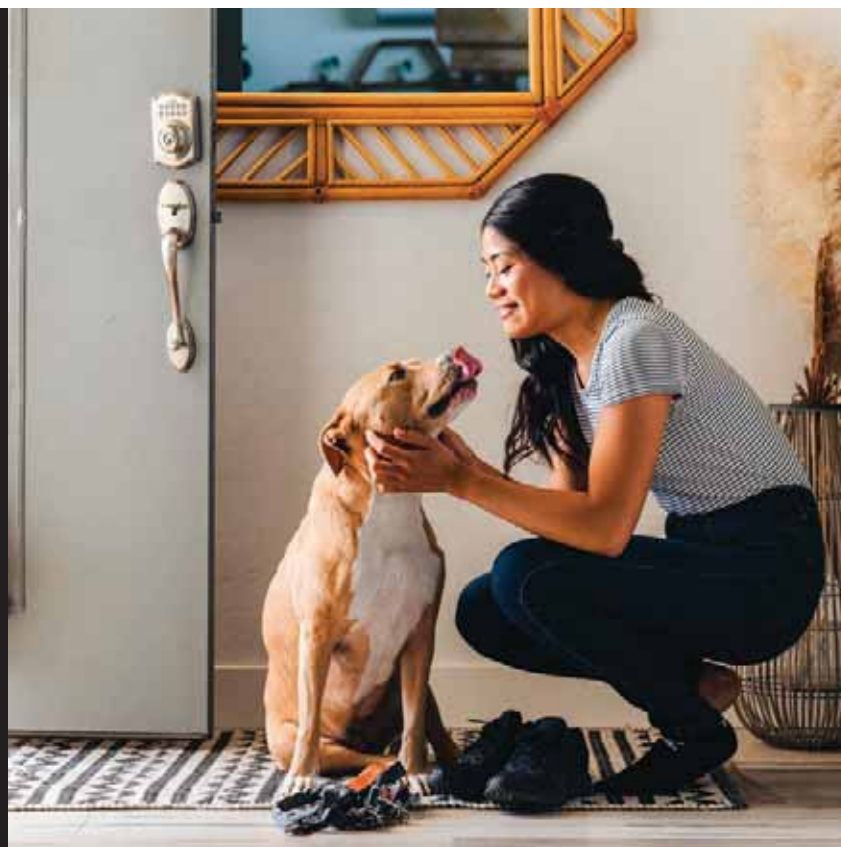
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# Local News

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Courtesy Karen Rynewicz

A Corte Madera School student meets with a Sequoias resident this school year.

## Corte Madera School's 'oral history of seniors' project to continue under new leadership in coming years

By Ashwini Gangal

Karen Rynewicz, fifth grade teacher at Corte Madera School in Portola Valley, believes there's more to school than "just the academics." Over nearly two decades, she has been putting this wisdom into action by taking her classes to meet and bond with seniors at an assisted living community in the neighborhood. Typically, two students are paired up

with one "senior buddy" whom they meet with regularly.

The program, called the Oral Histories of Seniors has an academic component attached — students are required to interview the seniors and write a biography on them that documents their early years, childhood memories, family life and accomplishments.

"I see their best writing in these biographies," said Rynewicz, who has been teaching at the grades 4-8 school

for 35 years. She grew up in Portola Valley and attended Corte Madera as a child.

Rynewicz started this program in 2005. "The district had a service learning grant; every class had to come up with some type of service learning project," she said about the origin of the program. "A lot of the classes were just going to raise money and donate to charities."

See SENIORS, page 10

## Q&A: Jen Wolosin reflects on Menlo Park council tenure and shares her next steps

By Neil Gonzales

After several years in the public sphere, Menlo Park City Council member Jen Wolosin has called it a career.

Wolosin announced in her March 31 newsletter that she will not seek council reelection in November, citing "familial and personal considerations" without going into details.

But in an interview with *The Almanac* on Wednesday, April 17, she elaborated on those considerations. She also reflected back on her time on the council and mulled over what her next role in the community could be down the line.

A big reason behind her decision to step out of the political arena involves health issues of those closest to her.

Her mother has Alzheimer's disease while some of her friends are battling cancer, she said.

Wolosin also doesn't want to miss out on her two children's high school years, she said.

However, leaving the council doesn't mean completely disengaging from the community and issues impacting residents.

"I'll be watching and voting and expressing myself," Wolosin said.

She, her husband and their

kids also have no intention of skipping town. "We love it here," she said. "We have certainly put down roots here."

Mayor Cecilia Taylor believes Wolosin's presence will continue to be felt around town after she departs from the council in December.

"Council member Wolosin's leadership is and always will be invaluable to the city of Menlo Park," Taylor said. "She is committed, well-researched and thoughtful about policy, direction and inclusion. She is a great colleague."

Wolosin, 50, was elected to the council in 2020 and led the city as mayor last year. She represents District 3, which includes the Civic Center, Caltrain station and neighborhoods of Vintage Oaks, Linfield Oaks and Felton Gables.

Before her council tenure, she founded the safety-advocacy group Parents for Safe Routes and served on the city's Transportation Master Plan Oversight and Outreach Committee.

The following has been edited for length, clarity and flow.

**The Almanac:** How would you describe your four years on the council, and what have you been proud of seeing happen?

**Wolosin:** Being on council is kind of like being in a relay race. It's a time to be a steward of the city, taking over for previous

See WOLOSIN, page 8



Jen Wolosin

## Las Lomitas educators rally for better pay

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

More than 40 Las Lomitas Elementary School District educators and supporters gathered at the school board meeting in La Entrada Middle School's atrium on April 17 to call for increased compensation. Educators, who are in the midst of pay negotiations with the district, spoke up during the public comment section on the need for competitive salaries and benefits given the high cost of living in the area.

While holding posters and wearing black T-shirts saying: "LLEA (Las Lomitas Education

Association) Strong," teachers came up to the podium and called on the district to reconsider and reassess its budget allocation to prioritize teachers compensation. The district's contract with the union expired in June 2023. The district gave teachers a 5% for the 2022-23 school year, according to the contract.

Members of the California School Employees Association attended in support of the Las Lomitas union. The Las Lomitas union represents certified staff from the district's two schools: Las Lomitas Elementary School in Atherton and La Entrada

Middle School in Menlo Park.

"This unity shows our powerful voice advocating for equitable compensation and benefits for all of our educators," said LLEA co-president Tara Berta, a first grade teacher at Las Lomitas Elementary. "It's clear that we need a significant increase in compensation and benefits to be competitive with our neighboring districts that are attracting qualified teachers. This is the year that change in our district is needed and to prioritize our teachers"

Berta urged the school board to look at ways it can invest in its educators when crafting the

district's budget.

Union co-president Jennifer Montalvo, a school counselor at La Entrada, pointed out that without competitive salaries it will be more difficult to retain educators. She added that compensation "ensures that our schools are staffed with the best professionals who can deliver high quality instruction and support the academic success of all students."

Montalvo mentioned that the compensation is also necessary with the high cost of living in the Bay Area. Las Lomitas teachers make less than the cost of living index and have

not received an annual cost of living adjustment, according to Montalvo.

The starting salary for teachers at LLESD is around \$71,000 and according to the 2022 U.S. Census the median household income in San Mateo County is about \$149,000.

"Working as an educator is not an easy job," said Montalvo. "We all need to adjust to this reality and shift our priorities to support our people who impact the lives of the future generations."

Judy Ackerman, who teaches second grade at Las Lomitas

See LAS LOMITAS, page 8

# Las Lomitas Elementary partners with Atherton for \$1.4M in flood mitigation work

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

After Las Lomitas Elementary School faced flood damage from the winter 2023 storms, school officials said a flood mitigation plan was necessary to protect the Atherton campus at 299 Alameda de las Pulgas from future creek flooding.

Mike Wasserman, owner at Capital Program Management, Inc. and Jason Mansfield, civil engineer with BKF Engineers presented the school board with a long-term flood mitigation plan on Wednesday, April 17.

In March, Rep. Anna G. Eshoo, D-Menlo Park, announced that she was able to secure about \$1.4 million in funding to address flood mitigation in Atherton. Superintendent Beth Polito plans to meet with Atherton's mayor, Diana Hawkins-Manuelian, in May to discuss their partnership and future plans for flood mitigation.

"I'm proud to have secured

funding for the Upper Atherton Channel Flood Mitigation Project which will increase the capacity of the channel and reduce flooding during major storms," she said in the press release. "This project is critically important because storm flows overtopped the channel two years ago, causing the closure of Alameda de las Pulgas and the flooding of classrooms at Las Lomitas Elementary School."

Over the winter, the school took preventative measures against heavy rainfall by adding grates on campus to capture rainfall, according to board member Jason Morimoto. During the heavy storm season in February, the creek luckily didn't flood as it did in January 2023 and the campus did not see any damages. Morimoto said that the town of Atherton made sure to clear the debris in the culverts early this year.

The upstream drainage area encompasses 1,200 acres involving the jurisdiction of Woodside,

Atherton, Menlo Park, San Mateo County and Caltrans. All of this drainage flows straight toward the school campus.

"We're looking at a lot of water coming down and it being blocked by the school," Mansfield said.

Mansfield said possible solutions for the school could include reducing flows upstream, creating an alternative flow route and capturing and storing water on-site.

Currently, the school's property lies on top of culverts, which channel water underneath the campus. These culverts have a limited flow capacity that has no ability to withstand more.

Debris buildup is also an issue in these culverts, which clog the drainage and send overflowing water toward the school.

"There's already work to clean up the channel and line up the creek," Mansfield said. "If we can reduce the amount of debris coming down the channel we can utilize the culverts coming

through." He adds that adding a trash rack at the culvert opening can allow increased flow for full capacity.

Evaluations showed that possibilities for the infiltration and storage of water underneath the campus would be too expensive and would not provide "value or relief to the school." Any solutions will have to be compatible with the school's uses and so infiltration systems under well used areas of the school such as the parking lot and ballfield would not work.

Final recommendations in the presentation touched on adding infiltration and detention upstream, dry wells and basins in the creek, and considering diversion options.

School board member Laura Moon asked: "Are there other entities beyond individual homes that are within the [drainage flow] that are in a similar situation or is this something uniquely ours to deal with?"

Mansfield responded saying,

"it is very unique to have culverts running through your property or under buildings," making Las Lomitas's situation special.

"I look forward to the partnership with the town of Atherton in terms of working through ways to mitigate the creek and culvert for future rain-falls," said Morimoto after the presentation.

Next steps for the plan will be to develop a maintenance plan, study flood mitigation measures in upper watersheds, present and develop solutions with agency jurisdictions, identify additional funding, design and implement.

Wasserman said that he is working with the town for a FEMA grant which has started to get some movement. The grant will provide funds for a creek monitoring system, overflow box culvert under the creek and on campus retention. ■

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# County to receive \$14.1M to remove homeless encampments, expand resources

By Joshua Picazo

San Mateo County will receive millions in funding after Gov. Gavin Newsom announced nearly \$200 million in new state funds to combat homelessness during an April 18 press conference. These funds include money for clearing homeless encampments and investing in homeless resources.

The county itself will receive \$14.1 million in one-time funding.

According to a recent "One Day Homeless Count," there were about 1,808 homeless people in the county as of 2022. The results from the 2024 one-day homeless count have not yet been released.

In the 2022 report, Redwood City had the highest total

number of people experiencing homelessness in the county, with 245, followed by East Palo Alto, with 169. Pacifica was third, with 161, and Half Moon Bay had 68.

Between the 2019 and 2022 counts, Menlo Park's total more than doubled from 27 to 56. Overall, the county saw a 20% increase between those two counts.

The grant, alongside contributions from local and other sources, will facilitate the transition of individuals into both permanent, supportive housing and temporary accommodations. This assistance will include access to behavioral health and substance abuse treatment, mental health counseling, medical care and case-management services.

"Homelessness is a crisis that has been decades in the making," said District 4 Supervisor Warren Slocum. "It's not a crisis that we can take decades to remedy."

A county press release from April 18 stated that it, along with partners, will "focus on 200 plus individuals" who mostly live along highways.

"These applications talk about specific outcomes, specific people and timelines," Newsom said at the conference. "People have had it; they're fed up."

Newsom added that he felt people wanted to see these homeless encampments removed, but they wanted them removed in a compassionate way.

He added that some counties don't put money into addressing homelessness but said Los

Angeles County and San Mateo County are not among those counties.

"We're determined to get these people housed," Mike Callagy, the county's chief executive, said during the press conference.

Along with the new funding, the county has changed its previous policy, under which those removed from encampments were required to go to one of eight Core Service Agencies. The policy change came as part of the grant application.

Outreach workers in the county will work to meet unhoused people where they are, but they said accepting shelter would be a choice. ■

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# Highway 84 expected to fully open in late May

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Caltrans has announced that Highway 84 near Woodside is expected to fully open in late May, "provided good weather and material shortages don't cause delays," according to the transit agency's latest update on April 19.

The repair of the two-lane

highway has been in the works since March 2023. Caltrans has maintained one-way traffic control since June 2023.

Crews are working on permanent lower slope repairs involving erosion control, backfilling and completing the drainage system. On the upper slope, they are working on staining the architectural rock wall mock-up.

The update states that upcoming work includes completing details on the rock wall and repairing roadways.

For the latest updates on the highway construction, sign up for Caltrans's weekly newsletter by submitting your email address to SR84slideupdates@dot.ca.gov or visit tinyurl.com/highway84repair. ■

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## Stanford STEMfest draws a crowd of 3,000 science lovers

By Ashwini Gangal

On Saturday afternoon, April 20, the Science and Engineering Quad Courtyard at Stanford University was abuzz with the din of curious science lovers attending this year's inaugural edition of STEMfest.

At around 30 booths, people stopped by to learn about a range of STEM-related subjects, from cosmic rays, solar telescopes, astrophysical magnetism and automobile engineering to orthopedics, electricity grids, neuroanatomy, bacteria and much more.

Lab tours that educated people about subjects like psychiatric disorders, polymers and X-rays were also part of the program. Around 3,000 people attended the event, according to estimates provided by the event's public safety officers.

"Stanford has a lot of different STEM outreach programs, where there are student groups who might go into a school to do activities and there are summer camps where the students come here," said Kyle Cole, director of education and STEM outreach. "But this is the first time we've all come together and it's open to the public. There are activities from across the whole university ... the best thing is you get to see a bit of everything that Stanford does in research."

The booth with the longest line was the one where real human brain specimens were on display for people to learn about and, if they dared, touch. "I am here to get my older daughter interested in STEM because it's easy to branch out to other fields from science," said a woman standing in line, waiting for her turn at this interactive anatomy booth. A chemically preserved sheep's brain and a pig's kidney were on display at another booth. Dr. Tanya Thakur was busy fielding all manner of outlandish questions from children and adults all day.

"The most common question would be — 'Is our brain this small?'" she said. Thakur made sure to tell everyone that it was not a human brain, which happens to be a lot bigger. Youngsters interested in applying to pre-medical courses thronged at this booth through the day, she said.

Joaquin Arig, an intern at the university, who was showing people how photolithography works, said, "It's a process that is used in nanotechnology to put patterns on silicon wafers." He and his fellow volunteer at this booth were demonstrating the process using fun patterns like smiley faces and

stick figure drawings on special, hydrophobic paper. Using the brightness of the sun, the participants developed these patterns and transferred them onto the next surface. In the lab, UV light is used, Arig said.

Animal anatomy was a popular area at the event. At another booth, items like a lion's skull, a cat's stomach and intestines, and a cow's uterus, heart and liver were on display. Alejandro Ceva, a student of classics and economics at Stanford, was manning the skeleton of a real dog at this table and making children guess what they were looking at. His sister is developing pre-veterinary programs at the university, hoping to promote animal science studies in coming years. Besides his love for kids, it was her enthusiasm for the subject that prompted him to spend the day helping out at this stall.

"Everyone thinks this is a dinosaur! I think that's really cute," he said.

Not far away at the cosmic magnetism booth, participants learned about how experts are able to detect magnetic fields far away in our galaxy. To understand this complicated science, they used everyday tools like small magnets and little pieces of iron.

"The kids really like the demos; it's useful even if they just like playing with the magnetic demos even if they don't learn about the galaxy stuff," said Ben Dodge, Ph.D. student of Physics at the Kavli Institute for Particle Astrophysics and Cosmology (KIPAC), who was volunteering at this table. He enjoyed answering questions about outer space through the afternoon. "Someone was asking if dust would get in our way if we wanted to travel to other galaxies — that would probably be the least of our problems!"

Space enthusiasts also lined up to look through a set of solar telescopes and observe things like sunspots and solar prominences, most commonly asking "What am I seeing?" and "Why am I seeing these things?" Luckily, the sun is at its "solar maximum" this year, so there is a lot of activity to observe, said KIPAC undergrad Tirth Surti, who was helping out the institute's astronomy club and solar group.

"I'm surprised so many teenagers have come to the event. One of them asked me why silicon wafers are always round and not square!" Yang Bai, a volunteer at the nanotechnology booth, who took a break from showing a group of kids how a microchip is made and what ferrofluids look like, told the Weekly. "It's been a good mixture of different ages of audience, this is a really good turnout." ■

## HISTORY CORNER

Welcome to History Corner! In this ongoing feature, The Almanac will publish historical photos from local history associations and our own archives.

This week, we have a photo of Menlo Park School students in front of their schoolhouse in the 1880s.

The Creek School was the earliest public school in what is now the incorporated city of Menlo Park in the Willows neighborhood, according to the Menlo Park Historical Association's website. The school opened in 1874 and was part of the Redwood City School District on land donated by Col. Atherton McKendry.

The Menlo Park School District (now the Menlo Park City School District) formed in 1880, according to the district website. The first school built by the district was Central Elementary School, on El Camino Real (on the site of the now closed Cadillac dealership), according to the district.

A Central School janitor caused significant damage to the campus when they stripped paint by using turpentine and lighting it on fire (not a procedure used anymore!). After the fire, the campus was condemned for children and was used as the district office. Eventually, the district office was moved to the Encinal campus in Atherton in 1948 and the Central School campus was sold.



Menlo Park School by James Van Court, c. 1885. Courtesy San Mateo County Historical Association Collection (217.17.6)

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## WOLOSIN

continued from page 5

council members and then carrying things until the next council members arrive. I'm proud of the race I ran.

I'm particularly proud of the main initiative that I ran on, which is making our streets safer for people of all ages and abilities. I'm really proud of going around town now and seeing just the expansion and improvement of our bike and pedestrian network.

I'm really proud of the housing element, and the work that went into that — to enable more housing at all income levels throughout the city. (The housing element is a state-mandated planning document in which cities have to show how they can accommodate future residential growth.)

I'm really proud of the (city) management team that has been built. I just feel like we have a great team that is very responsive and helpful with council directives and community

priorities.

I feel that the city's on a really good path and I'm leaving it in a good place.

**Q:** What challenges do you see Menlo Park needing to tackle even after you leave the council?

**A:** I'm concerned about some of the budget constraints that we're going to have in future years.

We're learning about a shortfall from vehicle-license fees, and we have lost our utility-user tax. (A year ago, the San Mateo County Superior Court issued a tentative decision siding with a class-action lawsuit that challenged the city's collection of the tax.)

Things are just more expensive. So I think that'll be an ongoing challenge for the city to grapple with in the years to come. But I think every city is grappling with that as well, having enough money to deliver the services that our residents need and expect.

**Q:** Could you elaborate on why you're not pursuing reelection?

**A:** I have a 14-year-old son and a 16-year-old daughter, and my 14-year-old is going to high school this year. If I were to serve another term, I would essentially

be on the council throughout my kids' high school careers.

In addition, my parents are getting older. My mom has Alzheimer's, and I have friends that are being diagnosed with various cancers. I just started doing a lot of thinking about time and how I spend my time.

The council is an amazingly gratifying, interesting, unique opportunity. I've loved it in so many ways. It's also a position where you carry a lot of stress. You kind of always are in the service of the larger community, and your focus is always outward.

Given where my family is right now and where I feel my attentions might need to be, I wanted to be present for that in my life in a way that I didn't feel would be doable being on the council.

I toyed with the idea of kind of dialing it back on the council, but that's not who I am. I don't feel like that's doing a service to the residents. So I wanted to step aside so that someone who is in the right kind of stage in life to give it their all could come forward.

**Q:** Could you detail some of your future plans?

**A:** I don't really know what my next step is going to be, to be honest. But I find it hard to believe that I'm not going to care about things and have opinions.

That being said, I don't want to get in the way of those in elected position to forge their own paths and have their own time in that relay race and run their own race.

So I have to figure out what the role of a former council person in Menlo Park is. I am curious myself of what my next move is going to be.

There's a possibility to go back into some advocacy work. An issue that I've been thinking a lot about lately is work in the Jewish community countering growing antisemitism. I love working with, or inspiring, youth.

I definitely need to feel connected to the larger world, to intellectual pursuits, to some form of purpose and productivity. What exactly that will look like I don't know, but I'm excited to see where it'll take me. ■

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

## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

**Portola Valley neighborhood cleanup day is Saturday**

The town of Portola Valley is hosting a neighborhood cleanup day on Saturday, April 27, from 8-11 a.m. for town residents at the Historic Schoolhouse parking lot at 765 Portola Road. Those who wish to participate will need to show proof of residency by bringing a copy of their GreenWaste garbage bill or the original postcard in the mail.

No items will be accepted after 11 a.m. GreenWaste asks that residents contain or bundle their yard trimmings and no hazardous waste is allowed.

**Portola Valley resident honored as 2024 Volunteer of the Year**

Patty Dewes was honored by Portola Valley Mayor Sarah Wernikoff on April 19 at a Volunteer Appreciation Party for her dedication and involvement in many town committees and organization of events, according to a town press release.

Dewes has served on committees including the Parks and Recreation Committee, Historic Resource Committee and the Hawthorn's Ad Hoc Committee.

She has served as chair of the Parks and Recreation Committee for the last four years and has helped the town organize the Town Picnic and Zotts to Tots. She has also worked on initiatives like the ADU Working Group and has pushed for committees to embrace non-Brown Act status. She is currently involved in updating the town's committee handbook and organizing the town's 60th anniversary tea.

Not only is she committed to serving the town through her involvement in committees but she is also dedicated to safety and emergency preparedness, according to the release. Dewes is CERT certified, a liaison to Woodside Fire Protection District, emergency preparedness leader for Westridge and more.

— Jennifer Yoshikoshi

**Meet Portola Valley's Sue Crane and Helen Park Bigelow, authors of 'Behind the Barrels: The Women of Ridge' on Sunday**

Former Portola Valley mayor, and author of "Behind the Barrels: The Women of Ridge" will speak alongside her co-author Helen Park Bigelow during a reading at the Portola Valley Library at 2 p.m. on Sunday, April 28.

The book chronicles the story of three families who started a vineyard in the Santa Cruz Mountains.

Copies of the book will be available for sale after the event. Proceeds will go toward a scholarship fund for the children of employees of The Sequoias retirement community, where both women live. There will be light refreshments on the back patio after the reading.

Friends of the Portola Valley Library is sponsoring the event.

**Water efficient edible gardens workshop in Menlo Park on Saturday**

Learn how to select plants for your edible garden to replace your lawn at a workshop on Saturday, April 27, from 1-2:30 p.m. in Arrillaga Family Recreation Center's Juniper Room, 700 Alma St. in Menlo Park.

The workshop will also tackle how and when to plant your seeds or seedlings, composting, watering and more. Organizers will give out free water efficient seedlings at the end of the event.

Register on Bay Area Water Supply and Conservation Agency's website at [tinyurl.com/edible-gardens](http://tinyurl.com/edible-gardens).

— Angela Swartz

## LAS LOMITAS

continued from page 5

Elementary, spoke on the discrepancies in budget allocations, which show the district's "prioritization of administrative roles over frontline teaching positions."

Ackerman compared the district to Menlo Park City School District, which spends 42.6% of its total budget on their teachers, while LLESd spends 34.4%.

Las Lomitas Elementary fourth grade teacher Kim Behrens highlighted that the district currently has an excessive reserve that amounts to more than the recommendations of the state for public schools. Behrens said the state recommends schools maintain a reserve of 4% of the school's total budget but the district's reserves are at 47%, a total of \$18 million.

"The surplus suggests an overly conservative approach to budgeting and resource management, potentially depriving critical funds from immediate educational needs and investments in teachers and students," said Behrens.

Parker Kelly, eighth grade technology teacher at La Entrada, said that data shows that the district has received more than an 87% increase in property taxes over the last 14 years.

In the 2021-22 school year the projection was 5% but the property tax increase was 10.76%. For the year of 2022-23, the projection was at 5% and the

district received 7.39%.

"Why are these increases not included in the following year's negotiations and where is all the extra property tax revenue going?" asked Kelly. "The community is supporting the district. The district needs to support the teachers as well."

One parent expressed her support for increased teacher compensation.

"As a parent and a taxpayer, I don't know where all the money goes. I truly have no idea," she

said. "I feel like we pay a huge amount and then donate a huge amount and my property taxes are insane. All I want is for the teachers to be taken care of."

The school board did not provide a request for a comment on educator pay and ongoing negotiations by The Almanac's Wednesday afternoon press deadline. ■

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



Courtesy Jennifer Montalvo

Las Lomitas Elementary educators and their supporters gathered at La Entrada Middle School's atrium on April 17 to call for increased wages.



# 8 BRITTANY MEADOWS ATHERTON



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## SENIORS

continued from page 5

But she wanted to do something different. At the time, her own grandmother was at Lytton Gardens at Palo Alto. “I was close to both my grandmothers. I wanted to do something with that age group — no one else was working with that age group from our district so I wanted to try that,” she said. “I thought it was wonderful to develop these intergenerational friendships.”

Lytton Gardens became the heart of this program until 2020. Originally, students visited the senior home only a few times a year, but over time it evolved into a monthly program which long outlived the grant that it was born out of.

It won the Kent Award for best school program in San Mateo County in 2007. At some point, she even went to a national service learning conference in Minnesota to learn how to enhance it.

“I presented my project to

teachers from all over the world — there’s actually schools in Japan that wanted to try it,” she said. Even so, she didn’t imagine it would go on for 20 years.

Recently, due to transportation complications, the venue changed from Lytton Gardens in Palo Alto to The Sequoias in Portola Valley, which is within walking distance from the school. Since last fall, her students have visited this senior home four times, most recently on April 16.

“Even though I’ve been doing this a long time, it feels new because it’s a new place that we’re doing it at,” she said.

Interviewing residents is not all they do. Students also perform musical programs, play games like Bingo with them, and celebrate festivals and special days by presenting flowers to the seniors. Recalling one such Valentine’s Day, she said, “Some of the residents were crying — happy crying.”

For Rynewicz, the emotional learning curve she sees her students go through during the

course of this program is especially gratifying, because every year when she tells her class about it, she’s invariably met with nervous apprehension.

“They’re hesitant about it,” she said. “Every year, they’re scared to go. They don’t know what to say.”

But by the end of each year, when it’s time to part ways, there are tears all around.

“The big thing for me is just the emotions I see on both sides; there’s a lot of happy crying at the end when we have to say our goodbyes,” she said. “The emotional attachment that I see these students forming with the seniors is something I hadn’t expected.”

Through the process of writing the biographies, her students learn not only about the lives of their senior friends but also about significant historical events. For example, many of the seniors have lived through World War II. “One student learned that her senior buddy was (late former President) John F. Kennedy’s

cook in the White House!” she said. Another student ended up interviewing his own grandfather, whom he doesn’t know well.

For the seniors, the same biographies become precious collectibles. Rynewicz once attended a funeral of one of the residents and the biography that her student wrote was read out at the funeral.

“What’s really shocked me is the attachment that the students form with these residents,” she said. “I wasn’t expecting it to be so strong.”

Rynewicz, who will retire sometime in the near future, hopes the program will continue after she has moved on. To this end, she has requested her colleague, fifth grade teacher Gabriella Kiernan, continue the tradition after she retires.

“I just want it to continue indefinitely because it touches so many lives,” she said. “I want the district to continue to support this project which I know they will.”

The district school board is supportive of continuing the program, but wants more

involvement from other classes, something that’s a work in progress, she said.

For now, she’s pleased that new aspects of the project are emerging. For instance, one of the residents is going to come visit the school to teach art.

After retiring, she wants to keep the concept alive by helping other schools develop similar programs.

“I’ve had students come back and tell me that’s the highlight of their experience at our school. And even after they’re out of my class, they still go back and see them (the seniors),” she said. “School isn’t just about teaching the reading, writing, math. It’s important for them to develop compassion and empathy for others. ... I’m always getting compliments about how kind and compassionate my class is and I think it’s because of what they’re doing.” ■

*Email Contributing Writer  
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## EARTH DAY

continued from page 1

were — everyone wasn’t all AI / robotic, Silicon Valley only.”

The day also featured the return of the tongue-in-cheek electric leaf-blower bowling competition between town police officers, council members and local firefighters, vegetarian food trucks and the chance to hold a live beetle. Although the town didn’t take a headcount of attendees, some 553 people RSVPed “yes” to the event as of the evening of April 21, according to Deputy City Manager/City Clerk Anthony Suber.

## Event returns to Holbrook-Palmer Park

Atherton brought the event back to the place of its inception

in 2022 — to Holbrook-Palmer Park at 150 Watkins Ave. Organizers scaled the festival down from a larger event last year at Menlo-Atherton High School that was co-hosted by East Palo Alto and Menlo Park. (Menlo Park hosted its event in East Palo Alto on April 13 this year.)

New this year: the Atherton Arts Foundation’s Youth Art competition. The Atherton Disaster Preparedness Team offered hands-on demonstrations of how to prepare for the increasing number of power outages and storms. Children patiently lined up to learn from Menlo Park Fire Protection District firefighters how to properly an extinguisher to put out a fire.

“Climate change is already being felt in our community

with record storms, temperatures, smoke and bad air days,” said Mayor Diana Hawkins-Manuelian in a Monday email. “Mother nature is giving us a wake up call and we all have to make changes in what we buy and the way we live. Atherton Earth Day festival was a fun way to educate and inspire and build community.”

## Competitions call attention to ways to reduce emissions

Ken Frederick, an Atherton Environmental Programs Committee member, reached out to Haven Kiers of Davis because he was really interested in electric mowers and the idea of pulling in sheep for the event.

Before starting her project, Haven Kiers had read articles about sheep mowing lawns in

cool places, like under the Eiffel Tower in Paris. She wanted to know if the animals could fertilize and control pests as well as, or better than, conventional landscaping devices.

“I was like ‘this is the greatest thing ever,’” she said. She presented the idea of bringing it to UC Davis through her original job as a design and project manager for UC Davis’ Arboretum and Public Garden. “Of course it’s Davis, it’s an ag school, we have to have sheep mowing the lawn.”

The project came to fruition when she joined the Landscape Architecture Department as an assistant professor. Sheepmowers seeks to answer a number of questions: Do they cut the lawn as well as lawnmowers? Who normally does this type of labor?

Haven Kiers found benefits beyond what she was expecting. College students are more relaxed while watching sheep graze, she said. There are aesthetic benefits; the sheep create a “pastoral landscape in the middle of campus.”

She envisions sheep cutting back on overgrowth grasses that might contribute to wildfire risk, at vineyards or at solar farms.

The project is also about teaching people about sustainability and that not everything about the environment is “doom and gloom.”

To learn more about other activities and vendors at the event, go to [ci.atherton.ca.us/625/Earth-Day](http://ci.atherton.ca.us/625/Earth-Day). ■

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

## ‘Smash and grab’ at Mike’s Camera in Menlo Park

By Angela Swartz

Around 4 a.m. on April 15 someone backed their car into the front glass window, to break into the store and steal equipment, of Mike’s Camera at 715 Santa Cruz Ave., according to Menlo Park police.

A sign at the front of the store, located in the heart of the city’s downtown, advises customers that the business is still open but to enter through the back door. Menlo Park Police spokesperson Nicole Acker said via email on Monday, April 22, that loss is unknown. Police

located the vehicle involved, which had been reported to be stolen, involved nearby. There is security footage of the incident, she said.

Burglars hit the store, which sells photo and video cameras, and has printing services along with other photo equipment, numerous times from 2015-2017, according to The Almanac’s archives. During one incident, burglars smashed a display case and stole about 15 cameras worth around \$6,240. In 2017, thieves pried open the back door to Mike’s Cameras, stealing six cameras and several

lenses worth around \$29,300.

Mike’s Camera did not respond to a request for more details about what was taken

and how much items were worth, along with what repairs to the store will cost by The Almanac’s Wednesday afternoon press deadline. ■

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

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## OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include:

**Hope Raymond**, 94, a devoted advocate for spiritual and social justice who lived a rich life as an educator, author, and pastor and who lived in the cities of Pleasanton and Palo Alto, where she played a pivotal role in making Palo Alto a sanctuary city and was a cherished hypnotherapist and animal therapy volunteer, on March 12, 2024. Throughout her life, Raymond traveled the world, authored three impactful books, and engaged deeply in theology, psychology, and social issues.

**Ian James Allan**, 65, a long-time resident of Palo Alto and

beloved brother, who was known for his academic and athletic prowess, excelled in design and was revered for his creativity and kindness, on April 11, 2024. Ian attended Addison Elementary, Jordan Junior High School, and Palo Alto High School. After graduating from Palo Alto High School in 1976, Ian continued his education at Stanford University (Class of 1982), earning his bachelor’s degree in design.

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

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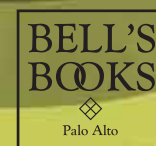
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# Public Notices

**STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME**  
File No. M-289527

The following person(s)/registrant(s) has/have abandoned the use of the fictitious business name(s). The information given below is as it appeared on the fictitious business statement that was filed at the County Clerk-Recorder's Office. FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME(S): RESTAURANT MITSUNOBU 325 Sharon Park Dr. Menlo Park, CA 94025

FILED IN SAN MATEO COUNTY ON: 11/22/2021  
REGISTRANT'S NAME(S): K & T FOODS INC 325 Sharon Park Dr., SUITE A-2 Menlo Park, CA 94025

THIS BUSINESS WAS CONDUCTED BY A Corporation.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of San Mateo County on April 03 2024.

(ALM Apr 12, 19, 26 and May 3, 2024)

**SUPER DUPER BURGER**  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-297032

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

1.) SUPER DUPER BURGER, located at 1100 PARK PLACE, BLDG 2, STE 20, SAN MATEO, CA 94403. Mailing Address: 2020 Union Street, San Francisco, CA 94123.

Registered owner(s): SUPER SAN MATEO LLC

2020 UNION ST

SAN FRANCISCO, CA 94123

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 March 28, 2024.

(ALM Apr 12, 19, 26 and May 3, 2024)

**CHAMBER MUSIC BY THE BAY**  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-297055

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

1.) CHAMBER MUSIC BY THE BAY, located at 2007 Poplar Avenue, E. Palo Alto, CA 94303.

Registered owner(s): JESSICA CHANG

2007 Poplar Avenue

E. 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 01/08/24.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on April 01, 2024.

(ALM Apr 12, 19, 26 and May 3, 2024)

**BAYSPO**  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-297107

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

1.) BAYSPO, located at 433 Airport Blvd. Suite 103, Burlingame, CA 94010.

Registered owner(s): INTER-PACIFIC PUBLICATIONS, INC.

433 Airport Blvd. Suite 103

Burlingame, CA 94010

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 08/26/1996.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on April 05, 2024.

(ALM Apr 12, 19, 26 and May 3, 2024)

**LONE FOX GAMES**  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-297014

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

1.) LONE FOX GAMES, located at 105 Alta Vista Way, Daly City, CA 94014.

Registered owner(s): JACOB JOHN PLACHTA

105 Alta Vista Way

Daly City, CA 94014

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 11/11/2022.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on March 26, 2024.

(ALM Apr 12, 19, 26 and May 3, 2024)

**SWERVE MEDIA**  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-297120

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

1.) SWERVE MEDIA, located at 25 Amherst Ct, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

Registered owner(s): JERVIS WILLIAMS

25 Amherst Ct

Menlo Park, CA 94025

LYNETTE WILLIAMS

25 Amherst Ct

Menlo Park, CA 94025

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA

This business is conducted by: a Married Couple.

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 April 08, 2024.

(ALM Apr 19, 26, May 3 and 10, 2024)

**EXPRESS HAULING**  
JUNK EXPRESS  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-297073

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

1.) EXPRESS HAULING, 2.) JUNK EXPRESS, located at 30 N. FREMONT ST, SAN MATEO, CA, 94401.

Registered owner(s): SAT NARAYAN

30 N. FREMONT ST

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 April 02, 2024.

(ALM Apr 12, 19, 26 and May 3, 2024)

**SAN FRANCISCO BAY WINDOW CLEANING**  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-297048

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

1.) SAN FRANCISCO BAY WINDOW CLEANING, located at 611 N CLAREMONT ST, SAN MATEO, CA 94401.

Registered owner(s): CHRISTIAN SPONCHIADO

611 N CLAREMONT ST

SAN MATEO, CA 94401

This business is conducted by: an Individual.

Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 03/29/2024.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on March 29, 2024.

(ALM Apr 12, 19, 26 and May 3, 2024)

**A P M CONSTRUCTION**  
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT  
FILE NO.: M-297092

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

1.) A P M CONSTRUCTION, located at 324 Winchester St, Daly City, CA, 94014.

Registered owner(s): YUN LUN ANTHONY MAK

324 Winchester St

Daly City, CA, 94014

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 4/1/2024.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on April 03, 2024.

(ALM Apr 12, 19, 26 and May 3, 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-01355

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

Petitioner: Serena Yu-Ching Yeung-Levy

filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

SERENA YU-CHING YEUNG-LEVY to SERENA YUCHING YEUNG-LEVY

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: 05/09/2024, 9:00am, Dept. 17, Master Calendar, Courtroom 2K 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: 03/11/2024

Hon. Judge Elizabeth Lee

JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT

(ALM Apr 12, 19, 26 and May 3, 2024)

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

Case No.: 24CIV01502

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

Petitioner: Karina Prado Cabrera filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

ANTHONY JOSEPH CARPIO PRADO JR. to ANTHONY JOSEPH CARPIO JR

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: 05/13/2024, 9:00am, law and motion 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: 03/13/2014

Judge Raymond

JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT

(ALM Apr 19, 26, May 3 and 10, 2024)



Devin Roberts

Outdoor pool at the Belle Haven Community Campus in Menlo Park on April 22.

**BELLE HAVEN**

*continued from page 1*

an exercise room with the latest machines and weights.

“This building was four years (in the making) from concept to completion, which is like light speed for a public building,” Reinhart said. “To see this come to fruition in only four years is really rewarding, and we think people are really going to love this new facility because it was really built for the neighborhood.”

The project broke ground in late 2021, replacing the old Onetta Harris Community Center on the same site. It also will be the new home of the Belle Haven Library, Belle Haven Pool, Belle Haven Youth Center and Menlo Park Senior Center.

A neighborhood campaign lobbied for the entire campus to assume the Harris name again, but city leaders decided instead to transfer the name to the “Movement” studio and “Flex Classroom” — hosting fitness and learning programs, respectively — in the new campus.

The cost to build BHCC is estimated to be about \$65 million funded by the city and Meta, the Menlo Park-based parent company of Facebook. Meta contributed about \$40 million.

BHCC “is a direct reflection of years of community

**Grand opening event**

**What:** Belle Haven Community Campus (BHCC) grand opening

**Where:** 100 Terminal Ave., Menlo Park

**When:** Saturday, May 18, at 11 a.m.

For more information about BHCC programs and to register, visit [menlopark.gov/activityguide](http://menlopark.gov/activityguide) or call 650-330-2200.

conversations and our efforts to help advance the community’s vision,” Juan Salazar, director of public policy at Meta, said in a city news release about the grand opening.

The Friends of Menlo Park Library, Menlo Park Library Foundation and Maria S. Hoffman Trust donated additional financial support for furniture, equipment, books and other materials, the city said in the release.

Calling BHCC “a jewel nestled in a neighborhood,” Mayor Cecilia Taylor said in the release that the project’s key goal was “to build a new community space that will improve the quality of life for residents” in Belle Haven and all of Menlo Park. ■

*Email Contributing Writer*

*Neil Gonzales at*

*ngonzales92@yahoo.com.*

# Employment

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The deadline is Sunday at 11:59 pm.

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## ACADEMICS

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[7edu.org](https://7edu.org) **(408) 876-2144**

### Early Learning Institute **Palo Alto, Pleasanton**

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[EmersonMontessori.com](https://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](https://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/](https://LydianAcademy.com/Admissions/Summer-at-Lydian/) **(650) 405-1312**

### Pinewood School **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](https://Pinewood.edu/SummerPrograms)

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

## ARTS, CULTURE & ENRICHMENT

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[Camp.Integem.com](https://Camp.Integem.com) **(408) 459-0657**

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Join us for 5 fun-filled weeks of dance! CDBN's summer camps are designed for dancers ages 4-12. Email for 12+ intensives. Campers will learn dance techniques in ballet, jazz, tumbling, lyrical, hip-hop, and musical theater. Camps are filled with excitement, games, arts & crafts, weekly performances, and more!

[CaptivatingDanceByNona.com/Summer-2024](https://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](https://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](https://Sunnyvale.ca.gov/Activities) **(408) 730-7350**

### Code for Fun **Palo Alto**

Code For Fun is a leader in online and in-person coding programs for kids and teens. Our lessons develop critical STEM skills taught through our proprietary curricula, with engaging and effective hands on projects. Discover how our after-school programs and summer camps, in Palo Alto and online, can unlock a world of innovation and creativity. Weekly camps held during summer, and the rest of the year for ages 5-15. Full and half day camps.

[CodeForFun.com](https://CodeForFun.com) **(510) 578-8920**

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

40+ creative camps for ages 5-15! Drawing, Painting, Ceramics, Wearable Art, Digital Art, Musical Theater and more! One and two-week sessions; full and half-day enrollment. Financial aid offered. After Camp available.

[Arts4All.org](https://Arts4All.org) **(650) 917-6800 ext. 0**

### Hidden Villa **Los Altos Hills**

Hidden Villa is a 1,600 acre refuge in Los Altos Hills and home to an organic farm, gardens, beautiful hiking trails, and farm animals. Our Summer Camp program blends nature, farming and social justice, while encouraging a diverse, compassionate, and eco-conscious youth community in a fun and age-appropriate environment.

[HiddenVilla.org/SummerCamp](https://HiddenVilla.org/SummerCamp) **(650) 949-8650**

### Oshman Family JCC Camps **Palo Alto**

At J-Camp, we build a spirited community where campers are immersed in joyful camp activities and develop meaningful relationships with others while engaging in individual personal growth. Our exciting day camp offers programming for incoming grades K-10.

[OFJCC-JCamp.com](https://OFJCC-JCamp.com) **(650) 223-8622**

### Riekes Center **Menlo Park**

Explore all your interests this summer with Riekes 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.

[RiekesSummerCamps.org](https://RiekesSummerCamps.org) **(650) 364-2509**

## ARTS, CULTURE & ENRICHMENT

### 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](https://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](https://VentanaSchool.org/Elementary-Summer-Camps-2024) **(650) 948-2121**

## ATHLETICS

### Bald Eagle **Bay Area**

The first camp ever approved by *The Positive Coaching Alliance* for message and *Development Zone* programming. We offer 4 camps: Non-Traditional MultiSports (TK-5th), Sports Leadership & Field Trips (6th-8th), Basketball Camp (3rd-8th) and Coach In Training (free, 9th-10th). Extended Care 7:30 am - 6 pm.

[BaldEagleCamps.com](https://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](https://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](https://SpartansSportsCamp.com) **(650) 479-5906**

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## Earth Month: Fighting carbon, revitalizing planet Earth

By Radhika Dutt

### GUEST OPINION

In commemoration of the April 22 Earth Day — celebrations through April have culminated in it becoming Earth Month. Hearteningly, we now see citizens across Bay Area, California and indeed, the rest of the country too, joining hands to celebrate the 55th year of this remarkable movement that was among the first to recognize the ill-effects of wanton industrialization on life, health and general well-being. First celebrated in 1970, the movement had inspired 20 million Americans to vocalize their concerns, which, positively, led to the establishment of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and its many successful climate legislations.

Since then, the succeeding decades have been quite remarkable. Beginning here in the U.S., the climate movement has permeated other parts of the world, led to the establishment of a dedicated United Nations body to fight climate change, and changed power dynamics unlike ever before. We have voyaged through phases of ignorance, denial,

anger, bargaining and, finally, acceptance to know that it is *our* planet, it is threatened by *us* — and *we* must save it.

There is so much we must do to limit the warming of our planet below 1.5 degree C. We must support others, particularly developing countries, and that is possible only if we strengthen our own infrastructure and systems to become climate-friendly. The end is clear and the paths are many. But we must start from a single point of convergence — one where we recognise that the biggest threat to our climate is indeed carbon.

### Rethinking carbon

A Pew Research Center survey of 10,237 U.S. adults finds that 69% of U.S. adults prioritize developing alternative clean energy sources over expanding the production of oil, coal and natural gas. The same share also favors the U.S. becoming carbon neutral by 2050, a key component of President Joe Biden's climate and energy policy agenda. The numbers are encouraging and the ill-effects of carbon are undeniable. Now,

with the White House agenda established in place, Congress has much to do in bringing to life our national net-zero carbon ambitions.

California Representative Salud Carbajal, CA-24, took an important step in introducing the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2023. This bill imposes a fee on the carbon content of fossil fuels, or any other product derived from those fuels that will result in the emission of greenhouse gases. The fee is imposed on producers or importers of the fuels and is equal to the greenhouse gas content of the fuel multiplied by the carbon fee rate. Most encouragingly, the bill enforces that the fees must be deposited into a Carbon Dividend Trust Fund that will be used for administrative expenses and dividend payments to U.S. citizens or lawful residents. Introduced in September 2023, the bill currently has 14 co-sponsors.

And, what better time than Earth Month to think about this important legislation that not only quantifies the cost of carbon in the atmosphere but also redirects cash flows to empower citizens in their climate journey.

### Citizens first

Remember, the 1970 Earth Day movement began with a convergence of citizens' interest and became successful because of the 20 million U.S. citizens — 10% of the country's population then — who voiced their concerns and took to the streets. The power of converging citizen sentiments can be a true force of nature and the Energy Innovation and Carbon Dividend Act of 2023 recognizes exactly this.

Earth Month is not just a time to celebrate the climate movement but also a momentous

occasion to celebrate the power of ordinary citizens. In celebrating this month — which indeed should be a year-round mantra — let's join hands to save the planet and also, celebrate ourselves. Our power, our ability, and our empowerment in making a difference is what truly matters!

*Radhika Dutt, a Mountain View resident, is an energy communications specialist. She has also been a journalist and volunteers with Citizens' Climate Lobby, a nonprofit organization advancing bipartisan climate solutions.*

April 26, 2024  
1st Quarter 2024

### AN IMPORTANT NOTICE REQUIRED BY CALIFORNIA DIVISION OF DRINKING WATER

Este aviso contiene información muy importante sobre su agua potable, por favor lea el aviso en español si va aquí incluido. Si el aviso en español no va incluido aquí, contacte al sistema de agua para pedir una copia

#### The O'Connor Tract Co-Operative Water Company has levels of manganese above the secondary drinking water standard.

Although this is not an emergency, as our customers, you have a right to know what happened, what you should do, and what we are doing to correct this situation. Our water system is in violation of a secondary drinking water standard. Violation of a secondary standard does not pose an immediate threat to health.

We routinely monitor for the presence of drinking water contaminants. Average results for water samples for the last four quarters have manganese levels of 48 ppb in well #1 and 138 ppb in well #2 (ppb=parts per billion). This is above the secondary drinking water standard, or secondary maximum contaminant level of 50 ppb.

Manganese concentrations above the standard may have an effect on taste and tend to leave black deposits in some plumbing systems.

#### What should I do?

- **You do not need to use an alternative water supply (e.g., bottled water).** There is no health risk.
- If you have other health issues concerning the consumption of this water, you may wish to consult your doctor.

#### What happened? What is being done?

O'Connor Water has been above the secondary standard for manganese for many years, and this has been described to members in the annual Report on Water Quality Measurements. Recent state regulations have imposed stricter requirements for complying with the secondary standard for manganese. The state has issued the company a citation for noncompliance. The state ordered the company to start quarterly monitoring in February 2012, and this monitoring is still ongoing at both wells. The state also required that manganese monitoring be continued quarterly and that the results of these tests be reported to all water consumers.

The manganese treatment plant is operating under a commissioning phase and manganese test results have been below the State's detected level reporting, meaning that the water supplied meets the regulation, and is no longer above the secondary standard for manganese. You are receiving this notice as a precaution since further tests are required.

Please share this information with all the other people who drink this water, especially those who may not have received this public notice directly (for example, people in apartments, nursing homes, schools, and businesses). You can do this by posting this public notice in a public place or distributing copies by hand or mail.

For further information contact:  
Secretary-Treasurer Telephone 650-321-2723  
Email: oconnorwater@gmail.com  
O'Connor Tract Co-Operative Water Co., System 4110019  
P.O. Box 1375, Palo Alto, California 94302-1375

### LETTERS

Our readers write

### Government welfare spending

Government welfare spending in 2023 was about \$1.1 trillion and general philanthropy in our country was about \$990 billion. Essentially private giving could

soon exceed government welfare as charitable giving grows as wealthy donors like Warren Buffet, Steve Jobs, Bill Gates leave more stock in companies they created to foundations and charities instead of their heirs.

An advantage of private charities and foundations is they invest a certain amount to ensure future giving while the government supports welfare by raising taxes and government

debt. Welfare spending supported by the growth of our economy is far better than welfare based on increasing government debt. In short private self sustaining foundations can fulfill the increasing demand for public welfare. In a way the wealth of the rich becomes a type of forced savings for future welfare.

*Ed Kahl,*

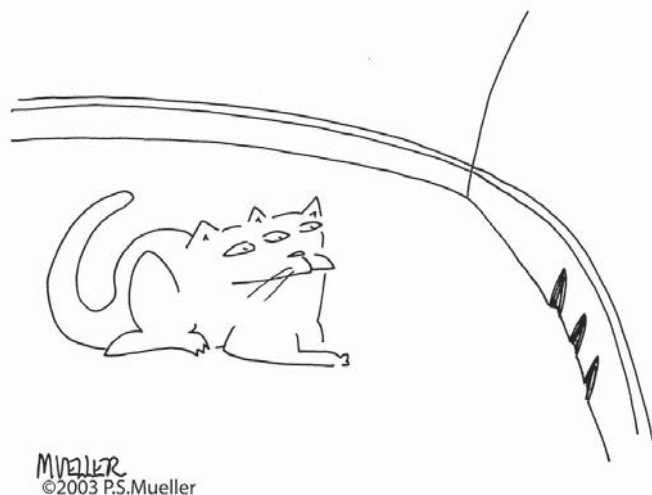
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# Artscene

PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCES IN ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

## Zach Fest '24 offers music and a message

### REDWOOD CITY CONCERT REMEMBERS A YOUNG MUSICIAN AND RAISES FUNDS FOR LOCAL NONPROFITS

By Ashwini Gangal



Courtesy Garrick Davis World Blues

Garrick Davis World Blues is one of the bands that will perform at Zach Fest '24, a concert held in memory of Davis' son, Zach Davis-Price.

When guitarist, singer and songwriter Garrick Davis takes to the stage with his fellow musicians on April 28 at Redwood City's Club Fox, he will give the audience two things: music and a message.

The concert has roots in a personal tragedy. Davis is organizing it in memory of his late son, Zachary Davis-Price, a nursing student who passed away in 2020 due to an opioid overdose. That's why the concert is called Zach Fest.

Bands that will perform are Garrick Davis World Blues and The Good Time Collective. Guest speakers will talk about health, longevity and addiction recovery.

"The pandemic isolated him from a lot of things," Davis said of Zach. For instance, his favorite band, Phish, wasn't performing due to the pandemic; he used to watch them live in New York every New Year's Eve. Moreover, just weeks before his passing, Zach's close friend died by suicide. "So there was a lot of despair obviously in that period of time," Davis said.

Zach Fest honors the spirit of community, something that was important to Zach because it's at the heart of both music as well as addiction recovery.

"He was a music fanatic, he developed himself into being a great musician," Davis said. "Zach went to lots of concerts. It was important that he see bands

play live, because that's when you can really tell if a band is good ... Zach loved the community of concert-goers." He enjoyed going to Dave Matthews and Bruce Springsteen concerts, Davis said.

This will be the second edition of Zach Fest. The first event was held in April 2022, as a memorial concert at the Fox Theatre. Nearly 500 people attended.

"It was a very moving experience," Davis said.

The concert he tried putting together last year didn't work out due to lack of ticket sales and inadequate promotions.

"Last year I realized that we need to do something different ... it has to be some kind of cause, that we will do some good," he said. That's how it transitioned from a memorial concert to a community benefit concert.

Through the show Davis will raise funds for two nonprofit beneficiaries this year: The Tim Griffith Foundation, which provides services to people affected by addiction, violence and loss, and Kara Grief Support, which provides help to the bereaved. Funds will be raised through a silent auction at the concert.

This selection of nonprofits has deep ties with Davis' own story. He received grief support from Kara for a year after Zach's passing. The counseling he received there helped him immensely, he said, and he grew close to his counselor. He was keen to express

his gratitude by contributing to the organization in some way.

He also felt the need to help people in their addiction recovery journey.

"Zach was really into doing something of good to help people; he'd always been that way," Davis said. "And this is what I'm trying to do here — I'm trying to make music, bring people together and do good things."

Davis, who has lived in Redwood City since 1986, will be moving to a village called Moha in Hungary to continue his career. "My wife is Hungarian," he said. "She just retired (as a dental assistant) and wanted to move back," something she'd always planned on doing. Davis didn't think she would go through with her plan of retiring in her home country, but is glad she did.

Davis is committed to continuing Zach Fest even after moving.

"My goal is actually to be able to come back here and put it on," he said. "I would like to be able to do this consistently and I would like to see it grow."

Davis' fellow musicians are aligned with his vision for Zach Fest. Artist "AJ" Joyce, bassist for Davis' band, said the concert is partly about spreading awareness about addiction, "a problem we have in the country that the government doesn't seem that concerned about."

AJ had a good relationship with Zach.



Courtesy Garrick Davis

Zach Davis-Price was a music lover. He's seen here at left performing with his father, musician Garrick Davis.

"He's Garrick's son but was a good friend to me, too. He was just a really great guy, a little quiet, soft spoken, the opposite of me!" he said about Zach, who was also a member of the band. "He used to help me through the gigs; a lot of times there were parts of songs that I couldn't remember and I'd just ask him and he had a real cool way of letting me know what the part was so that I could get to it and make it through the gig."

The two shared a camaraderie that he now recalls fondly.

"I used to tease him all the time. My career has been in the blues and he used to play more modern music, like young stuff. He was aware of dubstep, which is a genre that not a lot of people my age are into, and I used to always tease him about playing dubstep," said AJ.

The music they will play at the concert, AJ said, is not really genre-defined.

"It's not rock, it's not punk, it's not soul, it's not jazz, it's not country, but it's vibrant, energetic music that incorporates most of those ideas," he said. "Art is in the eyes or ears of the beholder. Come with an open mind." ■

Email Contributing Writer  
Ashwini Gangal at  
ashwinigangal@gmail.com.

Zach Fest '24 Community Benefit Concert takes place April 28, 6 p.m., at Club Fox, 2209 Broadway St., Redwood City. Tickets are \$55 through April 26; \$60 starting April 27. For more information, visit [gdworldblues.com](http://gdworldblues.com).

# Pear Theatre stages 'The Chinese Lady' and 'Love Letters'

Two-person plays follow characters through the years

By Karla Kane

In 1834, 14-year-old Afong Moy was brought from China to the United States and put on display as an “exotic” curiosity, purportedly the first Chinese woman in America. Moy is the protagonist of “The Chinese Lady” by Lloyd Suh, which follows Moy as she struggles to maintain her identity and find purpose in her life. It’s one of two plays running in repertory April 19-May 12 at the Pear Theatre, alongside “Love Letters” by A.R. Gurney, with both productions directed by Wynne Chan.

Eiko Moon-Yamamoto, who is double cast with Joann Wu in the role of Moy, said part of what drew her to “The Chinese Lady” was the chance to give voice to a perspective that has been neglected by the dominant, Western-centric narrative.

“You can certainly see in our political climate today there is a huge lack of information across the United States,” Moon-Yamamoto, who majored in history with a minor in Asian American studies, said.

“For me as an actor to be able to do a play about something that I feel strongly about, about immigration history — this



Sinjin Jones

Eiko Moon-Yamamoto as Afong Moy in “The Chinese Lady” at the Pear Theatre.

country was built on the backs of immigrants — also, specifically, being Asian American myself, I was very attracted to this play.”

Chan, too, appreciates the opportunity to help bring history to life, and to light.

“One of the interesting things about storytelling is, how do we

make sure that we are actually sharing these pieces of history to people, and (that) people are seeing that and reflecting that on modern day, and how they think about immigration, and how they think about Asian Americans, and how they think they think about the world,” she said.

While Moy is a historical figure who came to introduce and represent Chinese culture to her audience of American spectators, much remains unknown.

“There is so much information that is lacking about (Moy’s) history. The only things that we know about her (are the) things

that the newspapers wrote and even then, you know, they didn’t get things right, like her name. Some of the newspapers made up names for her, which were very offensive,” Moon-Yamamoto said. “And then she just kind

See **PEAR THEATRE**, page 21

## Worth a Look

### Analog Dog and Subtle Orange

For the latest in the Guild Theatre’s Local Sound Series, listeners can catch the San Francisco-based, self-described “genre fluid” band Analog Dog, which brings elements of psychedelic rock, funk, disco and jazz. “Color TV,” the debut full-length album from the group, was released this January, with a single, “here i lay in bed,” released this month. Analog Dog will be joined

by L.A.’s alternative rock group Subtle Orange at the upcoming Guild event.



Courtesy Analog Dog

San Francisco-based “genre fluid” band Analog Dog performs with Subtle Orange on April 26 as part of the Guild Theatre’s Local Sound Series.

### Sheep Shearing and Fiber Arts Festival

Feeling sheepish? Hidden Villa hosts a day dedicated to sheep, wool and fiber arts, with participants able to watch sheep shearers harvest wool from the farm’s flock and artisans demonstrate traditional fiber-processing techniques. A community dye pot offers the opportunity to try dyeing with plant-based pigments, a gallery will showcase the work of local fiber and textile craftspeople, and live music and food trucks featuring farm-fresh food will also be available. To reduce traffic congestion, attendees are requested to park at Foothill College and catch a 5-minute shuttle ride to Hidden Villa.

April 27, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., Hidden Villa’s Dana Center, 26870 Moody Road, Los Altos Hills; \$30 general admission/\$15 equity pricing; [eventbrite.com](https://eventbrite.com).

### ‘Dabin Presents: Stay in Bloom’

Dabin is a Canadian producer and instrumentalist who learned guitar, drums and piano as a teen and began producing electronic music in 2011. Developing a signature sound that blends acoustic and electronic elements, he’s gained many followers and taken part in numerous collaborations over the years. “Stay in Bloom” is a festival curated by Dabin, with a lineup including special guest Jai Wolf, according to an Instagram post.

April 27-28, 4:15 p.m., Frost Amphitheater, 351 Lasuen St., Stanford; \$59.50-\$115; [live.stanford.edu](https://live.stanford.edu).

### Big Band Swing Time

The California Pops Orchestra pays tribute to some of the big names in big band, with a concert that highlights swing music from the 1930s to modern times. The orchestra teams up with the Black Tie Jazz Band to make it an even bigger big band experience, with a program celebrating the music of bandleaders such as Glenn Miller, Benny Goodman, Tommy Dorsey and others.

April 26, 8 p.m., at San Mateo Performing Arts Center, 600 N. Delaware St., San Mateo, \$20-\$55, [californiapopsorchestra.com](https://californiapopsorchestra.com).

Find our roundup of local shops marking Independent Bookstore Day at [almanacnews.com/arts-culture](https://almanacnews.com/arts-culture).

## PEAR THEATRE

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of drops off and she disappears. And also that is very reflective of the fact that if history is not written, then people disappear.”

Several special events will be held alongside “The Chinese Lady,” including a post-show presentation about the real Afong Moy by historical and cultural consultant Patrick Chew on April 21; an AAPI (Asian American Pacific Islander) matinee with snacks April 28, a post-show AAPI industry mixer on May 4; and a May 5 post-show panel discussion with Asian American playwrights.

The play’s themes of objectification and discrimination are very relevant to modern day, Moon-Yamamoto and Chan said, noting the rise in anti-Asian racism during the pandemic.

As Chan wrote in her director’s note, “We are not as far from the violence against and the exoticification of Asian bodies as we think we are. With this play, we carry on the hope of Afong Moy — to continue to build a platform for shared understanding across cultures and differences.”

While the second show, “Love Letters,” is quite a different story from “The Chinese Lady,” there are parallels that make it a fitting companion piece, Chan said, including the fact that both plays are two-handers (requiring a two-person cast).

“Love Letters” is a tale of two best friends and soul mates, Melissa and Andy, that, like “The Chinese Lady” follows its protagonists for many years. It’s a tale told through their correspondence with each other from childhood throughout their lives.

In “The Chinese Lady,” Moy has a longtime aide and translator, Atung, played by Joseph Alvarado. While the circumstances and relationships are not at all the same, Chan said she recognizes a dynamic between Melissa and Andy that to her is in some ways similar.

“Even though they’re not in that situation where they are oppressed and they have no one else to go to, it does seem like that in the entire world, the only people that really understand each other (are) the same partner in the show,” she said. “You see how one character impacts the other.”

Part of the fun of the Pear’s “Love Letters” comes from the fact that the cast changes each time, and that most performances feature real-life couples from the local theater world: Bryan Moriarty and Vanessa Alvarez, Paul Braverman and Robyn Ginsburg Braverman, Curtis Murray and Naomi Evans, Michael Saenz and Michael Rhone, Chris Mahle and Kristin

Walter, Michael Champlin and Katie O’Byron-Champlin, Fred Pitts and Kelly Rinehart, and Max Tachis and Roneet Aliza Rahamim.

“Each performance is going to be different than the other, which is really exciting,” Chan said. Additionally, the real-life couples perform “Love Letters” as a cold reading — not preparing with the script or rehearsing ahead of time.

“We’re encouraging them to come into this completely cold without knowing what happens in the story so they can truly react to each letter that they’re receiving from the other person,” Chan said.

The exception is the May 3 performance, at which Alvarado and Moon-Yamamoto, who are not a real-life couple, will play Andy and Melissa, and who have served as “guinea pigs” helping develop the production with Chan and the crew in terms of logistics such as sound and

lighting design. For their turn in “Love Letters,” Chan said they will draw on the bond they’ve forged and the discussions they’ve had about their characters in “The Chinese Lady.”

“At the heart of it really is the connection,” Chan said of all the actors participating in “Love Letters,” whether they’re a couple off stage or not.

“It’s seeing what type of real-life connection they’ve built and how that impacts this play, which I think is a really powerful thing.” ■

Email Assistant Lifestyle Editor Karla Kane at [kkane@almanacnews.com](mailto:kkane@almanacnews.com).

“The Chinese Lady” and “Love Letters” run in repertory through May 12 at the Pear Theatre, 1110 La Avenida St., Mountain View; \$38-\$40. Check online for specific performance and cast schedules at [thepear.org/whats-playing](http://thepear.org/whats-playing).



Sinjin Jones

Joseph Alvarado as Atung and Eiko Moon-Yamamoto as Afong Moy in “The Chinese Lady” at the Pear Theatre.

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# Food & Drink



Above: Annie and Craig Stoll opened their first Pizzeria Delfina in 2005. Right: The carciofi pie is a pizza made with artichokes, mozzarella, arugula, ricotta salata and gremolata.

## 8 questions for Pizzeria Delfina's Craig & Annie Stoll

Our fourth annual Peninsula Restaurant Week is here! Through Saturday, April 27, celebrate the Peninsula's restaurant scene with special prix fixe menus and offers at dozens of local eateries. I'm catching up with three restaurateurs participating in Peninsula Restaurant Week. This is the final interview in this year's series. Previously, I spoke with Oh Honey Macaron owner Kelly Liu about the inspiration behind her unique macarons and Bistro Vida owner Ali El Safy about a new cocktail bar he's opening next door to his Menlo Park restaurant. For more information on Peninsula Restaurant Week, go to [peninsularestaurantweek.com](http://peninsularestaurantweek.com).

Learn about their restaurant journeys, where the business plans to go from here and Peninsula Restaurant Week offerings

By Adrienne Mitchel  
Photos courtesy Pizzeria Delfina

**C**raig and Annie Stoll decided to open a restaurant together on their second date.

One year later in 1998, Delfina

in San Francisco opened for business, serving up California-Italian fare. Then in 2005, the couple — with Craig in the kitchen and Annie in the front-of-the-house — opened their first Pizzeria Delfina on California Street in San Francisco, and in 2008, Craig won the James Beard Award for best chef. Since then, they've opened an additional four pizzerias (one closed in 2020 with the pandemic), including one in Burlingame and one in Palo Alto.

For Peninsula Restaurant Week, Pizzeria Delfina in Burlingame and Palo Alto are both offering a \$45 prix fixe three-course menu, featuring insalata primavera (little gem lettuce, radishes, lentils, asparagus, pea shoots and green goddess dressing) as the appetizer, a choice between carciofi pie (made with artichokes, mozzarella, arugula, ricotta salata and gremolata) and Delfina's housemade potato gnocchi (with English peas, prosciutto cotto and fresh herb buro fuso) for the main, and fior di latte soft serve (with roasted strawberries and rhubarb conserva) as the dessert.

I talked with Craig and Annie to learn about their respective

journeys into the food and beverage industry, their passion for Italian cuisine and an upcoming change to Pizzeria Delfina. The interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

**Peninsula Foodist:** How did you both get into the restaurant industry?

**Annie Stoll:** I grew up outside Philadelphia, and my mom was a great cook. And she took me out for my 12th birthday to this place in the '70s called the Knave of Hearts, and it was white tablecloths, and they served me cold strawberry soup. And I just fell in love with service at a young age, and I loved going to restaurants. And so I went to college for hotel restaurant management at Penn State. I graduated from Penn State, and then I started managing restaurants...and then moved here in 1990, and was managing just with the hopes of always opening my own restaurant. But I'm a front-of-the-house person. I'm a hospitality person, and I knew I needed a chef partner. So I was searching for that and getting experience and met Craig.

**Craig Stoll:** I'm from New York. I started washing dishes in high school so I had money



Pizzeria Delfina in Burlingame is participating in Peninsula Restaurant Week from April 19 to 27 with a \$45 prix fixe menu.

for car payments so I could date girls. That was the sum total of my drive, I think, at that point. But I just fell in love with it. It's like instant gratification — there was fire, they gave me beer after work, everyone drank. I loved it.

I also came from a hardcore foodie family before that term was ever invented. I grew up just outside of the city, and my parents were wannabe hippies. So we belonged to a food cop in the '70s in Westchester, and they'd take us out to eat all over the city. I fell in love with it. I ended up going to culinary school right out of high school and went back and got a bachelor's in hospitality management (at Florida International University). And I moved out here in '88 and started working for a really famous chef at the time in San Francisco. I just worked my way around the city and got another cook job and got a sous chef job and bounced around. And then I got an opportunity to go to a beady, guinea pig group of this cooking school in Torino, Italy. And then I spent three months in this Stalin-era conference center up on a hill in Torino and got a job at a restaurant named Da Delfina in Tuscany. I like to say that it's like central casting for small Tuscan village. It was surrounded by olive groves and vineyards, and I slept in a little room under the restaurant. It was an amazing experience, obviously, to inspire us years later. I came back to the Bay Area, got a sous chef job, a chef job, just bounced around until I met Annie. We were both working in Mill Valley across the street from each other, and we started dating. And then on our second date, we decided to open a restaurant together.

**Peninsula Foodist:** Did you pick the name Delfina because of Da Delfina in Tuscany?

**Craig Stoll:** Yeah, it was a woman's name. Delfina was Nona, the grandma. And she was in her 80s when I was there, so she's long gone. Her son Carlo still runs the restaurant to this day.

**Peninsula Foodist:** How would you describe the style of pizza you serve at Pizzeria Delfina?

**Craig Stoll:** New York meets Naples. Some people might call it Neo-Neapolitan. What we want is a really well-developed, airy cornicione, which is the crust, the edge, with a firm enough center of the crust to hold toppings and cheese, etc. Not too long after we opened Delfina, we went to Naples and spent some time working there and staging at various places. We had had pizza in Italy, but hadn't spent solid time on the ground in Naples. And that's when we fell in love with it. And that was just mind-blowing. I couldn't

stop cramming buffalo mozzarella in my face and just could not stop eating pizza after pizza after pizza.

**Peninsula Foodist:** What is the most popular dish on your menu, and what makes it so special?

**Annie Stoll:** Our biggest seller is the margherita pizza and the meatballs.

**'We just want to share our love and passion for what we do with people, and hopefully they dig it.'**

CRAIG STOLL

**Craig Stoll:** They're everything you want in a meatball. A lot of our food, we don't trick it out. There's no green peppercorns or lemongrass or black truffle or something funky in there. It's a classic meatball. It's three meats and onions and breadcrumbs and ricotta, and it's braised in a great tomato sauce with pork ribs in it to give it a little more depth of flavor. For the margherita pizza, it's the crust that I went on about at great length, and it's a great tomato sauce, which is not really tomato sauce. It's just raw canned tomato that's got a little olive oil in it, teeny touch of raw garlic in it and salt, which is how margarita pizza is made, and some good fresh local mozzarella from Belfiore in Berkeley and some torn basil.

**Annie Stoll:** Only a couple of pieces.

**Craig Stoll:** Some people get upset that there's not more basil.

**Annie Stoll:** There's not supposed to be.

**Craig Stoll:** You get two torn pieces. That's the way they do it in Naples. It's not a topping; it's an aromatic.

**Peninsula Foodist:** Are there any upcoming changes at Pizzeria Delfina?

**Craig Stoll:** At the end of the month, we will get the first batch of our custom flour blend that we had developed for us. It's an all-American grown, organic, custom milled flour from Central Milling that we're switching to. We were using Caputo that is milled in Naples, but they get their grain from all over the world. They get North American grain, they get grain from Russia and Ukraine and all over the place, and then they mill it there in Naples, which we visited a few times, and then they ship back out across the world, so the carbon footprint is ridiculous. It's worse than importing water from Italy, which we don't do.

**Peninsula Foodist:** How will the change in flour impact the taste?

**Craig Stoll:** It'll be better. It's

incredible. Because of the protein content, we're able to push the hydration even more than it is, which will result in a lighter, more developed edge (cornicione). Also, this adds a little bit higher ash content, so a little more whole wheat in it. It's not a whole wheat crust, but there is more whole wheat in it, which is going to even develop the flavor more.

**Peninsula Foodist:** What do you aim to achieve with Pizzeria Delfina?

**Annie Stoll:** As cliché as it is, to have a place for people to go, home away from home, where they feel really taken care of by authentic, genuine, knowledgeable service.

**Craig Stoll:** Delfina itself was never meant to be a destination restaurant: It was meant to be a neighborhood trattoria. At all our places, really, but I could speak most to Delfina because that was our baby. We've got people who had their first date there and are now married with kids, and they come back and they want to show their kids where they first dated, and then their kids come and work for us. People work for us and meet and get married and they start their own restaurants. But it's such a human business, and it's full of so much more than business transactions. Feeding people is a really intimate thing, and the way we practice it gives us so many connections beyond the guests, with our vendors and our farms and our staff. It's a good life. It makes our lives rich. And I think it does the same for the people who get to know us...We just want to share our love and passion for what we do with people, and hopefully they dig it.

**Peninsula Foodist:** Are you planning to open more Pizzeria Delfinas?

**Annie Stoll:** We've never sat down and said, "We're going to open seven restaurants in this many years." Everything just has come organically, like opportunities and things like that. If the right opportunity came around, we may. Craig's extremely creative and gets extremely excited about different projects. Me, I'm like, "I'm 60, and it might be time to slow down a little bit." So we're not completely on the same page. We're not sure. ■

Email Food Editor  
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**Pizzeria Delfina**  
Burlingame, 1444  
Burlingame Ave., Burlingame;  
650-288-1041. Open Monday  
through Thursday 5-8 p.m.,  
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