**Atherton resident, baseball legend Willie Mays dies at 93**

Beloved Giant forever remembered for ‘The Catch’ and so much more

By Clay Lambert

Willie Mays, arguably the greatest baseball player of all time, died Tuesday at the age of 93. Mays had called Atherton home for the last four decades of his life.

Nicknamed the “Say Hey Kid,” Mays enthralled baseball fans across the country from his first season as a New York Giant in 1951 — when he was named the National League Rookie of the Year — to his retirement after 23 years of often unforgettable baseball. He was named Most Valuable Player twice (in 1954 and again as a San Francisco Giant in 1965.)

“My father has passed away peacefully and among loved ones,” said Michael Mays, the baseball great’s son, in a press release issued by the San Francisco Giants late Tuesday afternoon. “I want to thank you all from the bottom of my broken heart for the unwavering love you have shown him over the years. You have been his life’s blood.”

Born May 6, 1931 in Westfield, Alabama to Ann and Willie Howard Mays Sr., Mays played baseball with his father on an industrial-league team in Birmingham, according to MLB. By 15, he was already playing in the Negro Leagues for the Birmingham Black Barons. The Boston Red Sox and New York Yankees scouted Mays, but were reluctant to sign Black players. They passed on Mays, even though Jackie Robinson already had broken the sport’s color line, according to MLB. However, in 1950, the New York Giants scouts had no reservations and signed Mays, according to various reports.

Mays is regularly talked about among the greatest baseball players of all time. He holds the all-time record for putouts by an outfielder, he won 12 Gold Gloves in center field and he appeared in 24 All-Star games. He was the league-leader in home runs and stolen bases four times each — and

Willie Mays is shown “the key” to the Willie Mays Ballpark by Bob Hellman before the opening ceremony for the Homer Field Willie Mays Ballpark. Rene Anderson, Willie’s long-time assistant sits to his left.

Q&A: How the Bay Area shaped Tony winner, Menlo Park-raised Will Brill

By Eleanor Raab

Will Brill, 37, a Menlo Park-raised actor, took home a Tony Award for best performance by an actor in a featured role during a Sunday, June 16, awards ceremony.

His first-time Tony win was for his role as Reg, a bassist who struggles with sobriety and pending divorce in the play “Stereophonic.” The play, which received several other Tony nods including Best New Play, was written by David Adjmi, directed by Daniel Aukin and features music from Arcade Fire’s Will Butler.

Stereophonic is set in the Bay Area in 1976 and follows a band on the verge of its big break as its members record an album and deal with issues in their personal lives. Critics have compared the tumultuous band portrayed in Stereophonic to the real lives of Fleetwood Mac.

In an interview with The Almanac on Tuesday, June 18, Brill reflected on the path that led him to his first Tony win, the influence that growing up in the Peninsula had on his theater career.

As a young actor, Brill was able to practice his theater craft at local organizations like San Jose Children’s Musical Theater, Palo Alto Children’s Theater and Peninsula Youth Theater, as well as in the theater departments of the several local high schools he attended.

Besides Broadway plays, you can see Brill in Netflix’s “The OA,” Prime Video’s “The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel,” and the historical romance mini-series “Fellow Travelers.”

The following interview has been edited for length and clarity.

**The Almanac:** How are you feeling in the wake of your first Tony win?

**Brill:** I am still recuperating. I got to bed very, very early on Monday morning, and I’m still kind of letting it all land on me. I have to take my Tony award to the theater today for a photo shoot, and I have to send it off to get engraved so it’s in a bag in my mailbox. It’s been there since I got home. It’s really trippy to keep thinking like, “oh, there’s a Tony Award in this apartment somewhere.” I’m fielding, just like so many congrats and DMs and voicemails. ... I’m really comfortable being an effusive, affectionate person, but receiving praise and accolades and affection is not my strong suit. So I’m trying to receive it all, but ... it’s a challenge.

**Q:** You first started working on Stereophonic a number of years ago, in 2015 or 2016, is that correct?

**A:** That’s right. I met the playwright, David Adjmi in 2015 when he had done the very first workshop with actors for it, which was at New Dramatists in Manhattan. I met him afterwards at a cafe, but I didn’t start working on the show until the following February. But he did say to me in the cafe ... out of the blue: “I have a feeling you’re gonna be in this play.” Which was weird because he had never seen me act before, and ... didn’t know who I was and didn’t know I existed until like five minutes earlier. So then I workshoped the play in 2016, but then I didn’t workshop it again until last year when I did a reading of it.

**Q:** How has it been to watch the evolution of the play, cast and the crew over time?

**A:** It’s been exciting but also heartbreaking at times. I mean, it’s been the same creative team, somehow magically has
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The Almanac  AlmanacNews.com  June 21, 2024
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Howard Young, Portola Valley’s longtime public works director, is leaving

The announcement about Young’s departure was met with shock and speculation from community members

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

After 22 years with Portola Valley, Public Works Director Howard Young is leaving his role at the end of June, but there isn’t a clear explanation about why he is departing. He joins other recent staffers who left their roles recently, which helped spark a restructuring effort.

Portola Valley Town Manager Sharif Etman announced the change during a May 29 Town Council meeting. Portola Valley has experienced a turnover rate of nearly 70% in 2023, according to a town staff report. The announcement about Young’s departure was met with shock and speculation from community members that he was fired or laid off, which they expressed in public comments to the Town Council.

The town nor Young have responded to The Almanac’s questions about the reason for Young’s departure.

“I am very disappointed to find out about Howard’s departure. What a huge loss for the town in so many ways,” wrote resident Mark Paris, who serves on the Public Works Committee, in a public comment. “Not knowing the details, can anything be done to reverse this? What is happening to this town and how can we lose someone who is part of the fabric of our community?”

Etman announced during a June 12 council meeting that the public works director position would be turned into a town engineer position as part of the reorganization of the town.

See HOWARD YOUNG, page 12

Spot the traveling bonsai truck across the Bay Area

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Bonsai here today. Gone tomorrow,” reads a sign in bold red paint along the exit of Highway 280 in Portola Valley. Danny Marrone runs a roadside bonsai business out of his truck and can be spotted on the side of highways throughout the Bay Area.

“It’s a creation that you see grow, bloom, live and survive. It’s an art,” said Marrone. “People come to buy a tree to cheer themselves up, some come with a love for trees already.”

Every spring and summer, he loads his truck with over 2,000 bonsai trees and travels from Santa Clarita in Southern California up to the Peninsula to sell his creations. He said the bonsai trees thrive in the Bay Area climate.

Spotting Marrone’s truck is a treasure as his location is never set in stone. He sets up his truck a few days out of the week and has been spotted in Portola Valley, Half Moon Bay, Redwood City, Los Gatos and San Jose. Danny said he gets the most customers when he’s stationed off of Alpine Road and Highway 280 in Portola Valley. He typically opens his shop Wednesday through Sunday from noon to 8 p.m.

The 15-year-old business was started by his late brother Steve Marrone, who died eight years ago from lung cancer. Danny has been keeping up the business in memory of his brother, who taught him the art of creating bonsai. He’s been selling trees for 10 years. Danny explained that the most difficult part of creating a bonsai tree is “propagating the plant and getting them to survive.” He also warns that the trees don’t survive in environments with manmade heaters — something many bonsai owners are unaware of.

Every one of Danny’s customers is given a walkthrough on proper care and maintenance of the trees. A detailed sign is displayed with instructions on watering, pruning, temperature and transplanting.

“You have to love them, nurture them and give them a lot of TLC,” said Danny.

The truck is stocked with various types of trees including

See BONSAI, page 12

Menlo Park residents joyously celebrate Juneteenth

Menlo Park residents, alongside Mayor Cecilia Taylor, gathered for an afternoon full of food, live music, cultural entertainment and joy as they celebrated Juneteenth on Saturday, June 15. Attendees learned traditional Congolese dances from Muisi-kongo Malonga, heard hit songs from black artists performed by Darrey Williams and band and listened to a spoken word performance by Deaidre White.

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See BONSAI, page 12
COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Fourth annual Ladera LGBT+ Pride and Juneteenth celebration, June 22

Ladera’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion committee and Ladera Community Church will host its fourth annual Ladera LGBT+ Pride and Juneteenth celebration on Saturday, June 22, from 11 a.m.-3 p.m.

The parade starts from the T-intersection of La Mesa and La Cuesta drives. After the parade there will be music, board games and a food track on the patio at Ladera Community Church beginning around 11:45 a.m.

For information on marching in the parade or volunteering during the event, email peter.sass@gmail.com and copy ketzal@ladera.org.

More information can be found at ladera.org/event/4th-annual-ladera-lgbtq-pride-and-juneteenth-celebration.

— Angela Swartz

Menlo Park City School District recognizes teachers

Over 20 staff members, volunteers and retiring staff were recognized by the Menlo Park City School District for their outstanding service and dedication to the district. The school board presented the 2024 Menlo Park School District - District Service Recipients to parents, teachers and staff at all district campuses and the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation.

At Encinal Elementary School, the President’s Award was given to Allison Carlson. The Honorary Service Award was awarded to Francesca Baragüello, Lisa Buda, Kinga Fern, Allisn Jagtiani and Leah Wolf. Laura Wiggs received the Continuing Service Award.

Hillview Middle School’s Sarah Sobel and Sarah Thayer were awarded the President’s Award. The Honorary Service Award was given to Kara Connelly and Joyce Wong. For the Continuing Service Award, Nick Fogel, Aimee Mathenia, Emily Robinson and Nora Singer were recognized. The Golden Hawk Award was given to Amy Beim.

At Laurel Elementary School, Erin Reuther and Melitta Stevens were given the President’s Award. The Honorary Service Award recognized Leanne Breckenridge, Catherine Gillis, Cassandra Loftus, Felicia McGrew, Barbara Vu-Nguyen, and Joyce Wong-Kamimoto.

Oak Knoll Elementary recognized Merelith Nonnenberg with the President’s Award. Ward Bullard, Bjorn Carey, Katie Davis and Alice Mount received the Honorary Service Award.

Within the Menlo Park-Atherton Education Foundation, Jennifer Bashkin and Suzanne Yonkers were awarded the President’s Award. The Honorary Service Award was presented to Ward Bullard, Ivan Morales and Sam Schroeder. The Continuing Service Award was given to Paige Arata, Krista Rosa and Katie Rottier.

The MPCSF Golden Oak was awarded to retiring teachers and staff, Valerie Cypert, Joanna Dagum, Helga Dinning, Cindy Guerra, Eveline Keman-Gerber, Jennifer Kollmann, Tom Lyons, Carol Mann, Janet Meister, Lori Perri, Richard Vaughan, Sheila Warren and Julia Williams.

Palo Alto student awarded at National History Day contest

Menlo School student and Palo Alto resident Aaron Widjaja was awarded third place at the National History Day National Contest held in College Park, Maryland from June 9-13. Widjaja created a historical paper project titled “The Golden Age of Buddhism: How Imperial Patronage in the Early Tang Dynasty Facilitated Buddhism’s Ascendancy in China.”

The 2024 contest theme was “Turning Points in History” and more than a million students around the globe competed in local, state and national levels. 540 historians and education professionals served as judges for the contest. More than 100 students received cash prizes between $250 and $2,000.

For more on the contest, go to nhd.org/en/contest/national-contest.

— Jennifer Yashkoshi

Patrick Palmer, a GIS analyst for the city of Menlo Park, works on the new GIS Hub.

New GIS tool offers maps of safest bike routes, city capital improvement projects in Menlo Park

By Eleanor Raab

Have you ever wondered who provides your sewer services, when your street is scheduled to be swept, what average daily traffic volumes are on streets near you or when the sidewalk in front of your house was last replaced? Menlo Park residents can now find the answer to these questions and more on Menlo Park’s new GIS Hub.

The new website, which was launched in early June, serves as a repository of public GIS data for the city of Menlo Park. GIS stands for Geographic Information Systems, a system that allows data to be created, analyzed and visualized to help make geographical or spatial queries.

Residents and other interested parties can now search through and download dozens of GIS datasets from the city. These datasets include: zoning maps of the city, a map of safe routes for biking and walking to school, the locations of stop signs, a map of citations issued by the Menlo Park Police Department, a map of the city’s capital improvement projects and their completion status, a map of current and pending development projects, a map of parcel boundaries and more.

Patrick Palmer, a GIS analyst, and Whit Loy, Menlo Park’s enterprise application manager, started creating the Menlo Park GIS Hub about a year and a half ago, after being inspired by other public data portals that they saw at a GIS conference.

“One of the driving factors for creating the hub was the need to fill a request for data. There’s this constant need for more information from our residents and regionally,” Loy said.

Though the data already existed and many of the maps and applications had previously been created, they were often hard to find as they were scattered throughout various project-specific city web pages.

“With this public hub, Loy and Palmer hope to create easier, more equitable access to public city data.”

“We wanted to take all of that cool GIS stuff and centralize it,” said Palmer. “A big part of this has been our open data portal being part of the website. It’s more equitable, anyone with an internet connection can access the data. If we have something online and you’re interested in it, go for it. We implore you to use it.”

Both Loy and Palmer waxed poetic about the immense utility of GIS data for residents, researchers and everyone in between.

“GIS has this preconceived notion of it being a map, but it’s really more of a spatial intelligence tool that allows us to make better decisions based on data,” said Loy. “People are thinking, ‘How can I use this public data of what’s around me to help make better decisions in my daily lives?’ How are my kids going to bike to school? What’s the safest route for them, etcetera.”

Palmer said that several student research groups from University of California at Berkeley, Stanford University...
Menlo Park City Council works to finalize environmental justice, safety elements

By Eleanor Raab

At its meeting on Tuesday, June 18, the Menlo Park City Council held a study session to review the drafts of the new environmental justice element and updated safety element, which focus on protecting residents in Belle Haven from environmental hazards. These two elements are being created and updated respectively as a part of Menlo Park’s housing element update process in order to comply with state regulations.

At the meeting, public commenters and city council members alike emphasized accountability and clarity around prioritization. Staff were asked to include language in the elements that ensures the city will follow through with the programs outlined in the elements. The public and council members also asked that the city’s budget reflect this commitment to environmental justice.

Council members Betsy Nash and Maria Doerr, as well as Mayor Cecilia Taylor, expressed the desire to see more information about indoor air quality, cooling centers and tenant assistance included in the environmental justice element.

In considering the updated safety element, there was a focus on improved seismic safety, in addition to the updates already suggested around wildfire and climate resilience. Mayor Taylor also brought up looking into developing biosafety standards for biotechnology firms operating near housing developments, after the topic was brought up at the city council’s May 21 meeting.

The environmental justice element is a new requirement from the state, and this is Menlo Park’s first time creating one. The purpose of an environmental justice element is to provide a roadmap for the city to address the unique public health risks, such as sea level rise, unstable housing, pollution, air quality, food deserts, heat islands, flooding and more that are present in “underserved communities.” The environmental justice element also aims to bolster civic engagement in these underserved communities.

In Menlo Park, the communities of Belle Haven and the Bayfront areas north of Highway 101 are defined as “underserved communities,” according to state criteria. Menlo Park’s history of segregation, redlining and other institutionalized inequalities has led to disproportionately worse outcomes in the Belle Haven and Bayfront neighborhoods.

The safety element is a section of the general plan that identifies risks in the community and potential strategies for mitigation. The safety element update is focused on addressing new requirements from the state, such as climate change adaptation and resilience, sea level rise, wildfire hazards and community evacuation routes. The last time the city updated its safety element was in 2013.

Former Atherton Police Chief, City Manager Dick Moore dies

By Claire Manuel

Richard “Dick” Lincoln Moore, Atherton’s former police chief and city manager, died peacefully on May 28 at his Sun City Lincoln Hills community home near Sacramento. He was 86.

Moore served as Atherton’s police chief from 1976 to when he retired in 1993. Uniquely, he also took on the role of city manager in 1988 to 1993, according to his obituary.

“Richard was a true gentleman with a warm and kind spirit,” said Atherton Council member Elizabeth Lewis in an email. “He always had a smile and willingness to help... He loved Atherton and loved to serve. He even threw his hat in the ring to run for Atherton City Council (in 2008) before deciding to move to Lincoln where he quickly became involved in public service. I’ve known his daughter Elizabeth Hammock for many years and admire her greatly. My condolences go out to all of Dick’s family at this time of loss.”

Born May 15, 1938, in Whittier, California, Moore earned his bachelor’s and master’s degrees from Notre Dame de Namur College in Belmont. He then served in the U.S. Army Reserve for six years.

Moore worked in the Atherton police force from 1965 until his retirement.

In 1987, Moore was also president of the California Peace Officers Association after being an active member throughout his career. Following this, he was appointed California Peace Officers Memorial Commission by Governor George Deukmejian. After retirement, Moore and his wife Patricia Moore moved to Lincoln in 2007. There, he served on the Placer County Officers Memorial Commission.

In 1988 to 1993, according to his obituary, Moore served as Atherton’s police chief and city manager, died peacefully on May 28 at his Sun City Lincoln Hills community home near Sacramento. He was 86.

Moore was appointed California Police Officers Memorial Commission by Governor George Deukmejian. After retirement, Moore and his wife Patricia Moore moved to Lincoln in 2007. There, he served on the Placer County Officers Memorial Commission.

At the study session, public commenters and council members asked that the text in the environmental justice element build in accountability for the city to ensure that proposed programs are actually implemented.

“I would love to see us make sure we’re focusing on, as we move forward with the environmental justice element, specific metrics that are numeric in some way that we can track and say how far along are we to reaching our goals,” said Doerr.

Pam Jones, a longtime resident of Belle Haven, said that the city has studied the needs of Belle Haven residents over and over again, but no actionable progress has been seen in the over 30 years since the first community needs assessment in 1993. See COUNCIL, page 10
Menlo Park police run DUI checkpoint: find six unlicensed, zero intoxicated drivers

Despite few citations, the department feels they were able to provide ‘priceless’ education

By Arden Margulis

On Friday, June 14, Menlo Park Police ran a driving under the influence and license checkpoint which cited six people for driving without a license and found zero intoxicated people.

The checkpoint took place on Middlefield Road near Menlo-Atherton High School from 8 p.m.-2 a.m.

During the checkpoint, 657 people were stopped and 29 were sent to secondary screening. Of those 29, 10 were given field sobriety tests, of which none failed, and those 29, 10 were given field sobriety tests, of which none failed, and were drinking, but none over the legal limit so it seems people are drinking more responsibly.

“We had one individual who was very close to the legal limit and didn’t think he was. It was an eye opener for him,” he said. “That kind of education is priceless. It doesn’t take much to be intoxicated.”

“We were also able to keep the roads clear of unlicensed drivers; these people are involved in collisions don’t have insurance, and are a really serious problem. People driving without licenses need to be held accountable,” he added.

Officers only screen a portion of drivers in order to limit disruptions to drivers.

“It is a random stop so we start out by stopping 1 car out of every 10 and as traffic dies down, we will increase it,” said Adair.

For the car that is stopped, Adair said, “We ask the driver for their license and if they have been drinking, if everything is good, we send them on their way, otherwise they go to secondary screening.”

Conducting a checkpoint is a resource-intensive operation; according to Adair, 12 department employees are needed, including officers and civilian staff. Adair said, “The checkpoints are funded by a grant from the Office of Traffic Safety and we do at least one annually.”

“It is a big project but it is something that is near and dear to my heart. When I was in college, I was hit head on by a drunk driver. I had pretty major injuries: I broke my jaw and my hand was injured badly. My car was totaled,” he added.

Portola Valley staff plans to reorganize to iron out budget woes

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Portola Valley’s Town Council meeting on June 12 discussed the town’s preliminary budget for 2024-25 and how Town Manager Sharif Etman plans to reorganize the town to bring Portola Valley’s finances back on track.

Portola Valley is currently running at a loss of “$150,000 to $200,000 a month” and if the town runs at this current rate, the town has 26 to 30 months left before money runs out, according to the Finance Committee.

“If we stay at our current run rate, when do we run out of money?” Council member Craig Etman responded that the town has less than three years to get finances in order.

The Town Council voted unanimously to adopt the preliminary budget with amendments to freeze capital improvement program projects until final budget approval in September. Etman is aiming to align with council goals, conserve revenues, recruit and fill vacant positions, provide stability and restore integrity of finances.

The town is now staffers with 17 employees, with plans to have a full staff of 20 full time employees. Expectations for the budget at in account construction in progress, general election costs, committee budgets and a $75,000 sustainability grant. Some $40,000 of the grant will be used for staffing toward sustainability efforts. CIP projects include storm drain repairs, street resurfacing, and more. Newly added projects ask for a used vehicle of $35,000 to use for inspections and travel to meetings and a replacement of the town hall boiler.

Funds for CIP projects are included in the town’s general funds, explained Etman.

Reorganization

Town officials are working on reorganization of staff. The makeup of the planning and building department is still in the works as they evaluate how many staff members and consultants they need as well as how to recruit and keep a permanent director.

Terrence Grindall is currently serving as the interim planning director.

Portola Valley’s Troop 4064 instills confidence and bravery in girls

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Portola Valley Scouting America Troop 4064 has 16 girl troopers, many of whom will be achieving the highest scout ranking — Eagle Scout. In May, Boy Scouts of America announced they would be rebranding to Scouting America Troop 4064 has 16 girl troopers, many of whom will be achieving the highest scout ranking — Eagle Scout. In May, Boy Scouts of America announced they would be rebranding to Scouting America Troop 4064 has 16 girl troopers, many of whom will be achieving the highest scout ranking — Eagle Scout. In May, Boy Scouts of America announced they would be rebranding to Scouting America Troop 4064 has 16 girl troopers, many of whom will be achieving the highest scout ranking — Eagle Scout. In May, Boy Scouts of America announced they would be rebranding to Scouting America.

Troop 4064 is one of many girl troops that are quickly growing in size within the San Francisco Peninsula. Ranking up as a scout means performing hours of community service, serving in the troop, and completing merit badges for activities such as rifle shooting, rock climbing, lifesaving and more. To become an Eagle Scout, members must earn merit badges and complete an Eagle project. Eagle Scouts are between ages 11 and 17.

“Who the new troop was being formed, the scouts in the Portola Valley boys’ Troop 64 were asked to vote whether to continue as an independent troop or to go forward as linked troops with the girls’ troop,” said Dawn Axelrad. “The scouts decided to work together with the new troop. As a result, the new girls’ Troop 4064 was able to benefit from all the experience and traditions of Troop 64.”

Woodside High School senior Jennifer Richter is one of the founding members of Troop 4064. In 2019, Richter and four other girls formed a girls troop, which was later voted to work alongside the boys’ Troop 64. She’s on track to complete her Eagle project by the end of the summer.

The next couple of months Richter will be working on repairing the benches in the Woodside High School’s Green Academy garden. Richter will also be replac- ing the roof of their greenhouse that blew off by a storm a few years ago.

“Without it wasn’t for [the scouts], I would have never learned how to shoot a rifle or I would have never learned fingerprinting,” said Richter.

Camilla Khiai, 14, is another scout that will be reaching Eagle rank in the next two years. She’s only been a scout for a year but has quickly progressed through the ranks.

Scouts are also learning skills that teach them how to be active members of their community along with camping, first aid and other outdoor activities. They have to earn badges for tracking finances, attending town and school board meetings and understanding local issues.

“We know that so much of our world is led by men and when we allow women to step up and take on leadership roles, we see a different approach,” said Karyn Ellis, scoutmaster for Troop 4064. Ellis has witnessed the girls in the troop grow into confident leaders and public speakers who come out of the program with a strong understanding of life. “Our girls are tough and they can handle anything that the guys can do,” she said.

Khiai said when she often tells others ‘I’m a scout’ people will assume Girl Scouts, but the two organizations are very different. Khiai explained that when working alongside the boys troop, she feels there is no stereotypical divide between boys and girls.

“People learn to respect each other and really understand each other. I think that’s a really important life lesson for teenagers and kids to learn,” said Khiai.

Ellis said she plans to “keep the magic going, keep growing it. We are happy to take in anyone who is interested.” More girl troops are being developed across the Peninsula in Menlo Park Burlingame and Mountain View, expanding opportunities for young women.

“They just have no fear, they are all super adventurous, real go-getters,” said Ellis. “To give them this opportunity is so exciting.”

Email Staff Writer Jennifer Yoshikoshi at jyoshikoshi@almanacnews.com.
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**Menlo Park school district approves $124M bond proposal to send voters]**

By Arden Margulis

The Menlo Park City School District’s governing board approved a $124.6 million bond proposal to pay for facilities at its meeting on June 6. The district is seeking the bond to pay for improvements in four areas: school safety and security upgrades, replacing outdated construction, climate resilience and modern technology.

“I went through this, like everyone else, to make sure it captures our critical facility needs. So I feel good about it,” said board President Francesca Segre during the meeting.

The board previously discussed the bond during its April 18 meeting.

“Our facilities require a timely response. We will need the funding as soon as possible,” said Superintendent Kristen Gracia in April. “As soon as possible in the world of bonds is the November 2024 ballot.”

“There is undeniable risk in waiting,” she added during a May 9 meeting.

**Public approval**

For the bond to pass, 55% of voters must vote for it.

In December, the district hired data analytics firm EMC Research for $30,000 to assess voters’ opinions about a potential bond; the firm found that voters were more cost sensitive than in previous years.

EMC surveyed 300 potential voters and found initially, when they were asked to vote, 59% voted yes. After EMC provided additional information about the need for a bond, 62% of respondents said they would vote to approve the bond.

However, when EMC showed these voters some potential arguments against the bond, approval fell to 52%, meaning a coordinated opposition group could sway voters.

School safety and security upgrades

In a flyer mailed out to voters, the district highlighted the need for newer security measures such as access control, intruder detection, and fire alarm upgrades.

They estimate it will cost about $1.4 million for fire alarm upgrades, $654,500 for alarm and security camera upgrades, and roughly $2.5 million for electrified door access and key cards.

According to the district, a battery energy storage system is needed for command areas such as administration offices in case of an emergency.

**Replacing outdated construction**

At the Lower Laurel School campus, at 95 Edge Road in Atherton, buildings were built in 1959 with cinder blocks, following outdated seismic standards. Additionally, according to a lease and purchase agreement to fund grants, the district wants to increase its capacity by 250 units of affordable housing, and seeks to replace them with more modern systems.

The system the district is currently considering would be integrated with the security system and would allow for officials to deliver visual and auditory messages into classrooms during an emergency.

The district wants to add up to 14 electric vehicle charging stations at each school. The district applied for the Peninsula Clean Energy EV charger grant program to help offset the cost. The grant can provide $5,000 per charger to a maximum of $90,000 per site.

**Climate resilience**

According to Gracia, 95% of classrooms do not have air conditioning. Teachers say this can hamper learning.

“It is so uncomfortable teaching in a hot classroom. On the days when it is so hot in the classroom, the kids are not learning. Teachers cannot teach,” said Marisela Ghalramani, a fifth grade Spanish immersion teacher at Laurel School, during public comment at the April 18 board meeting.

The district also wants to add a shade structure at each school but has yet to decide any specifics.

**Modern technology**

The district feels that the current audio visual systems are hurting student learning and seeks to replace them with more modern systems.

The systems the district is considering would be integrated with the security system and would allow for officials to deliver visual and auditory messages into classrooms during an emergency.

The district wants to add up to 14 electric vehicle charging stations at each school. The district applied for the Peninsula Clean Energy EV charger grant program to help offset the cost. The grant can provide $5,000 per charger to a maximum of $90,000 per site.

**Two suspects arrested following a sideshow near Woodside High School**

Police initiated a foot pursuit of the suspects on June 15

By Lisa Moreno

Two suspects from San Francisco were arrested Saturday, June 15, after fleeing the scene of a sideshow near Woodside High School in unincorporated Redwood City, according to a San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office press release.

The sideshow at the intersection of Woodside Road and Alameda de las Pulgas garnered hundreds of spectators, who were reported throwing items at passing cars, the sheriff’s office wrote.

“Not only are sideshows illegal, but they are extremely dangerous for all involved,” according to the press release. “The San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office has a zero-tolerance policy related to sideshows and is actively working to identify others who were involved in Saturday’s sideshow.”

Police were dispatched to the scene around 3:30 p.m. when multiple cars and people fled. Police pursued two individuals on foot and caught up to them at the ARCO gas station on Woodside Road and Santa Clara Avenue.

One individual entered the car of a person pumping gas, but police quickly arrested the 22-year-old and 23-year-old suspects.

The San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office is working to identify people involved in Saturday’s sideshow and asks that anyone with information contact Sgt. Doug Richardson at drichardson@smcgov.org or 650-363-4911.

It is Embarcadero Media Foundation’s policy to withhold the names of those arrested for most crimes until the District Attorney’s Office has determined that there is sufficient evidence to file charges in the case.

**COUNCIL continued from page 7**

“The commonality is about funding,” she said. “We now have the opportunity to fully address significant issues that have affected the neighborhood. The commitment needed from the city is to seek funding in our budget and through matching funds.”

“My hope is that you will stay invested (in environmental justice), because a lot of these things that we’re bringing to you are action issues, right?” said Violet Wulf-Saena, executive director of Climate Resilient Communities, “I think it’s time to respond to that.”

A city staff report says that staff will explore options to strengthen language around the city’s commitment and accountability to environmental justice, but recommends that the language “be cautious of potentially overpromising and under-delivering as this could result in decreased community morale, support and trust.”

**Funding**

Another big question that came up during the study session is where the funding for these additional programs is going to come from, given that the city is projected to run an $800,000 deficit in the next fiscal year.

“I would be curious to hear from staff, maybe not right now, but how the budget would actually work to get money from the general fund, given our budget constraints,” said Nash.

In order to get some funding from sources outside the city’s general fund, Taylor, Nash and Doerr expressed support for using approximately $1 million from the Bayfront Mitigation Fund to support environmental justice element programs. The staff report also suggests that matching grant funds from the city’s Vision Zero action plan and urban forestry efforts may also help boost financial feasibility.

“Funding and staffing can be constraints to overcome but should not be seen as insurmountable barriers,” says the staff report.

**Community engagement**

The latest updates to the environmental justice and safety elements come as the result of a lengthy public outreach and engagement process. Over the last few months, city staff have attended and hosted at least five community events to talk about the environmental justice and safety elements, in addition to disseminating materials to residents via emails, flyers and social media.

Priorities in the draft environmental justice program were determined by feedback from members of the underserved communities that the element is trying to strengthen.

The community said that improving air quality, preserving open space, building affordable housing, reducing pollution, providing more bike and pedestrian infrastructure and educating the community about environmental justice issues were top priorities for the environmental justice element.

In the interest of keeping the Belle Haven community involved, this meeting was the first time a satellite viewing location of the City Council meeting was offered at the new Belle Haven Community Campus.

“I want to thank you for having the satellite at BHCC,” said resident Pam Jones. “That is just really powerful and helps the community to know that we really are being included, and that what we have to say is valuable.”

Doerr said that continuing to have meetings at the community campus, on this topic and others, could help keep the council and city accountable to the needs of that community.

“Having these meetings moving forward in the campus center, I think would be wonderful to see,” she said.

After feedback is implemented by city staff, the elements will tentatively be considered for adoption in fall of this year.

Keep track of adoption progress for these two elements at menlo park.gov/housinglement.

**LET’S DISCUSS:** Read the latest local news headlines and comment on articles at AlmanacNews.com.
Portola Valley Theatre Conservatory announces new executive director

By Claire Manuel

Maddie N. Zdeblick has been named Portola Valley Theatre Conservatory’s incoming executive director, according to a June 12 press release. Zdeblick, a Bay Area native, has worked with the Portola Valley Theater Conservatory (PVT) on several projects, including Eagle Scout projects. She plans to continue Portola Valley Theatre Conservatory’s mission of promoting educational equity, disability justice, and innovating new theatrical forms in partnership with learners of all ages and abilities, according to the release.

She will officially take over on Sept. 1, for the fall semester. In the meantime, she will use the summer to plan for the upcoming semester alongside the current Executive Director Noëlle GM Gibbs.

Email Editorial Intern Claire Manuel at cmanuel@rwcpulse.com.

GIS TOOL
continued from page 6

and even the Boy Scouts have requested GIS data from the city to help with housing issues, entrepreneurial ideas and Eagle Scout projects.

Menlo Park residents and visitors can also access and contribute to the city’s public GIS data through an application called ACT Menlo Park. This application helps Menlo Park residents report non-emergency issues such as potholes, broken street signs, traffic enforcement issues or tree issues to city staff.

The application uses GIS technology to track these issues. Users can even see maps of reported and resolved issues within the city. Data about the locations of recurring issues can even help the city make long range planning decisions.

“The system will track over time the condition of a street versus the cost of replacement and hopefully try to guide us to make better decisions,” said Loy. “You can see you’ve spent this amount of money to fix X amount of potholes, so there might be a larger issue with the street. You might want to look at repaving it.”

Palmer said that the ongoing data that the city gains from GIS technology also helps the city write more efficient work orders. “You can tell if a sign has been up in the field, maybe for like five years, it might be getting kind of faded. And without even having to go out of the office, you could be like, alright, it could be time to make a replacement on that,” he said.

Beyond the public GIS Hub and ACT Menlo Park app, Menlo Park uses GIS to support a wide variety of city operations. The city, like many other municipalities in the Bay Area, uses GIS technology to help analyze patterns and make informed decisions on spatially related problems, such as urban planning, emergency management, environmental management, transportation planning, tax records and other public services.

Several big projects, which will be heavily supported by GIS technology, are coming up in the future for Menlo Park.

As part of the city’s Vision Zero action plan to prevent traffic deaths and injuries in the city, Menlo Park will be creating a Vision Zero dashboard to track upgrades to street safety, and using other GIS data to track car crash locations and statistics.

Vision Zero will look at the granular data collected from each crash incident to help design safer streets.

“They’re not just looking at the like, where was the crash, but at what happened,” said Loy. “And what was the outcome? They’re looking many levels deep in order, again, to make policy decisions and funding decisions.”

Menlo Park staff plan to continue expanding the amount of data that is available to the public.

“It’s always expanding,” said Palmer. “We’re just trying to build more … increasing the options for dashboards or apps that residents can use. And I’m sure there’s always questions that we don’t have immediate answers for, but maybe that’s how some of these solutions can come about.”

Access the tool at data.menlopark.gov.

Email Staff Writer Eleanor Raab at eraab@almanacnews.com.
Sheriff’s office to host anonymous fireworks buyback event in Redwood City ahead of Fourth of July

Buyback events are taking place as part of a county-wide crackdown on fireworks violations.

By Eleanor Raab

The San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office, in conjunction with the Redwood City, Menlo Park, and East Palo Alto Police Departments, will be holding an anonymous fireworks buyback event on Saturday, June 29, from 11 a.m.-2 p.m. at 690 Broadway St. in Redwood City.

This will be the third of three anonymous buyback events hosted by the sheriff’s office in 2024.

By turning in illegal fireworks, residents can receive up to $200 in cash, “with no questions asked,” according to a county press release. The amount of money that attendees receive for turning in fireworks and explosives will be calculated by weight.

“Sheriff’s office bomb technicians and fire personnel from partner agencies are on site at each buyback event to ensure the safe handling and disposal of all fireworks and explosives collected,” said Gretchen Spiker, the director of communications for the sheriff’s office.

The first anonymous fireworks buyback event this year, which took place in Half Moon Bay, resulted in the collection of 51 pounds of illegal fireworks, dozens of mortars and 24 explosive devices, according to the sheriff’s office.

The sheriff’s office hosted its first buyback event in 2023, which resulted in the collection of about 400 pounds of fireworks. Beyond fireworks, the material collected last year included military grade smoke devices, about 400 pounds of illegal fireworks, 51 pounds of illegal fireworks, dozens of mortars and 24 explosive devices.

The task force calculated the sum by looking at costs in the area, accounting for the benefits the county already provides, for a family of two working adults and one child. Task force members determined the hourly wage should be $29.76 but rounded it up to $30, according to a report presented to the supervisors.

Only two county job classifications, Office Assistant I and Medical Services Assistant I, were paid below $30 an hour. The eight employees in those positions will receive an increase as soon as the next pay period.

There are 71 other employees who are paid below $30 an hour. Departments are increasing these employees’ salary steps without altering the annual budget, according to a county press release.

The increase in wages also increases the county’s obligation to pay approximately $28,000.

The minimum wage for all employees in the state is $16 an hour but many cities in San Mateo County have greater. The average state and local government worker is paid $37.53 an hour, according to data released by the Bureau of Labor Statistics in December 2023.

The salary increases do not apply to “extra-help” classifications, which provide temporary employment, according to the county.

HOWARD YOUNG

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During public comment, residents came forward to express their appreciation for Young’s two decades of service to Portola Valley. They showed disappointment in his departure and concerns about the future of the public service department.

“I dread the consequences of his departure. This is an ominous legacy for the town manager and, by proxy, the Town Council,” said Portola Valley resident Barb Eckstein. “I urge both of them to listen to the people who live here and love this town to honor and respect hard work and loyalty, to put pride aside, admit there’s been a mistake and reinstate Howard.”

In a statement to The Almanac, Etman said there are plans to have an interim fill the public works director role while recruiting for a town engineer. Young’s anticipated last day will be June 30, according to Etman.

“The town loves and wishes to honor Howard for all he has done to create the sparkle in Portola Valley which the whole Peninsula has learned to treasure,” said Council member Mary Hufty. “Change is hard on everyone but it is also the only constant.”

Young served as interim town manager upon Jeremy Dennis’ departure in March 2023. Young continued his public works role at the same time as filling in as town manager. Etman filled the town manager role permanently in August 2023.

A celebration will be held for Young’s service to the town, according to Etman.

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

BONSAI

continued from page 5

Junipers, Fukien tea trees, Chinese elms, Hawaiian umbrellas and boxwood. The bonsai trees range from $15-$150 depending on their size.

Danny said it took lots of traveling and trial and error to find the locations that he now regularly sets up shop. The locations were chosen based on how easily people can drive up, park and walk up to them.

After a decade of running the business, Danny has met a lot of strong friendships. He said he frequently gets repeat customers and some who bring their bonsai to him for advice on how to care for it.

Danny has traveled as far north as Alaska and all the way to Hawaii to sell his bonsai trees. He stays in hotels as he travels for months at a time.

“I love my craft and these trees once you start doing them you can realize that they have so much life in them. They’re good company sometimes!” Danny said.

Email Staff Writer Jennifer Yoshikoshi at jyoshikoshi@almanacnews.com.
MENLO PARK FIRE DISTRICT IS A NO FIREWORKS ZONE
Kathryn E. Reitman
February 21, 1950 – June 10, 2024

Kathryn “Kit” Elliott Reitman passed away peacefully surrounded by Family at the age of 74 on June 10th, 2024. She was born on February 21, 1950 in Newark, NJ. Kit is a 1968 Graduate of Columbia High School in Maplewood, NJ. She spent a year at Skidmore College and in 1970 transferred to Colgate University as part of the First Female Class to arrive — graduating in 1972 with a concentration in Psychology.

Kit began her graduate work at Stanford University studying for a Masters Degree in Physical Therapy and completing her degree at the University of California, SF.

Kit is the youngest of 3 girls — born to Peg and Raymond Reitman. Kit is the last of Frank Henry Reitman’s Grandchildren to bear the Reitman name.

From 1977-1984 Kit worked at 3 different Physical Therapy Centers and in 1984 she became a Founding Member of the North American Institute of Manual Therapy. Kit was a member of the American Physical Therapy Association (Orthopedic and Private Practice sections), the California Private Practice Special Interest Group, the North American Institute of Manual Therapy (which she helped found), and the American Academy of Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists. The North American Institute is an organization of continuing education, developed in order to better the standard of musculoskeletal rehabilitation.

Reitman’s philosophy is that everyone is a unique human being. Therapy is therefore very individual and is developed around each person’s needs.

Kit is a beloved Sister, cherished Daughter & Granddaughter, devoted Aunt, Cousin, Friend, Mentor and lover of animals and of her many cats and her Llamas Jackson, Jidi and Raj. She was also a professional bridge player and a voracious reader: Always sharing the best book recommendations with her friends and family. She was an avid outdoor enthusiast and tresured The Reitman Family lake house in Maine, where she vacationed every summer — despite her 45 year residence in Northern CA. Kit will be remembered mostly for her beautiful smile, stunning beauty, infectious laugh, brilliant mind, zest and passion for life, extraordinary baking & cooking skills and her outsized love of the outdoors. She valued a good laugh and was notably funny herself and was a wonderful conversationist. Her personal mantra was: “Hike, swim, ski, kayak and travel!” An exceptional and determined wonderful conversationist. Her personal mantra was: “Hike, swim, ski, kayak and travel!” An exceptional and determined wonderful conversationist. Her personal mantra was: “Hike, swim, ski, kayak and travel!” An exceptional and determined

And when I was finally asked back, and five of the seven cast members were different from who they had been, I was really scared that the play wouldn’t work in the way that I had foreseen. I was so grateful that I got to work with that group, so I felt very lucky to still be with it.

Q: Does it feel like a full circle moment to win your first Tony for a play set so close to where you grew up?
A: Yeah, absolutely. Getting to think about the Bay Area while working on this show was really special to me. I love the Bay Area so much. I loved growing up here. I actually have a tattoo of California on the back of my right arm that I got two years after that first workshop. I have always loved California, and I’ve always had the thought that I couldn’t act from any city in the world. I really love the Bay, I miss it tremendously all the time.

Q: Critics have compared some of the material in Stereophonic to Fleetwood Mac, and several members of Fleetwood Mac famously went to Menlo-Atherton High School. Did that influence your performance in any way?
A: I’ve thought about it a lot. The Bay has such a very rich, very historical music history. You know, I went to four high schools in the Bay Area because I had an early brush with the legal system in high school, but the second high school I went to... was M-A, where Lindsey and (Stevie) were. ... I know that Joan Baez lived in the Bay for a while...

I’ve thought about that for a long time. I was raised around a lot of that music. And from an early age, I had this awareness of what a special place the Bay Area was. The Bay Area is such a special place for me.

And it was a special place for me. So many great people have lived here. And so I felt like I was writing a love letter to my city.

Q: Would you tell me a little bit more about your early experiences in theater and around the Menlo Park and Palo Alto area?
A: When I was five, my family had a Thanksgiving dinner at a restaurant with the whole extended family there. At some point during Thanksgiving dinner, I got on a table and out of nowhere, just announced to everyone that I was going to sing my song. It was some song that I had learned in my kindergarten class. And my parents were like, oh, he should be in children’s theatre.

And so they took me to San Jose, where San Jose Children’s Musical Theater is still. And I was in a production of The Velveteen Rabbit and met a couple of kids who became my best friends for life. After that, I just kept wanting to do musicals. And God bless my parents, they drove me half an hour there and half an hour back like six days a week for years until I got my driver’s license. ... I did probably 20 musicals at SJCMTC, and met other guys who would go on to be on Broadway. Alex Brightman and I did a bunch of shows together, and Nick Spangler was a buddy out there.

And then I started branching out and did a show at Palo Alto Children’s Theater. Danya Taymor also did shows there and Danya is now directing. She just won a Tony for direction of “The Outsiders,” which is next door to the theater that I’m in doing Stereophonic.

Actually Danya’s theater teacher at Paly, was this woman named Kristen Lear, who is now the theater teacher at Gunn High School where I did my senior year of high school. And Kristen brought 50 students from Gunn out to New York a couple of months ago and they all got to see both my show and Danya’s show, which was really, really special... a very lovely way to keep in touch with the hometown.

Q: Is there anything else you want to say about your experience working on Broadway or winning a Tony?
A: In no particular order, I would like to thank — from San Jose Children’s Musical Theater — Kayvon Kordestani, Doug Santanta, Shannon Self, Kevin Hauge and Mark Phillips. These people really believed in me and gave me incredible license to go really far.

And then my high school theater teachers were Barry Woodruff at Woodside High School. And then really the king of kings, the guy who really convinced me that I could be an actor, was Jim Shelby at Gunn High School.

Actually when my friends and I all graduated high school and moved to New York, me, Dan Moyer and Grayson Defeux, we started a theater company called Shelby company because we all loved Jim so much.

Those people still live incredibly, incredibly large in my brain. And without them, and without the patience of my brothers and the insane support of my parents, I for sure would not be living in New York and winning Tony Awards. I’ve been super lucky to be championed by some really cool, really talented people.

Email Staff Writer Eleanor Raab at eraub@almanacnews.com.
a remarkable feat of power and speed.

Mays will be remembered for his offensive production, but a single defensive play assured that he would live forever in the minds of baseball fans. Game 1 of the 1954 World Series was tied in the top of the eighth with two runners on when Cleveland Indians’ slugger Vic Wertz hit a long drive that looked at first like a home run to break the tie. Mays, playing shallow as usual, sprinted with his back to the ball, catching it over his shoulder an estimated 460 feet from the plate. In one motion, he whirled and fired the ball back into the infield. Larry Doby, who had to turn back and tag up at second base, was forced to stop at third. The Giants went on to win the game and sweep the World Series that year. Known simply as “The Catch,” the play is considered by acclamation to be one of the greatest defensive plays in the history of the sport.

Major League Baseball Commissioner Rob Manfred said the entire baseball community was mourning the loss.

“All of Major League Baseball is in mourning today,” Manfred said in a statement “Willie Mays took his all-around brilliance from the Birmingham Black Barons of the Negro American League to the historic Giants franchise. From coast to coast in New York and San Francisco, Willie inspired generations of players and fans as the game grew and truly earned its place as our National Pastime.”

Mays was inducted into the Hall of Fame in 1979, in his first year of eligibility, a rarity in the sport.

Mays was a fixture with the Giants even after his retirement. He was often seen at the ballpark and on TV sporting the iconic black cap with SF lettering and he was swarmed by well-wishers wherever he went.

Mays was also a genial presence around Atherton. He was known to give baseballs to trick-or-treaters who walked up the driveway at his Mount Vernon Lane home on Halloween. Atherton’s Homer Field Willie Mays Ballpark in Holbrook-Palmer Park is named in honor of Mays, along with a conference room in the town’s library. He had countless friends on the Peninsula.

A public celebration of Mays’ life will be announced at a later date. Fans who wish to offer their condolences may send letters to the Mays family care of San Francisco Giants, attention Forever 24, 24 Willie Mays Plaza, San Francisco, CA 94107.

Mayor Sarah Wernikoff shared her gratitude for Etman and the work he has done since he started as town manager.

“You’re putting us on a path to integrity of our finances and so without you, we would not have known you, so I appreciate the work that you and your team and the resources that you’re bringing into the community,” said Wernikoff.

BUDGET

and building director and former interim Planning Director Jon Biggs will be returning in July to work on special projects. Etman said the staff aims to have a plan for the planning department in the next two to three months.

The town is also looking into possible revenue generation measures including, user and nexus studies, utility user tax increase, parcel tax, annexation, land sale, impact fees on property developers and becoming a charter town.

“Some of these discussions, I think, could be very quick discussions. Other ones could be rather lengthy, but we really got to pick up every rock, take a look at it, put it back down and see if it works for our town moving forward,” Etman said.

He recommends that the council adopt a preliminary budget with revisions in September for the final budget. The current fiscal year ends on June 30 and a revision on the budget will need to be revisited for 2024-25. He also called for a user fee and Nexus study which will assess the reasonable cost for town services and tax obligations.

Etman also recommends continued engagement with the Finance Committee and to explore a fiscal emergency, which he explains may be declared by the staff in the future. A fiscal emergency would mark a lack of financial support for the town and will be brought back as a resolution to the council.

The presented changes are “new to the town of Portola Valley,” said Etman. “This is kind of a reality check for Portola Valley and we’re not used to that.”

In order to get the town in financial order, Etman is reorganizing the town and examining what roles are necessary. Each change will work toward lowering the town’s budget deficit, he explained.

“We’re losing kind of the small town. What we were here for is open space, for trails and to support nature and to restore our open spaces and that’s not coming through in this budget and our planning structure,” said Huffy in response to the budget presentation.

All of the council members’ concerns are being noted to be considered with the Finance Committee, said Etman.

Residents expressed concerns for the future of the town’s finances and asked for a balanced budget. Others have suggested that town staff ask qualified residents to pitch in when further assistance is needed.

“I’d say that we need to submit a balanced budget and reduce new contracts and halt the projects that bleed money,” said Portola Valley resident Rita Comes, who runs the organization Portola Valley Neighbors United, a volunteer-led group that started in response to Stanford University’s plan to develop land along Alpine Road known as the Wedge, which is opposed.

Council members agreed to freeze any spendings on CIP projects until September to save as much as possible. Council member Judith Hasko asked town staff for a budget scenario planning and a better platform for council members to review the budget to prepare for the decisions they will make for the final budget in September.

“I think we need to be thinking about this in terms of cutting what we can and living with some deficits in the short term,” said Council member JeAl Aaf.

DICK MOORE

Civil Service Commission, Sierra College Bond Oversight Commission, and the city of Lincoln’s Parks and Recreation Committee.

Moore was an avid sports fan and loved to talk about his four grandchildren, according to his family.

He leaves behind his wife Patricia, two children Richard John Moore and Elizabeth Hammad, and four grandchildren Emma, James, Kathryn, and William. Dick’s celebration of life will be held on Aug. 23 for family and friends in Granite Bay. Final ceremony arrangements are ongoing.

In lieu of flowers, memorial donations in Dick’s name can be made to the California Peace Officers Memorial Foundation at: camarorial.org.
First look: Here are the 2024 Peninsula Photo Contest’s winning images

By The Six Fifty staff

A moment in time is never just that. Through their astute lenses, this year’s winning photographers for The Six Fifty Peninsula Photo Contest proved many times over that a moment, captured with a trained eye, can reveal so much more.

From the plains of Kenya to the shores of Hawaii and all the way home to Palo Alto, from raw moments of human emotion to snapshots of daily life, each image tells a clear story, both of the subject and of the beholder.

Through their narrations, this year’s winners reveal their own journeys to the image, many with only a few years of photography under their belt. What unites them all is a keen eye toward emotion, be it that of their subjects or their viewers, encountering a bold image, taking oneself out of a current moment into the next. And the youth photographers shine in their own right, capturing playfulness and melancholy with equal weight.

Once again, The Six Fifty, the Palo Alto Weekly and Palo Alto Art Center team up to bring our readers the annual photo contest, an opportunity for photographers of all experience levels — so long as they live, work or study in the 650 area code region — to showcase their finest work.

This year, our judges reviewed 1,141 images submitted by 247 adult and youth photographers in six categories: Abstract, Landscapes, Moments, Portraits, Travel and Wildlife, awarding 12 winning shots and 12 honorable mentions.

All of the photography will be on display at the Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road from June 22 to Aug. 18. Take a minute to immerse yourself in the images, read the photographers’ commentary and enjoy the judges’ praise. We’ve printed some of the winning entries, but view all 2024 Peninsula Photo Contest winners and honorable mentions at tinyurl.com/650-photo-contest.

Abstract

ADULT WINNER: ‘Reflections’
Laurence Baker

“This image was captured on a phone while visiting this space with family and enjoying the dramatic effects created by all the mirrors. It tries to capture the visual energy coming from the interplay between the more precise architectural lines and the more organic lines and shapes created by the people and their reflections.”

YOUTH WINNER: ‘City Lights’
Jeffrey Mu

“This picture was taken as I admired city lights on a clear night. The lights seemed to twinkle like stars in the darkness, calling the people around me to return to the light of their homes.”

Judges’ comments

“It is not often that an artist’s vision is unique. This photograph comes close to that definition. At first glance, it is simply a photograph with very interesting patterns. But the image looks like a puzzle and leaves us with questions while at the same time, challenges us as a society in terms of how we live. At first glance, the question is, ‘Is this possible, is it real?’ Upon further scrutiny, the viewer realizes that yes, it is real, and due to the architecture and all of the reflections it is also a highly manipulated reality. The busyness, repetitive patterns, perspective and the contrasty sharpness of the lines and angles all create a tension that challenges how we have chosen to participate in an ‘overbooked’ sometimes stressed society.

“The combination of the layers in this image, arranged in a compositionally balanced way, makes for a more than pleasing image. Besides the composition and the strong sense of time set in the lights of the city, there is a feeling of mystery to the photograph. It is not often that a photograph asks more questions than it answers. This is one of those rare moments of deliberate ambiguity done so skillfully by the photographer.”

—Neal Menschel
Moments

ADULT WINNER:
‘The Close of a Collegiate Career’
Erin Chang

"After falling to Stanford in the NCAA women’s soccer tournament, South Carolina’s goalkeeper, Heather Hinz, had this brief moment alone while Stanford celebrated on the other side of the field. She would go on to be drafted into the NWSL by the Houston Dash, but before that, the rain helped add a bit of drama to this moment where she reflected on the nine incredible saves she made in her final collegiate game."

Judges’ comments

"From the first glance it’s clear that ‘The Close of a Collegiate Career’ is an intense, captivating moment in time. Erin captured a scene which is full of personal passion, tension and mystery. The viewer questions — is this a moment of defeat or triumph? The details are distinct where they need to be and the contrasting, out-of-focus background paired with the detailed particles in the air creates a kind of silent, cinematic motion. Aesthetically the photo has an undeniable commercial appeal.

“There’s a heart-wrenching loneliness to ‘Scream of Victory’. The helmet, shot inches from the ground in mid-air, makes this moment feel like time is slowing to a halt in reaction to the heaviness of the scene itself. This piece leaves the viewer pondering the exact cause of this incredible display of emotion — whether it’s joy, disappointment, frustration or relief. The other fencers continuing on with their matches in the surrounding hall, with only one person seemingly included in the subject’s reality, makes the experience all the more intimate.”

— Douglas Young

Landscapes

ADULT WINNER & BEST IN SHOW:
‘Silky Sea’
Jim Colton

"On the Big Island of Hawaii I took photos of the waves crashing over the rocks in the morning. I exposed this photo for 160 seconds so the water looked light and silky to contrast with the dark and sturdy rocks. The morning sun on the peaks of the rocks is a nice finishing touch."

Judges’ comments

"Jim’s image captures more than just a beautiful landscape; it’s otherworldly. There are mysterious and evocative aspects to it that are hard to find in familiar, everyday landscape scenes. We think we’re looking at mountain tops in the midst of clouds, but then we find out it’s a long exposure of water hitting against rocks in the ocean in the morning sun that creates the dreamy, mist-like substances. The element of surprise is what distinguishes Jim’s photograph from others in the contest and makes his work sublime."

— Donna J. Wan

"We have all seen many photographs from Arches National Monument in Utah. There are classic images of the massive stone arches framing some distant other rock formation or with a human for scale. This beautifully composed and executed image goes a step further, with not only the sense of the unique space and the requisite human scale, but with the addition of a strong sense of time lending itself to the grand beauty of the place!"

— Neal Menschel

YOUTH WINNER:
‘In your eye’
John Fan

“This photo was taken in 2022 in Arches National Park in Utah. This was taken during one of my first proper photography trips, and the feeling of going out and shooting are the main reasons why I still do photography to this day.”

YOUTH WINNER:
‘Scream of Victory’
David Zaydman

“In the midst of the fierce sport of fencing, there is no better feeling than winning an important bout, especially a close one. Sergey Bida, an Olympic silver medalist and two-time world No. 1 fencer, was fighting for the top eight in the January North American Cup. The match was neck and neck, with the score of 14-14. In the match’s last touch, Bida scored the last point and secured his spot. The shot perfectly captures the intense emotions of the victory and the opponent’s disbelief at his loss.”

Judges’ comments

“From the first glance it’s clear that ‘The Close of a Collegiate Career’ is an intense, captivating moment in time. Erin captured a scene which is full of personal passion, tension and mystery. The viewer questions — is this a moment of defeat or triumph? The details are distinct where they need to be and the contrasting, out-of-focus background paired with the detailed particles in the air creates a kind of silent, cinematic motion. Aesthetically the photo has an undeniable commercial appeal.

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— Neal Menschel
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The Almanac

Please consider a one-time tax deductible donation and help make sure our voices are always heard.

AlmanacNews.com/donate
A clearly biased judge

I can understand why some are concerned that the recent revelations about Justice Alito were recorded secretly. However, his clear acknowledgement of having a religious agenda, were his own words and thoughts. Of much greater (and disqualifying) concern is the fact that Alito appears to have lied through his teeth to Congress during his confirmation hearings.

Don Barnby
Spruce Avenue, Menlo Park

Lack of clarity about building reach codes

Thank you for Robert Hogue's well done guest opinion in the June 8, Almanac: The case for electrifying our buildings.

The situation with building codes related to electrification is unclear at best. The impacts of reach code alternatives to those codes struck down by the Berkeley decision are not yet completely known. But electrification is the one most direct, personal step anyone, renter and homeowner alike, can take to turn around the climate crisis.

We can all ask for one thing: before a City Council makes a decision related to the climate and specifically building codes, please respond to the question: “How much will this decision lower green house gas emissions?” That is a great thing to ask, because not all alternatives to reach codes are actually effective in making the planet better.

The electrification is a local, regional, state, and global issue. Please adopt new building codes that actually reduce green house gases.

Robert Whitcher
San Mateo

Public Notices

2 PROTECT & SERVE SECURITY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-297555
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) PROTECT & SERVE SECURITY, located at 60 Amberwood Circle, South San Francisco, 94080.
Registered owner(s): PROTECT SECURITY SERVICES, INC.
60 Amberwood Circle
South San Francisco, CA 94080
State of Incorporation/Organization: CA
This business is conducted by: a Corporation.
Registered owner 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 May 24, 2024.
(ALM Jun 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2024)

RENEWED INTERIORS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATE FILE NO.: M-297614
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) RENEWED INTERIORS, located at 1123 Birch Street, Montara, CA 94037. Mailing Address: PO Box 371036, Montara, CA 94037.
Registered owner(s): MARÍA GARCIA
PO Box 371036
Montara, CA 94037
This business is conducted by an Individual. Registered owner 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 June 3, 2024.
(ALM Jun 14, 21, 28 and Jul 5, 2024)

TAVIERA
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME FILE NO.: M-297663
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) TAVIERA, located at 3130 Alpine Road #300, Portola Valley, CA 94028
State of Incorporation/Organization: CA
This business is conducted by a Limited Liability Company.
Registered owner 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 June 3, 2024.
(ALM Jun 14, 21, 28 and Jul 5, 2024)

SKY TERRACE LLC
PRACTICAL PSYCHOLOGY, INC
PACIFICA, CA 94044

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA COUNTY OF SAN MATEO COUNTY
Case No. 24-CV-0074
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner: Jeffrey Armando Avila-Cerritos: filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:
JEFFREY ARMANDO AVILA-CERRITOS to JEFFREY ARMANDO AVILA-SERRITOS
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 hearing scheduled above 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: 07/22/2024, 9:00AM, Southern Branch: Hall of Justice and Records of Southern Branch, Courthouse, San Mateo County, located at 400 Paloma Ave, Pacifica, CA 94044. Mailing Address: PO BOX 1791, Pacifica, CA 94044

DEADLINE: 07/21/2024
To place a legal notice visit AlmanacNews.com/legal_notices/
Ahead of the festival’s opening weekend, Combs talks about his first year with the group and what’s on this summer’s lineup

By Heather Zimmerman

Cory Combs is the executive director of the Stanford Jazz Workshop.

Cory Combs: It’s been a killer show at night,” Combs said. “I’m really trying to help an organization like this continue to thrive. It’s gone in that way, really well, and also because I’ve had this transitional support from Jim the founder and David the executive director, I haven’t had the usual pitfalls to step into that I wouldn’t have even known, because that’s always the case when you start something new, that you don’t know the mistakes you’re making.

I was able to, fortunately, draw on the experience I’ve had in terms of producing festivals and running summer camps, and so I’ve had a great deal of relevant experience, and that allowed me to feel like I wasn’t coming in in the dark.

Combs: We approached it with this notion that we want to feature amazing local talent as always and highlight some of our star jazz performers right here in the Bay Area. That’s, I think, always been a centerpiece of the Workshop’s work, and definitely a centerpiece of mine, is to appreciate everyone that’s just right in our own backyard.

The Almanac: Tell me about this year’s festival lineup. It looks like there’s a wide variety of offerings as usual.

Combs: Among other things that we want to bring in a touring act, and some first-time performers like Cuban pianist Aldo López Gavilán, who is a virtuosic Cuban pianist. Then we also, of course, try to feature some artists that are well-established veterans that have been in the industry for ages and doing such important work, and that’s someone like George Cables, who is coming back to do a week of teaching and also to do a performance on a festival evening.

We really think about that combination of who’s teaching, who’s touring, who we can bring in, and that highlights local talent. The other great part that I love about this festival is it very much keeps jazz in the center of it, that we have the luxury to really focus on the art form of jazz, which, of course, is wide and encompassing lots of different styles. So it’s by no means limited to just one thing, but it’s truly a jazz festival.

The Almanac: As you said, the integration of the workshop and the festival is so unique. What do you hope that audiences learn about jazz from attending a festival show?

Combs: We do a couple of interesting programs before the festival called Jazz Inside Out, which are unique combinations of performance and education, where we have a jazz band on stage that then peaks back the curtain a little bit to talk to the audience about what they’re hearing. That’s part of the programming that we’re going to continue to try to expand and grow — not only do you come to a performance for the musical content, but knowing you’re going to come away with some knowledge about the culture of jazz, where it came from, it is you’re listening to.

As people come to the festival, it’s not going to be the same (as that) — these aren’t lecture performances. But so many jazz musicians and basically everyone that’s on our festival roster, they’re all such incredibly educated that they are of course, going to talk about their music and what the audience is hearing and what’s inspired them. So we definitely want people to come away with a sense of connection to the artists and a sense of that joy that the artists will always bring. My love of live jazz music is always just amplified when I see a show that’s steeped in that tradition of sharing that care, and again, passion for the music and whatever angle they’re coming at it from. Essentially, if someone comes out loving jazz even more than when they came in, I’d say that would be the win.

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

Festival opener Ambrose Akinmusire Owl Song performs June 21, 7:30 p.m. at Bing Concert Hall. Tickets are $30-$100. The Stanford Jazz Festival takes place through Aug. 3 at various venues on the Stanford University campus and ticket prices vary by concert. stanfordjazz.org.

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Small wonders: Sarah Morejohn’s drawings provide an up-close perspective on nature

By Sheryl Nonnenberg

S

ome artists like to portray the big picture of nature: towering waterfalls, majes-
tic mountains and expansive plains. Sarah Morejohn prefers a more microscopic approach to depicting flora and fauna, as seen in her solo show of drawings, “Attentive Blooms: Future Transformations,” on view at Bryant Street Gallery through July 17.

Gallery owner Karen Imperial found Morejohn on Instagram and said she was immediately impressed by the intricacies of her work. “I loved the blues, and I am drawn to florals, so she was a hit with me,” Imperial said. She included her in a group show last year where Morejohn’s drawings garnered a great response.

Morejohn currently lives in Oakland but was raised in rural Oregon. In an email interview Morejohn said that she was not exposed to much art while growing up but was “always drawing.” She set off for the University of Oregon with a plan to study nursing but found that her latent interest in art took over. She earned a BFA in painting and drawing in 2011 and ever since has been pursuing a career in the field, which has included an artist’s residency at a nature sanctuary. She credits her parents for her ability to look closely at her surroundings, “My mom and dad pay acute attention to plants, animals and patterns and that rubbed off on me,” she said.

That attention to detail is certainly a hallmark of this exhibition. What might appear at first glance to be whirling, swirling bursts of indigo blue becomes, upon closer inspection, extremely detailed drawings that demand time to decode and decipher. There are recognizable objects like flowers, branches, leaves and strawberries. But these known quantities are enmeshed in thousands of lines, circles and hatch marks that create an almost psychedelic version of the natural world.

“I use dip pens, acrylic or India ink to draw the lines, and then I use either colored pencils or watercolor to build up the color. Dip pens are great because they make all sorts of drippy problems.”

There don’t seem to be any “problems” to the casual viewer but rather an extremely well-honed eye for detail and cohesion of disparate elements. In “Orange Berries,” a kaleidoscope of blue-hued leaves and branches combine and intertwine to form a backdrop for the delicately-rendered fruit. In “Strawberry Lightning,” those same natural elements seem to float placidly in the center of the drawing, but look to the right and bold, exaggerated diagonals form the lightning bolt about to strike.

Morejohn explained her working method: “It’s a combination of having an idea of what I’d like to focus on and letting things happen. There’s a back and forth between one line leading to the next and a stepping back and thinking about how things could connect.”

That feeling of interconnectedness is a strong theme in her work. She has a favorite motif found in nature, the raindrop. Whether it is incorporated into the whole or highlighted as it is in “Oh No, Rounded Snow,” the familiar shape is more to the artist than just a droplet of water. “In my mind I am playing with the shape of a cartoony raindrop and sometimes imagining the bits of dust or microorganisms that travel within precipitation.”

She has a similar scholarly take on snowflakes. Often depicted as simple and symmetrical, Morehouse found that she preferred how Robert Hooke drew them in his 17th-century study “Micrographia.” “There’s a page in the book that has renderings of a variety of snow crystals and also this out of place polygon with lines running through it. Maybe it was just a piece of ice, I don’t know.”

But I’ve played with and thought about that shape and its inner lines since then.”

The complexity of nature and the multitude of components that make up an organic whole are clearly a source of inspiration for Morehouse. In addition to the time and care it takes to create these drawings using ink, colored pencil and watercolor, she adds a further step by cutting and collaging. It is a subtle effect which can only be observed by looking carefully at the layers and cut out areas in works like “February” and “Perfection.”

“The large collaged drawings take more time and more thinking to arrange into something that makes sense.plus making the decision to cut out a drawing takes some time to decide on. I don’t do it without some hesitation.”

Morejohn explained that she usually works on several drawings at once and each one can take about a month to complete. And how does she know when a work is done? “I don’t. Especially with the collaged drawings, they seem like they could go on forever. I could just keep adding things. But there does come a point when the composition just works and I stop.”

While Morejohn’s drawings can be enjoyed at a distance for their color and design qualities, it really does require some time and close viewing to take in and appreciate her precision and skill as a draftsman. In our immediate-gratification world, does she think that people have the capacity to do that? “To be slow, to take notice of things, to find connections is of interest to me. Even I struggle with going too fast in this digital, social media-fueled era. Yes, I hope people slow down to look and notice, but I think people already have that response with my work. I think we all crave something slower.”

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

Singer-songwriter Robby Hecht plays the 2nd Story music series on June 23 at Red Rock Coffee.

Robby Hecht

Longtime touring singer-songwriter Robby Hecht has racked up millions of streams of his original music and has had songs recorded by numerous other artists. His most recent album “Not a Number” offers introspective songs chronicling several years’ worth of experiences. Hecht makes a stop in Mountain View to take part in Red Rock’s 2nd Story series, part of his June tour in Texas and California.

June 23, 6:30 p.m., Red Rock Coffee, 201 Castro St., Mountain View; suggested donation $15; redrockcoffee.com/2nd-story.

mimi tempest

California writer and artist mimi tempest’s first book, “the monumental misrememberings;,” was published with Co-Conspirator Press/The Feminist Center for Creative Work in 2020, and other works have been published in Foglifter, Interim Poetics, and at the Studio Museum in Harlem. Currently a doctoral candidate in literature at the University of California, Santa Cruz, tempest returns to Feldman’s, along with poets Hector Son of Hector and Kyra Flores Vasquez, a student of psychology at nearby Menlo College.

June 21, 6 p.m., Feldman’s Books, 1075 Curtis St., Menlo Park; $5 donations suggested; feldmanbooks.net/events.

IndiviDuo

Latin-pop combo IndiviDuo is California singer/songwriter Tiffany Joy and Colombian singer/musician/composer Maqui Reyes, who joined forces with Agatha Christie’s beloved detective Hercule Poirot (played by local theater fave Michael Champlin) on the Orient Express. He’s on the case to uncover the murderer in his midst in this classic whodunit. There’s also the fictional, on-stage luxurious-yet-perilous train journey “Murder on the Orient Express.”

This show, while not a traditional whodunit, explores the journey out of Palo Alto and up north to Woodside High School, where the venerable theater company is staging this show, while its home base at Palo Alto’s Lucie Stern Theatre is getting new seats.

June 23, 6:30 p.m. (doors open at 6 p.m.), Club Fox, 2209 Broadway St., Redwood City; $25 in advance/$30 day of show; eventbrite.com.

‘Murray on the Orient Express’

Palo Alto Players take a journey this June — in more ways than one. Firstly, there’s the fictional, on-stage luxurious-yet-perilous train journey with Agatha Christie’s beloved detective Hercule Poirot (played by local theater fave Michael Champlin) on the Orient Express. He’s on the case to uncover the murderer in his midst in this classic whodunit. There’s also the journey out of Palo Alto and up north to Woodside High School, where the venerable theater company is staging this show, while its home base at Palo Alto’s Lucie Stern Theatre is getting new seats.

June 21-30 (check online for schedule and ticket specifica), Woodside High School Performing Arts Center, 199 Churchill Ave., Woodside; $39-$63; tapplayers.org/event/orient-express.

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Q&A with Donato Scotti

Donato owner reflects on 15 years in Redwood City

By Adrienne Mitchel

Fifteen years after opening Donato Enoteca in Redwood City, Donato Scotti speaks with the same energetic passion as if he had opened the Italian restaurant yesterday.

Scotti grew up in Bergamo, Italy, attending culinary school in his home country before cooking in New York, Los Angeles and finally the Bay Area. He was the head chef at Il Fornaio in Walnut Creek and then Palo Alto before opening his first restaurant, the now-closed La Strada, in Palo Alto in 2004. In addition to Donato Enoteca, Scotti owns Cru Wine Bar & Shop in Redwood City and Donato & Co. in Berkeley.

I sat down with Scotti to look back on the past 15 years – the evolution of the Bay Area Italian food scene, his proudest achievement with Donato Enoteca and more. The interview has been edited for brevity and clarity.

Peninsula Foodist: How has Donato Enoteca evolved over 15 years?

Donato Scotti: My vision for Donato Enoteca has always been the same. I want it to be a true Italian restaurant the way I see it. I don’t want to serve the stuff that a Sicilian grandmother used to make. For me, it’s more like, 'What is it that I would eat in a restaurant if I want to go have a good meal in Italy?' The kitchen evolved in the past 15 years for sure. What we were doing back in 2009 is certainly very different from what we do now. Some dishes, though, I keep because they’re very unique, and if I take it off the menu, I get like a revolution against me, an uprising.

At a certain point, we said, ‘We’re going to have to make our own salumi.’ So we started doing that. Fresh pasta, we’ve always made, but even dry pasta we make now. I always envisioned my restaurant being like, ‘You walk in. On your way out, if you want to buy something that you like, you should be able to.’

Also, I think that our wine program is a lot stronger. When we started, we didn’t have anyone who knew anything about wine except me and my sommelier. Now we have five sommeliers in the staff, and we offer to pay for sommelier courses.

Peninsula Foodist: How has the Bay Area restaurant scene transformed over the last 15 years?

Donato Scotti: Fifteen years ago, you couldn’t go find burrata anywhere. Now everything is at the tip of your fingers. Fifteen years ago, if you went to an Italian restaurant, it was likely a generic Italian restaurant. Now you have these restaurants that are very specific to Neapolitan cuisine, to Sicilian cuisine, to Venetian cuisine. When I came to the United States 30 years ago, Italian restaurants had bricks of lasagna and spaghetti and meatballs, and now you hardly see any of those. I mean, go find spaghetti and meatballs now; it’s probably harder than finding formag de mut.

I also think the customers have evolved. The knowledge of Italian food from the people that come in the restaurant now, it’s like 100% more than what it was 15 years ago. (In 2009) nobody knew what burrata was. Now, everybody has it at home in their refrigerator. It’s beautiful because to me, it makes my job a lot easier to know that somebody will understand what we are trying to do.

Also, I think a lot of the costs that have increased dramatically over the past few years have changed the way restaurants operate as far as service. You have to adapt to what the increasing costs are.

Peninsula Foodist: What is your greatest accomplishment in the 15 years running Donato Enoteca?

Donato Scotti: The biggest accomplishment I have was...
making it through COVID the way we did. The way we came up with all these ideas and actually executed it made me so proud of not only myself, but everybody that was with me. I said, ‘I have a job for everybody. I’m going to keep this place going with take-out, with cooking classes, we’re going to start distributing stuff.’ By the end of the first year of the pandemic, this whole restaurant was packing and shipping. I wanted to keep as many people employed (as possible). I wanted to make sure that everybody had their family taken care of.

**Peninsula Foodist:** What do you envision Donato Enoteca to be like in another 15 years?

**Donato Scotti:** Eventually we’re going to have to do a pretty big remodel, because 15 years in a restaurant I feel like is 150 for a normal business as far as wear and take. I’m not one to have a restaurant with QR codes. But I think probably it would become a little more casual, but not necessarily by lowering the expectation of the service, maybe just removing the tablecloths and doing nice tables. Make it more of an attractive and fun environment. Not because where the hospitality is going, it’s probably going to have to be tweaked. I think our wine list will always be one of our pulling points, no matter how many years down the line. The food has evolved over the past 15 years, so I think it’s going to keep evolving. But our goal is always to keep it very Italian. And that I hope that will never change.

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Donato Enoteca, 1041 Middlefield Road, Redwood City; 650-701-1000, Instagram: @donatoenoteca.

Open Tuesday through Thursday 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 4-9 p.m. and Friday through Sunday 11:30 a.m. to 9:30 p.m.

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Casonsei, a stuffed pasta from Bergamo, from Donato Enoteca in Redwood City.

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The bar at Donato Enoteca in Redwood City.

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