

The Almanac

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

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Portola Valley celebrates 60 years

Old-time residents recall founding of town

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

June 23, 1964, was the day that more than 1,000 people voted for the incorporation of Portola Valley. On June 23, 2024, more than 20 people who lived in the town since 1964 gathered to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the town.

The people who lived in the town from the beginning, “passed down the legacy to all of us and taught the rest of us about the ethics of Portola Valley. How we blend in rather than stand out and respect the environment and all the creatures that are within it,” said Historic Resources Committee member Nancy Lund.

The event celebrated people who served as significant figures to the town’s history, including Bob Katz, the last surviving member of the first Town Council and Planning Commission, and Martin Ramies, the longest-tenured resident of Portola Valley.

In 1964, Katz educated the



Magali Gauthier

Nancy Lund, Portola Valley town historian and chair of the Historic Resources Committee, right, chats with an attendee during a celebration of the 60th anniversary of the town’s incorporation on June 23.

See **60 YEARS**, page 14

Menlo Park deems builder’s remedy application for controversial Sunset Magazine campus development incomplete

By Eleanor Raab

City of Menlo Park staff have deemed the builder’s remedy application to develop the 6.7-acre parcel that was once home to Sunset Magazine to be incomplete due to “multiple required items missing from the application.”

Renderings show that the controversial project, dubbed Willow Park, located at 80 Willow Road in Menlo Park, would consist of three towers that contain more than 350,000 square feet of office space. It

would also have nearly 40,000 square feet of retail space, a Montessori school, a 130-room hotel and 665 housing units.

Twenty percent of the housing units would be affordable to low-income households earning less than 80% of the area median income, as required by state law for projects submitted under builder’s remedy. This would amount to 133 affordable housing units in total for the project.

If the buildings are approved and built as currently proposed, the tallest of the three towers planned for the site would be the

tallest building in the Bay Area outside of San Francisco, standing at 431 feet tall.

This ruling from Menlo Park’s planning department does not mean that the development cannot go forward, however. The applicant, real estate developer N17, will have the option to resubmit a formal application to bring it into compliance with city requirements. Once the city receives another application, it will have 30 days to review the proposal for completeness.

See **SUNSET CAMPUS**, page 18



Courtesy Solomon Cordwell Buenz

A rendering of the Willow Park development.

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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY



Photos courtesy Robert Most

Mini monster truck drivers and their vehicles took over the Burgess skate park for a while on Sunday.

Mini monster trucks rumble through Burgess skate park

30 families make time to play together

By Eleanor Raab

On Sunday, June 23, mini monster trucks and other tiny cars took over the Burgess skate park for the second Menlo Monster Truck Kid Jam. For two hours, the skate ramps were reserved for kids to play with their mini cars and mini monster trucks.

Around 30 families showed up to the event to have fun on the skate ramps with their kids' wheeled toys. Organizer Jared Carlson, a Menlo Park resident, said that he started the event because he wanted to find new fun, safe landscapes where his son and other kids could play with toy monster trucks.

"It was really heartwarming to see one of my son's best friends show up along with his old daycare teacher and her children," Carlson said. "So many people smiling and conversing while their children played was very gratifying."

Carlson said that he plans to host these events once a month, as long as there is good weather and interest from the community. "It doesn't take very much

effort and it is a joy to behold the little ones having so much fun!"

Carlson wants other local families to know that all kids are welcome at the Monster Truck Kid Jams. He said to look for fliers around the park and

for notice on the Menlo Park Parents Facebook group for jam times.

"If you don't have monster trucks or cars to play with, we always have extra ready to share," he said. ■



Parents' group sues Sequoia school district

Student journalists say they want distance from film

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

A lawsuit has been filed by the nonprofit organization Parents Defending Education against the Sequoia Union High School District alleging failure to disclose the censorship of Eli Steele's documentary "Killing America." This action was taken in response to a cease and desist letter student journalists at Menlo-Atherton High School sent to Steele in April for using copyrighted footage in his film.

The suit was filed on June 13 in San Mateo County Superior Court by PDE, which aims to reclaim "schools from activists promoting harmful agendas." The organization is asking for the district to produce the records that were formally

requested but were denied.

Steele's documentary investigates the rise of antisemitism in Bay Area schools, focusing on M-A's controversy over an ethnic studies lesson on Israel and Palestine. The film trailer was published on YouTube and Vimeo and included photos and video taken by student journalists at the M-A Chronicle. Steele did not ask for permission to use those images, according to Cleo Rehkopf, former editor-in-chief of the student newspaper.

Steele argues that his film is protected by the Fair Use doctrine, which allows the use of copyrighted material without permission from the copyright holder under certain circumstances.

See **SEQUOIA DISTRICT**, page 12

Draft EIR available for review for Parkline development

Plans for redeveloping parts of SRI campus

By Eleanor Raab

On June 20, Menlo Park published the draft environmental impact report for the proposed Parkline development on the SRI campus at 333 Ravenswood Ave.

The proposed project would redevelop parts of the SRI campus to create a mixed-use development consisting of up to 550 residential units, office and laboratory space, publicly accessible open space and retail and

restaurant facilities. The city is also reviewing a new project variant that would include the property at 201 Ravenswood Ave., and would create up to 800 new units of housing.

Residents can review paper copies of the draft EIR at the Menlo Park Library at 800 Alma St., and the Belle Haven Library at 100 Terminal Ave. Residents can also access the report at menlopark.gov/parkline.

See **PARKLINE**, page 8



Illustration courtesy city of Menlo Park

A parklet with shared pedestrian and bike lanes will run the length of the project on Ravenswood Avenue.



WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS GIVEN pursuant to Sections 5473, et. seq. of the California Health and Safety Code that the District Board of West Bay Sanitary District has, by general regulation, elected to collect its charges for sewer services for FY 2024-2025 on the tax roll in the same manner as general taxes and will cause to be filed with its Secretary a written report containing a description of each parcel of real property receiving sanitary sewer service from the District and the amount of the charge for each parcel.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that on Wednesday evening, July 10, 2024 at the hour of 7:00 p.m. at the meeting room located at the District's offices, located at 500 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA or by Zoom:
<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/88049883500?pwd=mikZ13pa6DMszYGcWd69PLvnCXR8jB.1>
 Meeting ID: 880 4988 3500 Passcode: 305032

The District Board will conduct a Public Hearing to hear and consider all protests and objections, if any, to the report.

Anyone wishing to address the District Board concerning these matters may do so in writing at or before the date of the Public Hearing or may be heard at the time of the Board's meeting.

Dated: May 22, 2024

/s/ Sergio Ramirez
 Sergio Ramirez
 General Manager

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The Almanac

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COMMUNITY BRIEFS



Lizzy Myers

Contestants practice and wait their turn to compete at the annual Junior Rodeo in Woodside in 2023.

Fourth of July rodeo in Woodside

The Mounted Patrol of San Mateo County is hosting its 72nd annual Woodside Junior Rodeo starting at 8 a.m. on July 4 at 521 Kings Mountain Road in Woodside. Community members can enjoy pony rides, petting zoos, a mechanical bull, various vendors and a Fourth of July barbecue.

Children between the ages of 6 and 18 can participate in rodeo events including dummy roping, goat tying, steer riding and more. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$15 for children under 18 and free for children under 5 years old. For more information on the event visit mpsmc.org/rodeo/.

Ukulele singalong with Flea Street Band

Woodside's Art and Culture Committee is welcoming Flea Street Band, a San Carlos-based ukulele band, to perform in Independence Hall from 7 to 8 p.m. on July 5. The band will be playing popular tunes by The Beatles and other songs from the 1960s.

The Flea Street Band is composed of ukulele players, vocalists, a guitarist, a bass guitarist and a drummer. The ensemble has performed throughout the Peninsula. Several ukuleles will be provided by the library for guests to strum along and song sheets will be projected on the big screen.

Admission is free and light refreshments will be available. Register for the event at woodsidesartsandculture.eventbrite.com.



Sadie Stinson

A woman celebrates the Fourth of July by participating in Menlo Park's annual parade.

Menlo Park Fourth of July celebration and parade

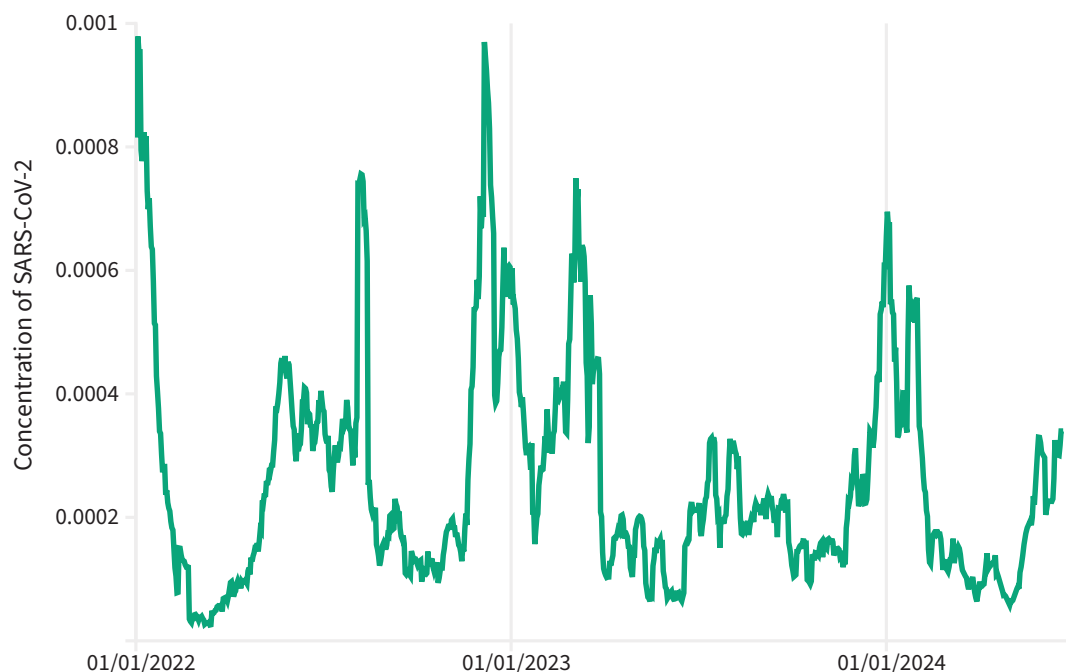
Come dressed in red, white and blue for Menlo Park's annual Fourth of July parade and festival. There will be a new parade route and festival location this year.

Those who wish to participate in the parade should meet at the corner of Laurel Street and Burgess Drive at 10:30 a.m. on the Fourth. The parade will begin at 11 a.m. and follow a route around Burgess Park.

See **COMMUNITY BRIEFS**, page 18

Concentrations of SARS-CoV-2 virus in local wastewater

Samples from Silicon Valley Clean Water



Note: The data uses a 10-day rolling average. Source: California Department of Public Health. Graphic by Zoe Morgan.

Wastewater data shows COVID rises again in San Mateo County

Variant shifting again even as manufacturers gear up for fall vaccine

By Arden Margulis

San Mateo County is experiencing a rise in COVID-19 cases, according to wastewater data released earlier this month by the California Department of Health.

“We are seeing an increasing trend,” said Karen Pfister, a health services manager at the San Mateo County Office of Epidemiology and Evaluation.

The sewershed covering San Mateo and Foster City showed a 320% increase in the 10-day rolling average COVID concentration from May 17 to June 17, according to the most recent data.

The Silicon Valley Clean Water sewershed, which covers Redwood City and The Almanac’s coverage area, revealed a more moderate increase of 170% in the 10-day rolling average COVID concentration from May 22 to June 21.

“Generally, wastewater data is an early indicator and something like hospitalizations would follow,” said Pfister. “We have not been routinely tracking COVID-19 hospitalizations but we have a syndromic surveillance system, which looks at emergency department data for respiratory illnesses in general. The most recent report does not show an increase in that data.”

COVID-19 cases are most likely increasing in 39 states, including California, according to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

The CDC estimates that 32% of cases in region nine, which includes California, are due to KP.3, which is a variant that became dominant in early June. However a different variant, LB.1, has recently grown and experts expect it will become the dominant variant soon.

A preprint paper, which has not yet been peer reviewed, suggests that LB.1 is more immune-resistant than previous variants.

“At this time, I do not have plans to implement any COVID mandates,” said Dr. Kismet Baldwin-Santana, San Mateo County Health Officer.

On June 13, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration advised manufacturers to focus their vaccines on the KP.2 variant. That vaccine is expected to be released this fall from Pfizer and Moderna however Novavax, which does not use mRNA technology, may not be able to pivot in time.

If a markedly more virulent variant occurs that results in more morbidity or mortality, the agency could consider recommending a change in vaccine composition at any time, an FDA spokesperson told Verywell Health.

COVID-19 variants are not tracked at the local level, according to Pfister, however the county does routinely track wastewater data.

“We look at data from all of our testing partners and compile a report that is sent out to epidemiology staff, communicable disease staff and some others in health

leadership,” said Pfister.

Pfister does have some advice for the public. “Some of the general things we would say, whether it is COVID or any respiratory illness, if you are sick, stay home,” she said. “It’s like anything else out there, just really try to do good hygiene like mask up if you are sick, avoid other people, stay home, social distance.”

“In terms of where this will go and what this means exactly, it is hard to say at this moment because it hasn’t popped up on some of the other indicators. It’s something to keep an eye on, especially if you are someone who is traveling locally or outside of California,” she added.

Pfister also advises people to get vaccinated for COVID-19 and the flu and seek care if necessary. ■

Email Editorial Intern
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LEHUA GREENMAN



“What lies behind us and what lies before us are small matters compared to what lies within us.”

650.245.1845 COMPASS

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



What is Builders Remedy?

Dear Monica: Can you tell me what “Builder’s Remedy” projects are that I read about?

Mary H.

Dear Mary: “Builder’s Remedy” (BR) can be used to avoid local zoning requirements when a locality’s housing element does not substantially comply with state law. For example, areas zoned for single family dwellings could, under BR, have multi-units built instead. Many Peninsula cities have yet to be in compliance with state law, and thus BR proposals are being made. It is meant to spur cities’ compliance with state law mandates.

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



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Supervisors vote to update Menlo Oaks road standards

Some residents are unhappy with process

By Eleanor Raab

At its Tuesday, June 11, meeting, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors unanimously voted to approve new minimum road standards for the Menlo Oaks neighborhood, an unincorporated area located in northeastern Menlo Park. This decision has left some residents unhappy, while others are looking forward to the changes to their streets.

The Menlo Oaks neighborhood has a distinctive character. The narrow streets have no sidewalks nor gutters, few street lamps and are surrounded by large oak trees. Residents say the neighborhood, which has nearly 300 households, is known for its

rural character and close-knit community.

The Board of Supervisors' decision to adopt the new road standards follows months of contention in the neighborhood around the process used by the county to survey property owners about the new road standards. Residents are also concerned that the new minimum road standards will jeopardize large oak trees that line neighborhood streets, and add to traffic and speeding issues on neighborhood roads.

Other Menlo Oaks residents are happy with the county process and outcome of the vote, saying that the roads desperately need an update due to flooding issues, the crumbling roadbed

and dangerous potholes.

The neighborhood's previous road standards were adopted by the Board of Supervisors in 1998. These standards limited road work to maintaining the existing narrow roads in the neighborhood.

The same 1998 resolution also stated that the road standards would remain unchanged "until such time as the residents desire a different level of improvement as determined by a property owner survey or other means as approved by this or subsequent Boards of Supervisors."

In 2022, the Board of Supervisors approved funding for public works to conduct a survey in the Menlo Oaks neighborhood in order to determine if

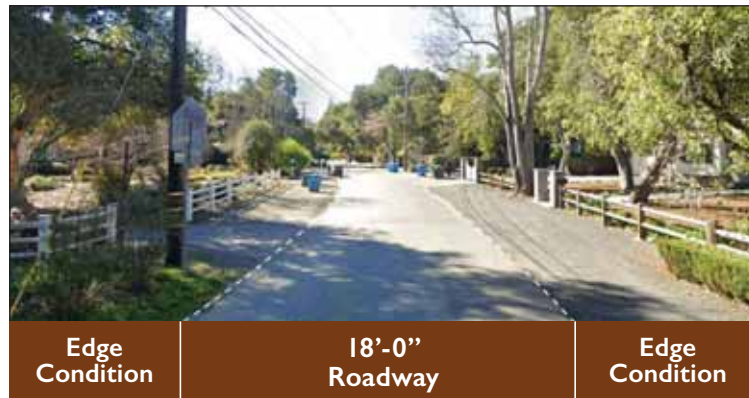


Illustration courtesy San Mateo County

A Board of Supervisors packet included photos and illustrations of existing conditions and alternatives for new road standards in Menlo Oaks.

the roads should be updated.

The Department of Public Works surveyed property owners on all streets in the community except for Ringwood and Coleman avenues. According to the county, the road standards for those two streets will be studied separately as they are part of the county's Active Transportation Plan and require

their own outreach process.

In November 2023, public works surveyed the neighborhood to see if residents wanted new road standards, and if so, what those standards would be. The surveys found that many roads in the neighborhood had flooding, drainage and pothole issues, and that many were upset with the condition of their roads. Some residents said that their children who bike, skateboard, or use crutches and wheelchairs are having a hard time navigating the roads.

"Our streets are a disaster," said Menlo Oaks resident Victoria O'Hara at the Board of Supervisors meeting.

Resident Zoe Hyatt, who is a civil engineer, said that Menlo Oaks has some of the worst roads she has ever seen.

"Our crumbling infrastructure makes it unsafe to bike, walk or drive on our roads," she said. "We need significant structural improvements, as your office has already indicated through a thorough, diligent

See **MENLO OAKS**, page 11

PARKLINE

continued from page 5

The Menlo Park Planning Commission will review the report at a public hearing on July 22.

Community members are encouraged to provide comments on the draft EIR. Written comments can be emailed to Principal Planner Corinna Sandmeier at csandmeier@menlopark.gov, or mailed by letter to Corinna Sandmeier, Community Development, 701 Laurel St. Menlo Park, CA 94025.

The public comment review period for the draft EIR will close on Aug. 5, at 5:30 p.m. Menlo Park staff will then prepare a final EIR that addresses the public comments and comments received from the planning commission. ■

Email Staff Writer Eleanor Raab at eraab@almanacnews.com.

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San Mateo County Sheriff's Office announces departure of undersheriff

By Bay City News Service

Leadership in the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office has undergone a major change, the office announced on Friday, June 21.

Undersheriff Chris Hsiung is leaving the sheriff's office after less than two years in the role.

The undersheriff is second-in-command to Sheriff Christina Corpus.

"After careful consideration, Sheriff Corpus and Undersheriff Chris Hsiung have come to the understanding that it is best for the organization to go in different directions," the sheriff's office said in a press release.

Dan Perea is replacing Hsiung as undersheriff, effective July 1.

"Undersheriff Perea is a distinguished and highly respected figure in the law enforcement community and is



Dan Perea

expected to bring a dynamic and innovative perspective to our team," the sheriff's office said.

Perea served 33 years with the San Francisco Police Department, where he rose to deputy chief.

The sheriff's office did not provide details on the reasons for Hsiung's departure.

"I'm excited for this next

chapter, where I'll be able to dedicate my time to coaching, mentoring, and especially the work of The Curve, to help advance our profession forward," Hsiung said on LinkedIn and Instagram.

The Curve is a nonprofit that aims to modernize policing strategy, advance leadership and evolve culture in police departments. ■

Another dead bird tests positive for West Nile virus in Menlo Park

By Eleanor Raab

A third dead bird has tested positive for West Nile virus in Menlo Park, though vector control officials say that this is "no cause for concern at this time." This is the fifth dead bird to test positive for West Nile virus in San Mateo County this year.

"As of June 21, we have had five dead birds test positive for West Nile virus in San Mateo County. Three of those birds had been reported in Menlo Park — one in April, one in May, and one in June," said Rachel Curtis-Robles, the public health education and outreach officer at the vector control district, in an email to this news organization. "Our staff are keeping a close eye on West Nile

virus throughout the county, and some extra effort is occurring in Menlo Park, given the positive dead bird findings. We continue to communicate with the city of Menlo Park and share relevant information with the public about West Nile virus and how to prevent and protect yourself from mosquitoes."

In order to monitor the mosquitoes in Menlo Park, Curtis-Robles says that vector control staff are setting extra mosquito traps in the areas near where the birds have been found, both to check if mosquito populations are increasing and to test the trapped mosquitoes for West Nile virus.

"This is part of our usual surveillance efforts that we do throughout the county; given the

recent West Nile virus-positive dead birds, we just want to keep an extra close eye on Menlo Park," she said. "No cause for concern at this time."

None of the mosquito samples have tested positive in San Mateo County so far.

In neighboring Santa Clara County, 12 birds have tested positive for West Nile virus so far this year, with six of those birds located in Palo Alto. Two mosquito samples have tested positive in Santa Clara County as well.

The vector control district also wants to remind residents to dump standing water to avoid creating new habitat for breeding mosquitoes, and to report dead birds and biting mosquitoes so that they can be tested for the virus.

"Of course, it is always good to remind everyone to ... use an EPA-registered insect repellent if outdoors where mosquitoes are active," said Curtis-Robles.

You can read more about West

Nile virus in San Mateo County in the district's press release from May. ■

Email Staff Writer Eleanor Raab at eraab@almanacnews.com.

Sheriff's office investigates Portola Valley residential burglary

The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office is investigating a residential burglary that occurred in Portola Valley between 8 p.m. on June 6 and 7 p.m. on June 9. The unknown suspects entered the back of the property on the 300 block of Cervantes Road by breaking a sliding glass door.

Surveillance cameras in the area are being reviewed by the sheriff's office. There is no available information on the suspects. The sheriff's office is asking for anyone who has more information regarding the incident to call the Anonymous Tip Line at 800-547-2700.

—Jennifer Yoshikoshi



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Tensions fly high over Palo Alto airport upgrades

East Palo Alto residents, environmentalists concerned about impacts of airport's growth

By Gennady Sheyner

Frustrations over Palo Alto's efforts to upgrade its airport soared at a public hearing on June 20, where critics assailed city staff and consultants for failing to involve East Palo Alto residents and local environmentalists in the plans. The tense meeting, which brought around 60 people to the Baylands, centered on the city's ongoing effort to create a master plan for Palo Alto Airport on Embarcadero Road. As part of the plan, the city is considering modifications that the small but bustling airport would need to undergo to accommodate

a projected increase in flights and emerging technologies like electric planes that can lift off vertically. The airport today accommodates about 160,000 takeoffs and landings annually, according to city figures.

"When you're looking at how many operations are happening on this airfield, with only one runway, the airfield is almost at capacity," said Kim Fabend, a consultant with C&S Companies.

While the city has yet to pick a preferred alternative for modifying the plan, its five alternatives include options that would extend the airport's lone runway and, in some cases, place

the runway on top of a newly constructed levee. One option would extend the runway into the Baylands, requiring the city to fill the duck pond. Another would shift the runway so that it runs immediately next to a popular recreational trail.

But for many of the roughly 60 people who attended the public hearing, the details mattered less than the broader picture. Even though the city has held four prior public hearings, many residents contended Thursday that officials had inadequately publicized these meetings. Some attendees said they hadn't heard about the project until they read about it in this publication last



Anna Hoch-Kenney

Private planes parked at Palo Alto Airport in 2024.

month.

While city officials maintained that their goal is to make the airport safer for its users, many of those in attendance urged staff and consultants to do a better job considering the impacts of any proposed changes to residents in communities around the airport, most notably the city of East Palo Alto.

Numerous speakers objected to the fact that none of the materials that the city presented at the hearing to display the various alternatives depict the neighborhoods of East Palo Alto near the airport. This struck many as an apt metaphor for the residents' views being ignored.

For Heather Starnes-Logwood, the airport project hits particularly close to home. She alluded to the 2010 airplane crash in East Palo Alto that killed three people and took out power lines that supplied electricity to Palo Alto.

"Raise your hand if you had a plane crash on your street and burn down the neighbor's house and hear the cries of the pilot screaming for help. ... There's a street here that's been traumatized and it's not even on the site map," Starnes-Logwood said.

Elena Kogan, a resident of East Palo Alto, received an ovation after she suggested that it's her city that will be forced to bear the negative impacts of the airport project, and the more affluent residents of Palo Alto would reap the benefits.

"All the inconveniences associated with airports such as pollution, noise and accidents that kill people are going to be borne by us here in East Palo Alto, but really the airport is used by people who can afford to have a private plane," Kogan said.

City officials and consultants repeatedly reassured residents that they are not moving ahead with any plans to expand the airport and that whatever option they ultimately choose would need to be consistent with city policies that aim to protect the environment. The city's

Comprehensive Plan, for example, specifies that the airport be limited to a single runway. That policy is reflected in all of the alternatives.

Even so, some of the attendees questioned the city's commitment to environmental stewardship. Members of the non-profit group Environmental Volunteers, which is based in the EcoCenter in the Baylands, were taken aback at an alternative showing a portion of the duck pond getting filled.

"People are really concerned that the things that they love are going to go away," said Deborah Lindsay executive director of Environmental Volunteers. "We don't care so much about whether or not corporations or wealthy community members can fly in and out at leisure. What we care about is the quality of life in this community."

East Palo Alto City Council member Lisa Gauthier, who also attended the Thursday meeting, said she is particularly interested in making sure that the city's plans protect the marsh and take care of the environment around the airport. Residents are just now learning about the airport plans, she said. She acknowledged the tension in the room and the inherent challenge for city officials in holding a meeting that both presenting alternatives and allowing people to be heard.

"I know people are really nervous," Gauthier said.

East Palo Alto isn't the only neighboring city where residents are growing concerned about the airport's growth. Menlo Park Mayor Cecelia Taylor said she is concerned that Palo Alto's plans for the airport could bring more noise and health impacts to neighborhoods in such as Belle Haven and the Willows, which are on the east side of the city and which already experience the city's worst air quality and highest asthma rates.

See AIRPORT UPGRADES, page 16

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MENLO OAKS

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and fair process. As climate change progresses, flooding will worsen and continue to deteriorate our roads.”

Others living in the neighborhood say that public works did not adequately study how installing wider streets with gutters could potentially lead to more traffic and speeding and impact the heritage oaks.

“It’s not our intent to remove any trees,” said Department of Public Works Director Ann Stillman. “That’s not what we would want to do. We have to work in a very thoughtful and careful manner to not disturb or damage any of the trees. It involves working with arborists. It involves really working around the trees.”

Supervisors Warren Slocum and Ray Mueller formed a subcommittee to follow the road standards implementation process.

“The subcommittee was formed to give the supervisors more direct involvement as the project moves forward,” said Slocum in an email to this news organization. “For instance, we would like to review future questionnaires before they get mailed.”

Following more than an hour of public comment and discussion, the Board ultimately unanimously approved the new road standards for the neighborhood, and set in motion the project to upgrade the roads.

Neighborhood divided

The vote to adopt new road standards followed months of controversy and ire in the Menlo Oaks neighborhood over whether or not the process to adopt these new standards was conducted fairly.

“Until last year, the neighborhood had a feeling of everyone supporting each other,” said longtime Menlo Oaks resident Dorothy Fadiman. “This proposal and the way the survey was conducted is tearing apart the neighborly atmosphere of Menlo Oaks.”

Neighbors upset with the process say that the survey was flawed because it did not include the residents from Ringwood and Coleman avenues, the wording of the survey did not accurately reflect the improvement options being offered and that residents were not given enough information.

Fourteen Menlo Oaks residents spoke at the meeting, and asked the Board of Supervisors to postpone its vote on the new

road standards until the neighborhood could be resurveyed.

“In my 22 years as a Menlo Oaks homeowner, there has never been a bigger, more ill-conceived or more unfair or more frankly chaotic governmental threat to my neighborhood than the process and the outcome that you are being asked to endorse today,” said resident John Danforth in a public comment.

“Much of the controversy revolves around the flawed process by which DPW measured our residents’ desires for their streets in a survey,” said Menlo Oaks resident Judy Horst in a written comment to the Board of Supervisors.

The Department of Public Works did not bring the survey to the Board of Supervisors to review before it went out to residents.

Several residents living on Ringwood and Coleman avenues commented that they felt excluded from a process that would affect their neighborhood.

“The county has divested Ringwood/Coleman homeowners of our rights under the (Menlo Oaks) Road Standard and treated us like we are not part of (Menlo Oaks),” said Menlo Oaks resident Karen Barr

in a written public comment to the Board of Supervisors.

Several other neighbors commented that they felt the process was fair and that the neighborhood was well informed throughout.

“Between 78% and 100% of our residents actually participated in that vote,” said Menlo Oaks resident Greg Eckert in a public comment. “You don’t see that amount of participation almost anywhere else in America right now, and it’s fabulous. And you saw that the majority of the people. ... they voted yes to improve those road standards.”

The Board of Supervisors reminded upset residents that they have a duty not only to those who live in the neighborhood, but also to others in the county.

“There is nothing as contentious as doing work in front of someone’s home,” said District 3 Supervisor Ray Mueller at the meeting. “But we have a duty not only to those who live in the neighborhood, but to those outside the neighborhood, ... for those who might travel through that neighborhood from outside of it. And also for those who may be impacted by the spending of resources throughout the county. ... having to spend

resources in an area over and over again when the money can be used to help other people.”

What comes next

The next step for the neighborhood as outlined by the county is a block-by-block survey. This additional survey will be used to determine whether improvements are desired, and if so, which of the available improvements will be implemented.

Property owners will have the option to choose to maintain the roads “as is” in this subsequent survey if they decide that they don’t want any of the improvements being offered.

Design for the project is set to begin in 2027, and construction of the new road designs would not begin until 2028 or later, depending on funding availability. Until the new road standards updates are implemented, the county department of public works has said that they will continue to perform pothole and crack repairs on all streets in the neighborhood.

One road per year will be upgraded to the new road standards, so it will take several years for the project to be completed. ■

Email Staff Writer Eleanor Raab at eraab@almanacnews.com.



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SEQUOIA DISTRICT

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“I was surprised by the cease and desist letter. I thought that anyone who understood basic journalism and documentaries would understand the copyright law better,” said Steele.

The M-A Chronicle’s editorial board suggests the news organization wasn’t interested in censoring the documentary, but rather wanted to set itself apart from the film.

“Being associated with the documentary seemed like it was more intended to cause panic than to thoughtfully comment

on the issue,” said Rehkopf. “We felt that would kind of undermine the community’s trust in our reporting.”

Rehkopf acknowledges that Steele “has every right to release the documentary without us.”

The lawsuit filed by PDE claims that the school district is “withholding requested records” related to the censorship “without lawful justification.” Steele and PDE speculate that the students were influenced by school staff and administrators to take legal action.

“We were never motivated to contact anyone at the district or administrators. Our adviser does

give us some advice sometimes, but we often go against that advice,” said Rehkopf. “This was definitely a decision that I was promoting and that the other editors decided to back me up on, but that was not influenced by the administration or the district or our adviser or anyone else.”

On April 4, PDE submitted a formal request to the district for records containing the phrases “Eli Steele,” “Man of Steele,” “Killing America,” “documentary,” “trailer” and “YouTube.” The purpose of the request was to inform the public of the M-A Chronicle’s copyright removal request, according to the suit.

“California was the first in the country to pass a law that specifically protects student journalists from censorship and editorial interference by administrators,” said Mike Hiestand, senior legal counsel at the Student Press Law Center. “In California, the students run the show.”

The district partially denied PDE’s request claiming that any materials used by the student journalists for publication and records related to advice provided to students in their editorial decision are “exempt from disclosure” as it’s not “reflective of the ‘public’s business,’” states the lawsuit.

Steele is appreciative of PDE’s



Nathalie Camens

A parents group has filed a lawsuit against the Sequoia Union High School District over the district’s handling of a dispute between student journalists and a filmmaker.

support in this legal battle but has expressed “regret that it has to come to this situation” and that “we have to understand that the school and school board are public entities.”

He said the marketing of his film was impacted while dealing with the legalities of the censorship. After the trailer was removed from all platforms, multiple screenings of the film were affected.

As a filmmaker, Steele explained that he uses copyrighted material for all of his work under Fair Use. He told The Almanac that he had no intention of asking for permission as it would take too long to ask every

copyright holder for permission to use their content in his films.

“The M-A Chronicle could have communicated to me before sending the cease and desist letter,” said Steele, who felt that the letter set a negative tone for the legal battle that followed.

Members of the editorial board said it was a “total shock” when they saw their footage in the documentary trailer and that things may have been different if Steele asked for permission prior to including their material in his film. ■

*Email Staff Writer
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jyoshikoshi@almanacnews.com.*

Employment

Schlumberger Technology Corporation is seeking a **Lead Engineer, Edge Intelligence**, in Menlo Park, CA, to be resp for the tech efforts rel to intelligence (ex: ML/AI based workloads, advanced algorithms, data processing) closer to our operations (Edge). Min bachelor’s or forgn ed equiv, in CS, Electrical Eng, or directly rel IT degree + 3 yrs of post-bacc exp as a Softwr Eng or rel role. Comp for this role btwn \$156,520 - \$166,520/year. Apply online & see complete req’s, visit <https://careers.slb.com/>, Job ID: 5236

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Preparing for floods with an eye toward equity

Stanford University and partners have developed a way for community planners to see how infrastructure designs, sea-level rise and severe storms will affect flood risk at the local level.

The model could be especially useful in the Bay Area, where the researchers studied significant flooding caused by winter storms in recent years. Planners can create better flood risk assessments and avoid creating new inequities. **SCAN TO READ THE SPOTLIGHT**



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Photos by Magali Gauthier

Portola Valley residents chat at a celebration of the 60th anniversary of the town's incorporation at the town center on June 23.

60 YEARS

continued from page 1

community on the importance of voting and created awareness for the election. Lund said he was instrumental in the fact that 80 percent of the electorate voted for the incorporation of the town.

During the event, the Historic Resources Committee hosted a quiz on the history of Portola Valley asking questions about the first town council,

planning commission and who the town attorney was. The town residents also reflected on nostalgic memories of life in 1964 with a review of what movies and books were popular, who won the Kentucky Derby, historical events and more.

"I have borne witness and try to record it so that people in the future will know who we are in this era, in the end of one century and the beginning of the next one," said Lund, who has been a town resident since 1980 and

a member of the historic committee since 1982.

The anniversary of the town is celebrated every 10 years and this is only one of the events that will commemorate the 60th anniversary, said Lund. Future events will invite the entire town to celebrate the history of Portola Valley. Plans are still in discussion and will be announced at a later date. ■

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

'We blend in rather than stand out and respect the environment and all the creatures that are within it.'

NANCY LUND,
PORTOLA VALLEY HISTORIC RESOURCES
COMMITTEE MEMBER



Attendees chat at the 60th anniversary celebration.

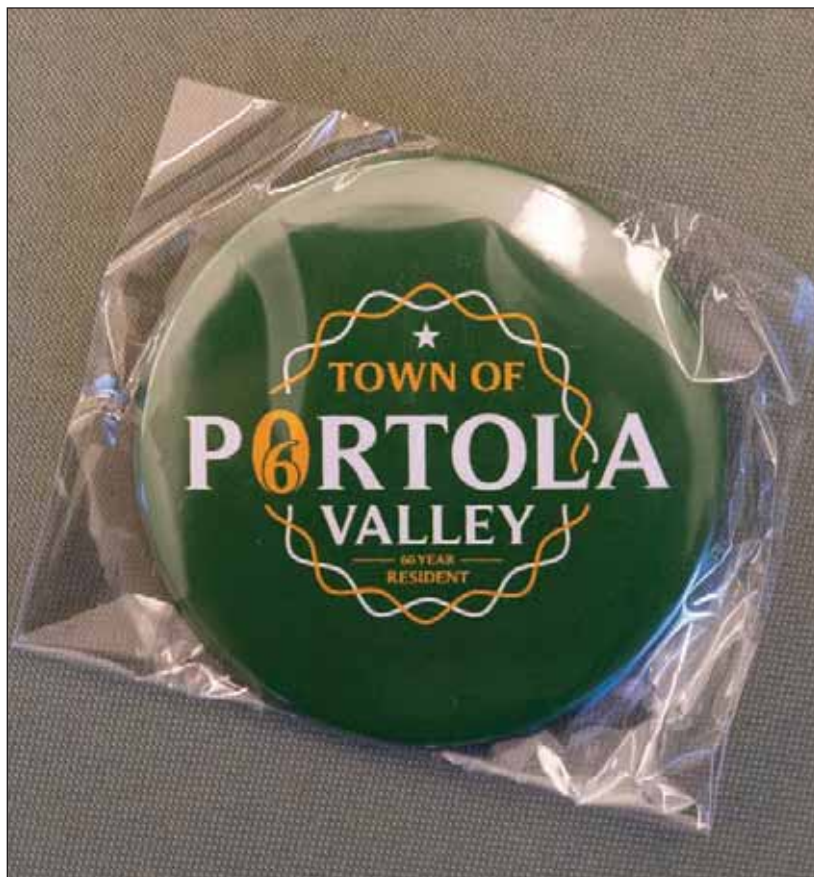


Sue Crane smiles while chatting with friends at the anniversary celebration.



‘I have borne witness and try to record it so that people in the future will know who we are in this era.’

NANCY LUND, PORTOLA VALLEY HISTORIC RESOURCES COMMITTEE MEMBER



Clockwise from top left: Nancy Lund, Portola Valley town historian and chair of the Historic Resources Committee, quizzes residents on events that happened in 1964, the year the town was incorporated; An attendee smiles while greeting a friend; Dianne Schilling, left, smiles along with a group of Portola Valley residents; A button reads “Town of Portola Valley 60 year resident.”

Teachers report low pay, high levels of stress in annual survey

Educators reported working average of 53 hours a week

By Diana Lambert / EdSource

Teachers work more hours with a lower average base pay than other working Americans with similar vocations, according to a national RAND survey released Tuesday, June 18.

Teachers who took part in the annual Rand State of the Teacher survey reported

working an average of 53 hours per week. The average similar worker logged 44 hours a week, according to the nonprofit research organization.

The teacher data was compared with the 2024 American Life Panel companion survey, a national survey of working adults.

Teachers ranked managing student behavior, low salaries

and administrative work outside of teaching as the top sources of stress in their jobs. Teachers who consider themselves underpaid said they would need a \$16,000 annual pay increase to be adequately compensated, according to the survey.

Black teachers who were surveyed reported working more hours and being paid less than their peers. They also were

more likely to say they have considered leaving their jobs.

Female teachers overall report higher levels of stress and burnout, and lower pay than their male counterparts.

“This is Rand’s fourth consecutive year collecting data that raise concerns about high stress and low pay in the teacher workforce,” said Sy Doan, lead author of the report and a

policy researcher at the organization. “Although teacher well-being seems to have stabilized at pre-pandemic levels, our data raise questions about the sustainability of the profession for Black teachers and female teachers in particular.” ■

This story, from the Bay City News Service, was originally published in EdSource.

PG&E Foundation funding \$900K in grants for independent restaurants and caterers

By Bay City News Service

The PG&E Foundation announced on Tuesday that it will contribute \$900,000 to the Restaurants Care Resilience Fund, which will provide grants of \$5,000 to 154 independently owned restaurants and commercial

caterers in PG&E's service area.

The fund was started in 2021 to support restaurants impacted economically by the COVID-19 pandemic. According to the California Restaurant Foundation, which manages the program, 1,325 grants have been awarded. This

is the first year that catering companies have been invited to apply.

Grants can be used to fund kitchen equipment, technology upgrades, employee training, retention bonuses and unforeseen hardships such as robbery, theft, vandalism, fires, floods and other disasters.

"We all have favorite gathering spots in our communities where we come to relax or celebrate a special occasion over a great meal," said Carla Peterman, executive vice president for corporate affairs at PG&E, and chair of the board at the PG&E Foundation. "Our local restaurants are where we

connect with one another and where memories are made. We are proud to continue our partnership with the California Restaurant Foundation to help boost our local eating establishments and our local economies."

Applications are open through June 30. ■

Air district launches new air quality notification service

By Bay City News Service

The Bay Area Air Quality Management District on Monday announced a new subscription service that can notify residents via text and email of incidents impacting county-level and regional

air quality.

Residents can sign up for air quality incident notifications on the district's website, at baaqmd.gov/contact-us/sign-up-for-information/air-quality-incident-notifications.

Subscribers can sign up to register for emails and text alerts

for incidents affecting specific counties or the entire Bay Area.

"This new subscription service will help the Air District get the word out quickly to Bay Area residents when incidents like industrial fires, refinery flaring, wildfires or widespread odors are affecting local or

regional air quality," said Dr. Philip Fine, executive officer of the air district.

The number of notifications may vary from one per month to more than 15, depending on the frequency of incidents, according to the air district website.

The service, the website also noted, should serve as a supplement, but not a replacement, to other air quality notification services, such as community warnings, Spare the Air alerts, local news coverage and the Environmental Protection Agency fire and smoke map. ■

FIRE MARSHAL'S SAFETY CORNER

FIREWORK SAFETY



The Menlo Park Fire Protection District is a **"NO Fireworks Zone"** serving the areas of Atherton, East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, and Unincorporated San Mateo County.

San Mateo County Sheriff's Office to host a series of fireworks buyback events in June

During the month of June, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office and partners will be hosting a series of anonymous fireworks buyback events across San Mateo County. The program aims to enhance community safety by encouraging residents to turn in fireworks, which are illegal in all areas of our fire district.

Want to enjoy a legal fireworks display?

If you want to see legal fireworks and have a wonderful 4th of July celebration, join the fun at Leo Ryan Park in neighboring Foster City. Port of Redwood City also does a display which can be seen from all over the Peninsula.

Anyone caught lighting, selling, or possessing fireworks faces fines from \$500-\$2,000+.

Did you know?

Hospitals treat **10,000** fireworks-related injuries a year. Children account for more than **one in three** injuries. Most injuries occur just before and just after the Fourth of July.

AIRPORT UPGRADES

continued from page 10

When asked in an interview whether she favors any of the alternatives presented at the meeting, Taylor said she would prefer the "do nothing" alternative when it comes the growth.

"Just develop healthier guidelines," Taylor said. "They should do that before pursuing any of the alternatives."

Others at the meeting pushed back against the criticism and touted the airport's value as a training ground for commercial pilots and its role in providing space for "life

flight" helicopters and other aircraft that bring in patients for treatment at Stanford University's medical facilities. Ben Hochman, a pilot who uses Palo Alto Airport, said he wished the airplane community did a better job talking about the facility's role in providing critical medical care.

"The pilot community wants what many of these concerned citizens want," Hochman said in an interview. "They want to do a better job about flying quietly so that neighbors can appreciate having the airport's benefits and they want to get rid of lead because it's bad for the environment."

Michael Mashack, an East Palo Alto resident and pilot, said he has been working with airport staff for years to address the noise and environmental complaints. The facility, he said, is a place where East Palo Alto youth can train to become pilots and air traffic controllers. Mashack urged patience in addressing the concerns expressed at the meeting. "It's kind of like a ship," Michael Mashack said. "We've got to turn the ship. And they recognize it and I think you hear it even more now." ■

Email Staff Writer Eleanor Raab at eraab@almanacnews.com.

HISTORY CORNER

Black and white negative shows an aerial view of the Bohannon Office Park in Menlo Park Business Park, looking southeast, in 1960.

During the 1930s and 1940s, David D. Bohannon developed 25,000 residential properties in Alameda, San Mateo, and Santa Clara Counties. His first commercial endeavors included the Hillsdale Shopping Center in San Mateo (opened in 1954), the San Lorenzo Village Shopping Center in San Lorenzo and Bohannon Industrial Office Park in Menlo Park, according to Bohannon Companies website.

Johnson & Johnson become the first tenant at 200-acre Bohannon Industrial Park in 1953, according to the website.

In the photo, you can see several large buildings in the office park next to Highway 101. The Southern Pacific Railway runs diagonally on right of the image. At the bottom of the photograph is Marsh Road leading to the Dumbarton Bridge.



Aerial view of Bohannon Office Park-Menlo Park Business Park by Norton Pearl, 1960. © Norton Pearl Photography / San Mateo County Historical Association (2015.1.1325.2)

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include:

John Lloyd Richardson, 89, a Portola Valley resident whose dynamic career in chemical engineering had him working in the fields of seawater purification, biotech and consulting for public utilities across the country, and who remained a philanthropic supporter of Stanford's Chemical Engineering Department and pursued his interest in jazz as a founding member of the Palo Alto Jazz Alliance, on May 13, 2024.

Barbara Metzger Baxter, 94, a 1951 Stanford graduate who worked as an editor for the Stanford Daily and remained an active alum and Stanford sports fan all her life, whose career led to technical writing for Hewlett-Packard, and who worked every year as an election official alongside hobbies including competitive bridge, scuba diving and traveling the world, on May 25, 2024.

Susan Anderes, 70, a Menlo Park resident who spent a lengthy 25-year career at Stanford University working as both a librarian and web developer, who worked on medical school courses related to nutrition and end-of-life care and co-authored two books, and who enjoyed photography and watercolor painting, skiing, snowshoeing, hiking, angling and bird-watching, on June 6, 2024.

Lupita Leal de Monroy, 85, a longtime resident of Menlo Park, who was known for her dedication to education, multilingual teaching, and poetry, died on May 29 in El Paso, Texas. She taught Spanish at Chabot College and the Cambridge Language Institute, published three poetry books, and attended international poetry conferences. A devoted parishioner at St. Raymond's and St. Anthony de Padua, she served as a Eucharistic Minister, Marriage Counselor, and Gospel Reader. Lupita had an active role in translating homilies and administering the Community Dining Room at St. Anthony's.

Dawn Podell, 80, a longtime resident of Palo Alto, who was dedicated to promoting diversity and community engagement, graduated from San Francisco State University with a degree in anthropology and was known for her artistic talents, culinary skills, and deep compassion for others. Dawn, a fluent Spanish speaker, served on several committees and the board of Peninsula School.

She married Allen Podell in 1966, raising their two daughters, Phoenix and Shani, while actively participating in their schools and activities. She was an accomplished artist with several art shows to her name, and she also worked as a bookkeeper for Allen's business before starting her own company in the 1980s. A talented cook, she hosted elaborate dinners for friends, family, and clients. She was also a passionate animal lover, enjoying her many cats in her later years.

Hazel H. Rand, 90, a decades-long resident of Palo Alto, who was dedicated to volunteer work at the Gamble Garden Center in her retirement, who received her BA in Anthropology from the University of Western Australia, and who was known for her creative landscape photography, avid traveling, and quick wit, passed away in Colorado. Born in Bath, England, Hazel served in the WRNs (Women's Royal Navy) and was an accomplished sailor with the Girl Guides - Sea Rangers. She worked at the Center for Radar Astronomy at Stanford University as a technical administrative assistant before retiring. She always enjoyed a good laugh with friends and her sharp wit was appreciated by many.

Kathryn "Kit" Elliott Reitman, 74, a longtime resident of Redwood City, who founded Reitman Physical Therapy and was a dedicated member of the American Physical Therapy Association, the North American Institute of Manual Therapy, and the American Academy of Orthopedic Manual Physical Therapists and who graduated from Colgate University as part of the first female class with a concentration in Psychology and completed her Master's Degree in Physical Therapy at the University of California, SF, and who was known for her beautiful smile, infectious laugh, brilliant mind, and zest for life, and who treasured summers at the family lake house in Maine, embodying her personal mantra: "Hike, swim, ski, kayak and travel!"

Rosalie Lefkowitz, 95, grew up in San Francisco, graduating from Lowell in 1946 and attending both Stanford University and UC Berkeley. She met her husband on a blind date before they married in San Francisco and later moved to Menlo Park and then South Palo Alto with their children. After a stint in Sweden, the

family returned home where Rosalie would remain active in community organizations and return to school for her master's in computer mathematics, working for over a decade as a programmer.

Diane Welles, 84, grew up in Whittier, California, where she attended high school. She later graduated from the Hollywood Presbyterian Hospital School of Nursing, and worked a variety of jobs, including many years at the Opera Co. in San Francisco and Mills Florist in Palo Alto. Diane was passionate about helping others, collecting and reading books, writing and spending time with her family. She is remembered as kind, funny, generous and wise.

Matthew Silverman, 40, was raised in Mountain View where he excelled as a math and science student and where he was diagnosed with Stage 4 Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma. He continued his studies and involvement in marching band throughout treatment, was cured and went on to study at UCLA. He then followed a calling to do missionary work in Haiti before being hired at SFSU to train graduates in clinical laboratory science and continuing his commitment to his faith as a youth pastor before his marriage and diagnosis of intestinal cancer.

Laurence Blickman, 71, a resident of Atherton, is fondly remembered as the CEO of BT Commercial Real Estate. He worked his way through UC Berkeley as a cook and car salesman, earning his degree in business, which led him to start his own company at a young age. He received many accolades in the position, being named Investment Broker of the Year multiple times, while still making time to explore his love of cooking, golfing and traveling with family, his two dogs, and as a devoted Cal sports fan. He and his wife Victoria have been married 22 years.

Barbara Perret, 71, is remembered for her vibrant laughter, eyes and life, and her love of her family and kindness to others. Her favorites, like Ringo Starr, the San Francisco Giants and Godzilla, remind others of her presence and celebratory nature. She was an accomplished baker and chef and a warm presence to others, always displaying care and concern for family and friends.

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

Public Notices

2 PROTECH & SERVE SECURITY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-297555

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) 2 PROTECH & SERVE SECURITY, located at 60 Amberwood Circle, South San Francisco, 94080.

Registered owner(s):
PROTECH SECURITY SERVICES, INC.
60 Amberwood Circle
South San Francisco, CA 94080
State of Incorporation/Organization: CA
This business is conducted by: a Corporation.

Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on May 24, 2024.
(ALM Jun 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2024)

THEY'RE REAL LASHES

TRL
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-297488

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) THEY'RE REAL LASHES, 2.) TRL, located at 812 S Railroad Ave Unit C, San Mateo, CA 94401.

Registered owner(s):
NASA BEAR LLC
812 S Railroad Ave Unit C
San Mateo, CA 94401
State of Incorporation/Organization: CA
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.

Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 04/22/2019.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on May 21, 2024.
(ALM Jun 14, 21, 28 and Jul 5, 2024)

ASBESTOS ABATEMENT CONTRACTOR
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-297683

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) ASBESTOS ABATEMENT CONTRACTOR, located at 1669 HIGGINS WAY, PACIFICA, CA 94044.

Registered owner(s):
PRO GENERAL CONTRACTOR LLC
PO BOX 224258
DALLAS, TX 75222
State of Incorporation/Organization: Texas
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.

Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 07, 2024.
(ALM Jun 21, 28, Jul 5 and 12, 2024)

IBERIA RESTAURANT
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: 1615211

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) IBERIA RESTAURANT, located at 740 El Camino Real, Belmont, CA, 94002.

Registered owner(s):
JOSE LUIS RELINQUE
740 El Camino Real
Belmont, CA, 94002
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on September 1984.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on September 01, 1986.
(ALM Jun 14, 21, 28 and Jul 5, 2024)

RENEWED INTERIORS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-297614

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) RENEWED INTERIORS, located at 1125

Birch Street, Montara, CA 94037. Mailing Address: PO Box 371036, Montara, CA 94037.

Registered owner(s):
MARIKA GARCIA
PO Box 371036
Montara, CA 94037
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 03, 2024.
(ALM Jun 14, 21, 28 and Jul 5, 2024)

TAVERNA
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-297663

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) TAVERNA, located at 3130 Alpine Road #300, Portola Valley, CA 94028.

Registered owner(s):
TAVERNA PORTOLA VALLEY LLC
3130 Alpine Road #300
Portola Valley, CA 94028
State of Incorporation/Organization: CA
This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.

Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 06, 2024.
(ALM Jun 21, 28, Jul 5 and 12, 2024)

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

Case No.: 24-CIV-02974

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner: Jeffery Armando Avila-Cerritos filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

JEFFERY 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 matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING: 07/22/2024, 9:00AM, Southern Branch: Hall of Justice and Records of the Superior Court of California, County of San Mateo located at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063.

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

ALMANAC
Date: 05/21/2024
Elizabeth K. Lee
JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
(ALM Jun 21, 28, Jul 5 and 12, 2024)

The Almanac is adjudicated to publish in San Mateo County.

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

The deadline is Sunday at 11:59 pm. Visit [AlmanacNews.com/legal_notices/](https://www.AlmanacNews.com/legal_notices/)
For assistance email LegalNotices@AlmanacNews.com.

SUNSET CAMPUS

continued from page 1

Oisín Heneghan, the founder of N17, confirmed that the company would respond to the city's comments and resubmit the application.

"We are progressing through the typical SB (Senate Bill) 330 application process," said Heneghan in an email to this news organization. "Cities always have comments on applications, we respond to any additional information they request as part of the normal approval process."

Once the city deems the application complete, the city can then begin reviewing the plans for compliance with development standards, environmental regulations, city requirements and any other applicable standards.

The large development has stirred up controversy in Menlo Park. Community members have petitioned against the development due to the scale of the proposed buildings.

What is builder's remedy?

Builder's remedy, also known as SB 330, is a state provision that allows developers to streamline building application processes and bypass local land-use regulations if a city does not have a compliant Housing Element.

Menlo Park's housing element was certified by the state on March 21 of



Andrea Gemmet

The office complex at 80 Willow Road in Menlo Park was designed for Sunset Magazine and served as its headquarters from 1951 to 2015.

this year. However, state certification does not prevent builder's remedy proposals that were submitted prior to the certification date from moving forward.

N17 filed its preliminary builder's remedy application last summer, before Menlo Park had a compliant housing element, and filed the formal application on May 24 of this year.

Menlo Park has received one other formal application filed under builder's remedy, for a 140 unit multi-family residential building

located at 104 Constitution Drive. This building would be located on a portion of the Vasara project site, which is nearing initial occupancy. Menlo Park must decide whether the 104 Constitution Drive application is complete by July 4, 2024.

You can continue to follow along with the project process on Menlo Park's website. To learn more about the proposed development, visit willowpark.life. ■

Email Staff Writer Eleanor Raab at eraab@almanacnews.com.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

continued from page 6

Following the parade, a festival will be held in Burgess Park, involving food, family-friendly activities, live music and more.

Willow Oaks Park Playground and Dog Park to reopen June 29

Menlo Park is holding a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the reopening of the Willow Oaks Park Playground at Dog Park from 10 to 11 a.m. on Saturday, June 29. The ceremony will be held at 460 Willow Road, but attendees are asked to park in the lot at the corner of Pope and Elm streets at 475 Pope St.

The park has been closed since October 2023 as upgrades were installed, including playground renovations, new picnic tables and benches, reconstructed pathways, dog park enhancements, new restroom facilities and more.

Additional work will be continuing on the tennis courts, restroom building and parking lot throughout the summer, though the park will remain open. All work is expected to be completed later this summer.

Peninsula Clean Energy offers up to \$1,000 toward e-bike to qualified residents

Peninsula Clean Energy's E-Bikes for Everyone program is helping income-qualified residents purchase or lease an e-bike. Bikes can be purchased through any qualifying bike shop, and leases will be offered through Ridepanda at a discounted rate.

Applications opened on June 12, and funds will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

Learn more and see if you qualify at peninsula.cleanenergy.com/ebikes/.

—Almanac staff

The first step in planning your weekend starts here

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- Fun and free
- Art exhibits
- Theater
- Lectures and learning

Artscene

PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCES IN ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

OUR GUIDE TO *Fourth of July* CELEBRATIONS ON THE PENINSULA AND BEYOND

From parades and fireworks to chili, chalk art and drone shows, there are lots of ways to mark the day

Courtesy Brandon Patoc

Edwin Outwater will conduct the San Francisco Symphony in the annual Fourth of July Fireworks Spectacular concert at Shoreline Amphitheatre, with special guest Jessica Vosk.

By Heather Zimmerman

Though the Fourth of July this year falls just one day short of making it a long holiday weekend, there are still plenty of ways to make the most of a Thursday off and celebrate. There are favorite traditions, old and new, from Redwood City's longstanding parade and Woodside's rodeo to Palo Alto's chili cookoff and the San Francisco Symphony's annual concert at Shoreline Amphitheatre. After dark, there are fireworks displays along the Peninsula and in the South Bay, though the city of Sunnyvale this year is forgoing the bang, but not the sparkle, with a drone light show stepping in for conventional fireworks. Here's what's happening around the Peninsula, Coastside and the South Bay for the Fourth:

FOSTER CITY

Foster City Fourth of July

The event kicks off with a pancake breakfast, followed by a family and dog parade. Throughout the day, visitors can enjoy games and food trucks. Live entertainment includes performances by Andy Z, Smokin' Slice of Mojo and Fog City Swampers. Capping off the event is a fireworks show around 9:30 p.m.

July 4, 9 a.m.-9:45 p.m., at Leo Ryan Park,

650 Shell Blvd, Foster City, fostercity.org.

LOS ALTOS HILLS

Los Altos Hills Fourth of July parade

The 13th annual parade kicks off at Los Altos Hills Town Hall, marches down Fremont Road, and concludes at Gardner Bullis School, where participants can enjoy drinks and watermelon. The parade will include six to eight horses from Los Altos Hills Horseman's Association.

July 4, gather at 9 a.m., parade begins at 10 a.m. at 26379 Fremont Road, Los Altos Hills. losaltoshills.ca.gov.

MOUNTAIN VIEW

San Francisco Symphony Fireworks Spectacular

Edwin Outwater conducts the San Francisco Symphony in its annual Fourth of July concert. The program features patriotic favorites, plus guest vocalist Jessica Vosk joining the symphony to perform popular songs celebrating the power of heroes from "Wicked," "Beaches" and more. The concert closes with a fireworks display. As part of the event, Shoreline Amphitheatre hosts an evening of family fun starting at 5 p.m., with kids' activities, favorite American foods and an afterparty with DJ Billy Vidal.

July 4, 7 p.m., at Shoreline Amphitheatre, One Amphitheatre Parkway, Mountain View, \$26-\$163, livenation.com

PALO ALTO

Palo Alto Chili Cookoff and Summer Festival

Palo Alto's annual Fourth of July celebration includes free chili tasting, plus food trucks, beer and margaritas, live music with Steady Eddy and the Shakers, and games and activities for kids. The cookoff features divisions for individuals and groups, with the first-place winner taking home \$1,000. Guests are encouraged to bring chairs or picnic blankets and reusable water bottles.

July 4, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., at Mitchell Park, 600 E. Meadow Drive, Palo Alto. cityofpaloalto.org.

REDWOOD CITY

Redwood City Independence Day Parade, Festival and Fireworks

The Peninsula Celebration Association hosts its annual Fourth of July parade in Redwood City. Voice artist Kaitlyn Robrock will be the grand marshal. A pancake breakfast in support of local firefighters kicks off the day. The celebrations also include a festival with arts and crafts, food, drinks, community booths

and kid-friendly activities at Courthouse Square. A fireworks show at the Port of Redwood City concludes the day.

All events take place on July 4. Parade begins at 10 a.m. at Brewster Avenue and Winslow Street, Redwood City. Pancake breakfast 8-11 a.m. at Fire Station 9, 755 Marshall St., Redwood City. Breakfast is \$10. The festival takes place 9 a.m.-5 p.m. at Courthouse Square, 2200 Broadway, Redwood City. Fireworks at 9:30 p.m. at the Port of Redwood City, 675 Seaport Blvd., Redwood City. parade.org.

Chalk Full of Fun

The festival, marking its 10th anniversary this year, features chalk artists creating colorful temporary works of art in Redwood City's Courthouse Square on July 3 and 4. The event, presented by the Redwood City Parks and Arts Foundation, invites visitors to take part by registering online for a square and free supplies to create their own works of art.

July 3-4, 8 a.m.-6 p.m., at Courthouse Square, 2200 Broadway, Redwood City. rwcparf.org/chalk-full-of-fun

An Old-Fashioned Fourth

The San Mateo County History Museum hosts an event inspired by the "Come Out and Play"

theme of Redwood City's parade, with crafts from the 1880s, including pinwheels and paper flags. The museum will also show summer-themed films from its archives, including a 1915 baseball game between Santa Clara University and Redwood City. July 4, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. (films at 1 p.m.), at San Mateo County History Museum, 2200 Broadway, Redwood City. \$2-\$3. historysmc.org.

MENLO PARK

Menlo Park Fourth of July

Start the day with a people parade at Burgess Park — guests are encouraged to dress up in red, white and blue and decorate their bikes or wagons to join in the fun. After the parade, stay at the park for food, games, family-friendly activities and live music with rock/R&B band Lady and the Tramps. The city is also offering a special \$4 family swim day at city-owned swim centers (Burgess Pool, 501 Laurel St. and Belle Haven Pool, 100 Terminal Ave.) July 4, 11 a.m.-2 p.m., at Burgess Park, 501 Laurel St., Menlo Park. menlopark.gov.

WOODSIDE

Woodside Junior Rodeo

The 72nd annual event features rodeo events such as barrel racing

See **FOURTH OF JULY**, page 20

A feast for the eyes: Art Center's latest exhibit explores cuisine, community and culture

'What's Cookin'?' is the final part of the Palo Alto Art Center's series of shows delving into issues around food

By Akhil Joondeph

Hungry for a visual treat? A diverse and eclectic collection of food-inspired artworks will populate the Palo Alto Art Center's galleries as the center opens their latest exhibition, "What's Cookin'?" on June 22.

Featuring over 60 artworks from over 50 artists, this juried exhibition is the final installment in the Art Center's year of food-inspired presentations.

The exhibit's works range from tapestries that honor indigenous ingredients to pointed commentary on the inhumanity of meat consumption, and were selected by juror Greg Flood, the director of Paul Thiebaud Gallery in San Francisco and an experienced local curator.

"I think what's so compelling about food is that it's something that we all relate to, because we all have a relationship to food," Flood said. "Some of it can be quite wonderful and memory-evoking, bringing back memories of family, family members, traditions, and things like that. But also, it can bring back hints of trauma."

A large and diverse selection of artworks were hand-selected by Flood to represent a multiplicity of different relationships with food.

"There are a range of artists of all different career levels," Palo Alto Art Center Director Karen Kienzle said. "There are some very young artists. There are some older artists. And these artists come from so many different cultural backgrounds. You will see Chinese noodles. You will see ramen. You will see Iraqi date palms, from an artist who was born in Algeria to Iraqi parents. You will see Filipino food. You will see artists who are addressing

things like additives in food and genetically modified food. You have artists who are taking fresh approaches looking at familiar foods, and artists who are kind of reflecting back on their own individual and cultural associations to food."

One of the featured artists, Rayos Magos, is a mixed media artist based in San Jose. Three of his works are featured in the show.

"I was already working on a prior series, building a body of work that kind of looks at this sort of dual identity I have as kind of a Mexican American person," Magos said. "These pieces take different fabrics, including one that almost looks like a tablecloth — the technical name of the fabric is gingham — which feels very American in a way, with the red and white checkers. And then on top I embroidered or stitched in elements that come from Mexico and the Americas: maíz, or corn, and nopales, or cactus."

In addition to these two smaller pieces Magos had already been developing, he also created a larger work specifically for this exhibition that also comments on his identity as a Mexican-American while also offering a critique of labels and credits in the food industry.

"I love avocado," Magos said. "In Spanish, it's aguacate, which is actually an indigenous word that comes from nahuatl. And in the original mock up, I found, you know, an image of an avocado that I really liked online, and the sticker on it said 'Dole,' which is a very American brand. In my research and travels to Mexico throughout the span of the last 10 years, I actually went to the Michoacan state on the west coast of Mexico, and they're actually the producers of the avocados

that we import from Mexico. So I opted to swap out the 'Dole' sticker for a 'Made in Mexico' sticker in the piece."

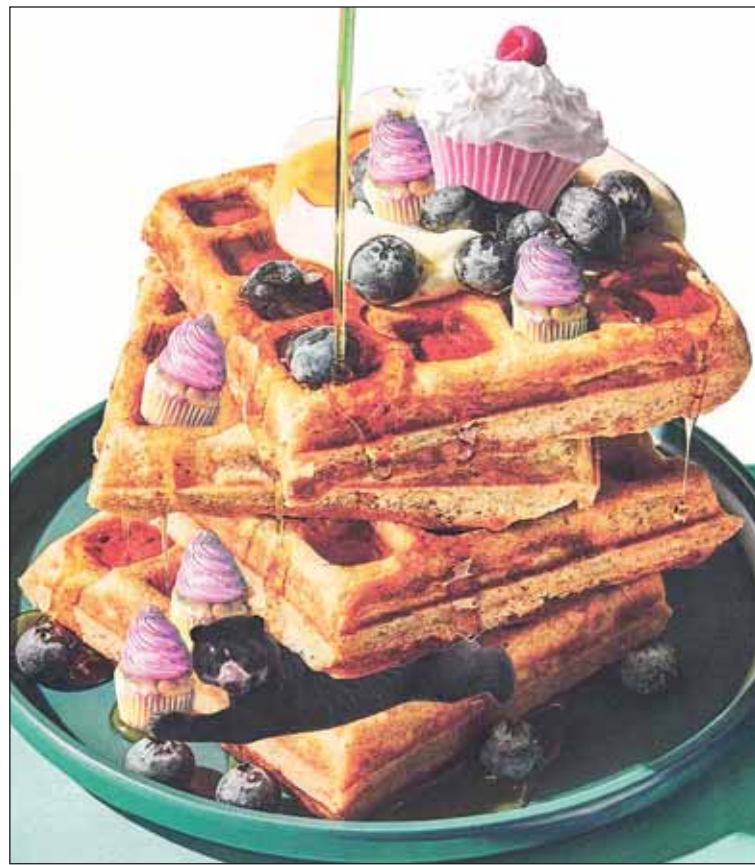
Flood described Magos' work, as well as the rest of the exhibition's collections, as falling into four larger themes: food as a tool for gathering, food as a means of cultural exchange, the preparation of food, and the intersections between food and ecological issues. These pieces range from small paintings to large interactive works.

"(Artists) Kent Manske and Nanette Wylde created a large-scale participatory piece," Flood said. "What it looks like is a giant mason jar with the word 'preserves' written across it. And they invite viewers to write on a little tag with a little string on it. And they write on it something that they would love to preserve as part of their culture or their food, and then they tie it on to that board. So it's a really wonderful community engagement piece."

The exhibition is opening in tandem with Martha Sakellariou's "Revolution is a Dinner Party," a stand-alone installation also at the Art Center that utilizes the imagery of a dinner party to open questions about domesticity, identity, and revolution.

Both of these exhibitions highlight local artistic voices and unique perspectives, something Kienzle said is one of the highlights of juried exhibitions like "What's Cookin'?"

"Juried shows are an opportunity for more emerging artists to actually put their work out there," Kienzle said. "There are a couple artists in the show who have very limited exhibition histories, so they're just getting started. And so it's a great opportunity for the community to see their work and for them to get an experience of



Courtesy Chung-Fen Schildan

"Overindulgence," collage on paper by Chung-Fen Schildan.

exhibiting in a kind of professional environment."

Through both the diverse set of artists represented and the accessibility of food as the exhibition's focal point, Kienzle said that she believes this exhibition has the power to unite the local community.

"It's really an inclusive exhibition," Kienzle said. "We see these shows as a way to give back to the local artistic community, to provide a lot of artists a chance to exhibit their work at the Art Center, and for us to showcase the vibrancy of our local Northern California artistic community."

The art center hosts a Friday night event and reception on June 21, with artists featured

in the "What's Cookin'?" exhibition, hands-on activities, as well as a special performance in conjunction with the exhibition "Revolution is a Dinner Party: An Installation by Martha Sakellariou." Food and drink will also be available for purchase. ■

Akhil Joondeph is a contributing writer.

"What's Cookin'" runs through Aug. 18 at the Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto. Admission is free. For more information, visit cityofpaloalto.org.

FOURTH OF JULY

continued from page 19

and pole-bending. Guests can also enjoy pony rides, a petting zoo, a mechanical bull, vendors and a barbecue. A pre-rodeo dinner dance takes place the evening before the rodeo.

July 3, 6 p.m. pre-rodeo dinner; tickets are \$20-\$30;

July 4, 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. rodeo. Tickets are \$15-\$20.

Both dinner and rodeo take place at Mounted Patrol of San Mateo County, 521 Kings Mountain Road, Woodside, mpsmc.org/rodeo.

COASTSIDE

Half Moon Bay OP Fashioned Fourth of July Parade and Block Party

Kick off the day with a pancake breakfast, then gather on Main Street at noon to see floats, classic cars, horses, dance troupes, youth sports teams and local dignitaries march along the parade route. After the parade, enjoy a block party featuring beer and wine, live music, a kids zone and a patriotic outfit contest, plus a festival hosted by the I.D.E.S. organization, with live music, over 20 artisans, food and beverages, axe-throwing, a kids' corner

with games and activities, jump houses and more.

July 4, pancake breakfast 8-11:30 a.m., at Portuguese Culture Center, 724 Kelly Ave., Half Moon Bay; suggested donation is \$12; parade starts at noon on Main Street with block party to follow; I.D.E.S. Festival 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Attendance is free. july4th.miramarevents.com.

Pacifica Fourth of July Celebration

The city of Pacifica hosts an event with live music, food and drinks, games and rides.

July 4, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., at Frontierland Park, 900 Yosemite Drive, Pacifica. cityofpacifica.org.

SOUTH BAY

Cupertino Fourth of July

A pancake breakfast opens the day at the Quinlan Community Center, followed by a flag-raising ceremony and children's parade at neighboring Memorial Park, where the event concludes with a concert by Phil n' the Blanks.

July 4, pancake breakfast 7:30-11 a.m.; ceremony and parade at 10 a.m.; concert 10:30 a.m.-noon.

Quinlan Community Center, 10185 N. Stelling Road, Cupertino and Memorial Park, 21121 Stevens Creek Blvd, Cupertino, cupertino.org.

Great America Fourth of July

Guests at the theme park can spend the day enjoying rides and games and take part in an all-you-can-eat Fourth of July cookout, featuring barbecued meats, sides, desserts and drinks. The day concludes with a fireworks display.

See **FOURTH OF JULY**, page 21

Worth a Look



Courtesy Jay Blakesberg

Jackie Greene plays The Guild Theatre on June 29.

Jackie Greene

Singer-songwriter Jackie Greene performs his distinct style of Americana and roots to The Guild. His laidback yet soulful vocals are equally at home over a breezy bluegrass tune as a blues-inflected ballad and Greene's pointed lyrics on everything from politics to the grind of everyday life hit home. A one-time lead guitarist for The Black Crowes, Greene could himself be a one-person band, as he plays guitar, piano, harmonica, mandolin, banjo and drums. R.O. Shapiro opens.

June 29, 8 p.m. at The Guild Theatre, 949 El Camino Real, Menlo Park, \$40, guildtheatre.com.

Richard Howell

Top Bay Area saxophonist Richard Howell performs a very personal concert at the Stanford Jazz Festival, paying tribute to sax great John Coltrane's 1965 album "A Love Supreme." Coltrane was an early inspiration for Howell, according to his website. He brings his own spin to the influential album, "preserving its deep emotional core while incorporating his own improvisational brilliance," as the festival website describes it. Howell is a multitalented, versatile artist who has performed or recorded with a who's who in music, including Etta James, Chaka Khan, Maurice White, B.B. King, Taj Mahal and many others. He's joined in this performance by Glen Pearson, piano, Gary Brown, bass and Deszon Claiborne, drums.

June 28, 7:30 p.m., at Campbell Recital Hall, Stanford, \$18-\$47, stanfordjazz.org.

Stanford Theatre

It may be kicking off with a movie famous for the classic holiday tune "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas," but the Stanford Theatre's latest program forecasts a sunny, romantic summer. The theater is featuring a celebration of the films of director Vincente Minnelli. He was especially well-known for his innovative hand with musicals, which is on full display in films such as "An American in Paris" (showing July 25-28) and "Gigi" (Aug. 8-11), both of which garnered Oscars for Best Picture. His body of work also includes such musicals as "Brigadoon" (Aug. 3-4) and "Bells Are Ringing" (Aug. 22-25), but Minnelli also had many credits directing romantic comedies, including the original 1950 "Father of the Bride" starring Elizabeth Taylor (July 11-14) and the drama "Madame Bovary" (July 25-28). The program opens June 28-30 with "Meet Me in St. Louis," which chronicles a year in the life of the Smith family in turn-of-the-20th-century St. Louis, and the whirlwind wartime romance "The Clock," both starring Judy Garland.

The Vincente Minelli festival runs Thursdays-Sundays, through Aug. 25 at the Stanford Theatre, 221 University Ave., Palo Alto. Tickets are \$7 general/\$5 seniors and students. For a full schedule, visit stanfordtheatre.org.

FOURTH OF JULY

continued from page 20

July 4, 10 a.m.-10 p.m. at 4701 Great America Parkway, Santa Clara. Cookout is \$29.95 for children 12 and under and \$59.95 for adults, in addition to park admission. Park admission starts at \$44.99 for children and \$49.99 for adults. cagreatamerica.com.

Los Gatos Symphony in the Park

The town of Los Gatos hosts an event featuring a children's bike and stroller parade, flag-raising ceremony and performance by the San Jose Wind Symphony. There will also be food trucks on hand.

July 4, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at Oak Meadow Park, 233 Blossom Hill Road, Los Gatos, losgatosca.gov.

Rose White & Blue Parade and Festival

The South Bay tradition is a parade highlighting local organizations and performing groups such as Santa Clara Performance and Elite Dance Team, Ensamble Folclórico Colibrí, Dài Festival, La Cumbiamba Colombiana and others. The festival includes Pro Wrestling Revolution Lucha Libre matches and Skateboarding



Vivian Cromwell

Guests taste chili, relax in the shade and play games at the Chili Cook Off and Summer Festival at Mitchell Park in Palo Alto on July 4, 2023.

lessons for the community, as well as vendors and performances.

July 4, 9:45 a.m.-3 p.m., at 1100 Shasta Ave., San Jose, rwbsj.org.

Santa Clara Fourth of July

The city of Santa Clara celebrates with a lineup of food trucks serving a variety of cuisines, activities and live entertainment featuring local bands and performers. The day closes with fireworks (from Great America).

July 4, 4-10 p.m., at Mission College, 3000 Mission College Blvd., Santa Clara, santaclaraca.gov.

Sunnyvale Drone Show

The city of Sunnyvale marks the holiday without a bang, but still with plenty of spectacle, hosting a drone show that will light up the sky in colorful shapes and patterns. The event also kicks off with live DJ music.

July 4, 6:30 p.m. parking opens; 7 p.m. DJ music; 9:15 p.m. drone show; Great Meadow at Baylands Park, 999 E. Caribbean Drive, Sunnyvale, free, sunnyvale.ca.gov. ■

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



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Food & Drink

THE SURCHARGE DEBATE

How a ban on surcharges could impact Peninsula restaurants

By Adrienne Mitchel

The price a Californian sees should be the price they pay," states the California attorney general's guidance on Senate Bill 478, often colloquially referred to as the "junk fee ban," which is set to take effect July 1.

The bill aims to help with price transparency for consumers, banning a business from charging any additional fees that aren't sales tax or shipping. For restaurants, these additional fees include surcharges like "healthy living" and service fees.

"Every consumer deserves honest, up-front pricing," said state Sen. Bill Dodd, D-Napa, co-author of the bill, in a press release.

And while SB 478 undoubtedly benefits consumers, Peninsula restaurant owners who are currently implementing surcharges as a way to combat inflation and high labor costs say it will lead to higher prices on menus and make it harder to run their businesses amid continuous turmoil in the restaurant industry.

"I firmly believe that these kinds of policies don't help us, they don't help the small businesses, and whether or not the intention is good, I just feel like there's a lot of damage being done," said Ted Kim, owner of Steins Beer Garden in Mountain View and founder of the annual Mountain View Oktoberfest. "Sometimes I feel like they're trying to treat a cut on the hand of a terminally ill cancer patient."

WHAT IS SB 478?

SB 478, also known as the "Honest Pricing Law" or "Hidden Fees Statute," makes it "illegal for businesses to advertise or list a price for a good or service that does not include all required fees or charges other than certain government taxes and shipping costs," said the California attorney general's guidance on the bill. Notably, the FAQ states "Fees for optional services or features do not need to be included in the advertised price" but "optional services or features" are not defined.

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed SB 478 into law in October 2023. The California Chamber of Commerce, the Family Business Association of California and the California Restaurant Association are among the groups opposed to the law, and the California Restaurant Association sent a letter last month requesting changes to California Attorney General Rob Bonta's FAQ, saying it was a "misinterpretation of the legislature's intent and the law."

On June 6, Dodd and state Sen. Scott Wiener co-wrote an amendment to SB 478 that, if passed, would allow California restaurants to continue charging automatic fees as long as they disclose those fees "clearly and conspicuously" on menus or "other display." Failure to do so allows a consumer to recover or obtain actual damages of at least \$1,000. That amendment, SB 1524, passed the Senate chamber

and must pass the Assembly chamber to be enacted. In a June 20 interview on KQED, Dodd said SB 1524 will go to the Assembly floor before summer recess, which begins on July 3.

While the California Restaurant Association supports SB 1524, there are a slew of unintended consequences that could result from its passage, said Joseph Dworak, former attorney and adjunct professor at San Jose State University's College of Business and Department of Hospitality, Tourism, & Event Management.

With no further clarification on what displaying additional fees "clearly and conspicuously" on menus or "other display" actually means, it opens up the floodgates to increased litigation because of the enforcement statute, Dworak said. And while large corporate restaurants likely have lawyers to help them comply with the statute, small business owners may not be fully aware of the technicalities of the new law, he said. Similar litigation to that of ADA serial plaintiff Scott Johnson, who filed thousands of disability lawsuits, sometimes forcing restaurants into permanent closure, could ensue.

"If the result of this is increased litigation, that's not going to bode well for the industry," Dworak said.

And despite Bonta releasing an FAQ for the surcharge ban, he doesn't define "fees for optional services or features," which are exempt from the law.

"What becomes optional?"



Photo illustration Paul Llewellyn

Dworak asked. "The restaurant you're at, you use the restroom to wash your hands. Well, maybe that's an additional fee. Maybe you have a certain food requirement the way you want to have something prepared because you have an allergy or whatever. Maybe that's an additional fee."

HOW DID SURCHARGES BECOME SO PREVALENT?

Restaurant surcharges began to increase in commonality in 2008, when the San Francisco Health Care Security Ordinance, which required businesses with more than 20 employees to set aside money for their workers' health care, went into effect. In 2011, the city amended the ordinance to ensure money from fees like "health surcharge" or "healthy S.F. surcharge" was actually being used for employees' health care. After 2013, when the City Attorney's Office found some restaurants violated the provision, most restaurants changed the fee's name to more generic "SF mandates," according to the San Francisco Chronicle.

As the practice became more widespread, it began to trickle out of the city and down the

Peninsula, particularly booming during the pandemic to help with rising costs. Despite its prevalence, there is no labor code that governs service charges, said Servando Sandoval, labor attorney at Spencer Fane LLP, which helps with labor matters at Flea Street in Menlo Park.

"When it comes to service charges, a restaurant operator-owner, if they wanted to, could charge a service charge and keep 100% of that," Sandoval said. "But at the same time, there's been lawsuits that have been filed. ... At least one Court of Appeals has ruled that those fees belong to the employees and not to the restaurant owner."

WHY ARE RESTAURANTS USING SURCHARGES?

Kim implemented a 4% surcharge a few years ago, bumping it up to 5% at the beginning of this year due to the increase in minimum wage.

"We've been open for over 11 years now, and I still have people here from the very beginning," Kim said. "We want to be able to help support their livelihoods, but it's so hard. ... We opened in 2013, and back then minimum wage was \$9. And now it's \$18.75. I mean, it's more than 100% plus, so there's only so much we can do."

"When you increase wages, I think the other side of the coin is a lot of these businesses have to raise the prices to accommodate for that wage increase well," he added. "Then what do you have? You have this unending cycle of just inflation and businesses not able to keep up with their expenses."

And it's not just the cost of labor that's causing restaurants' margins to shrink — it's the cost of goods too.

"I feel like just at a base level, everything's gone up maybe 15%-20%," Kim said. "As much as I'd like to increase menu prices 15% to accommodate that, I don't want to do that as well. That just



Anna Hoch-Kenney

Line cook Laura Herrera, who has worked at Flea Street for seven years, puts the finishing touches on a dish at Flea Street on June 20.



Anna Hoch-Kenney

Anthony Le takes an order from customers at Flea Street on June 20. Le works front of house as a waiter and back of house as a pastry chef, which Flea Street encourages with its "Heart of House" approach.

doesn't make a lot of sense."

For Scott Nishiyama, owner of Ethel's Fancy in Palo Alto, staff retention has been a challenge since opening in 2022. In an attempt to offer more competitive wages, Nishiyama bumped up his 5% surcharge to 6% earlier this year.

"Having that surcharge helps us retain people that we want to keep on our payroll," he said.

While Nishiyama considered increasing menu prices, he felt that explaining a surcharge to consumers is easier than explaining an increase in dish prices.

"The surcharge by no means is something that we take as added to our profit," Nishiyama said. "Restaurants have razor-thin margins, and some months we don't make money, and some days we barely make any money. We're not doing this to take money from our guests and put it into our pockets. It's really just to keep things running and keep the lights on."

Two years ago, Alice's Restaurant in Woodside implemented a 3% surcharge, slowly increasing it to 6% before deciding to fold the fee into menu prices — a decision that ironically went into effect just after a photo of a sign notifying patrons of the 6% surcharge went viral on Reddit, putting Alice's Restaurant under a lot of heat.

"We'd been trying to get these implemented to get rid of service charges because there was a lot of negative connotation to it," said Andy Kerr, who co-owns Alice's along with his brother Jamie Kerr. "We finally agreed to the price changes, and we got it printed on Friday (May 10). And the Reddit post came out on Saturday morning. That's dumb luck."

The Kerrs said the decision to implement a surcharge was largely due to inflation. For example, pre-pandemic bacon was \$3.50 a pound and now it's \$5.50, largely due California regulations on humane pig treatment, and eggs shot up from \$25



Anna Hoch-Kenney

Server Julio Perez carries food out as Chef Bryan Thuerk prepares dishes in the kitchen at Flea Street on June 20.

per case to \$100 per case, they said. With profit margins being compressed by at least 50%, the brothers decided to increase their surcharge as inflation increased, rather than continuously reprinting menu prices.

"I think the restaurant owners are just basically trying to stay alive," Andy said. "And I think people need to understand that this is not trying to line our pockets with ill-gotten gains."

Since the pandemic, Flea Street owner Jesse Cool has been using a 3% fee for employee health care and a 20% surcharge to bypass tipping laws that don't benefit back-of-the-house workers (i.e. cooks and dishwashers).

"In the state of California, with tipping, the law says that the people who are entitled to the money left on the table are those who are near the table," Cool said.

While it's legal to ask front-of-the-house workers to sign an agreement to share tips with back-of-the-house workers, by law the majority of tips must be given to front-of-the-house employees. But since California rules that mandatory service

charges are not tips and are the restaurant's property, instituting a mandatory service charge means an employer can distribute the money from the service charge in any ratio they deem fit, Cool said.

"The reason we're doing it is because after the pandemic, nobody wanted to come back to work, and the reason they didn't want to come back to work was because they were not making enough money to survive," she said.

While tipping is generally thought of as a way to reward good service, Cool said her "heart-of-the-house" business model motivates her team more to provide excellent service.

"It used to be that the service staff would show up for five or six hours and make all the money, and yet somebody in the kitchen is working eight hours and has no possibility," she said. "It's not designated by front-of-the-house and back-of-the-house now. It's designated by how much determination you have and how many hours you want to work."

WHAT IT COULD BE LIKE WITHOUT SURCHARGES

If SB 1524 does not pass and surcharges at restaurants become illegal, diners can expect to see increased menu prices. Alice's Restaurant already increased its prices 7% on average to make up for the lack of surcharge. Flea Street plans to raise prices to increase hourly wages for back-of-the-house workers, who will no longer benefit from a service fee.

"Our plan is to make sure that we do not take away the benefits that our staff respectfully started receiving once we had a consistent service charge and healthy living percentage fee charged to guests," Cool said.

out of California, but over the last few years it's seriously been on my mind. We built our success here based in Mountain View and we love this place, but when I think about trying to expand here, I don't know that we can, as much as I want to."

'A SYMPTOM OF A BIGGER PROBLEM'

One way or another, surcharges are being used to offset rising labor costs. But is the use of surcharges the most effective way to do that? Donato Scotti, owner of Donato Enoteca in Redwood City, argues no.

"To me, there are fights that would be worth having that are more important than the surcharge that could help restaurants' labor costs," he said.

One solution he proposes is tip credit, a system the majority of U.S. states use (except Alaska, California, Minnesota, Montana, Nevada, Oregon and Washington) in which an employer can pay an employee less than minimum wage if that employee earns enough from tips to meet the minimum wage.

San Jose State professor Dworak proposes a different solution: adjusting the tax code to offset restaurants' labor cost burden. Instead of imposing an "arbitrary number that we pick out of the sky" for minimum wage, implement tax rebates, he argues. For example, set up a program where restaurant employees enrolled in college can put what they pay in taxes toward paying off their tuition.

"This whole issue about passing on fees is just kind of a symptom of a bigger problem I think we're all facing on a going forward basis," Dworak said. "The pressures on the hospitality industry are much larger and need much more attention than what this statute deals with." ■

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Anna Hoch-Kenney

Bartender and gardener Eloy Martinez serves drinks at Flea Street on June 20. Martinez has bartended at Flea Street for 16 years.



Anna Hoch-Kenney

Edgar Cameros, who has worked as a line cook at Flea Street for nine years, prepares soup on June 20.

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