Localshonor Fourth of July at 72nd Woodside Junior Rodeo

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

On July 4, over 2,500 people attended the 72nd annual Woodside Junior Rodeo sponsored by the San Mateo County Mounted Patrol. Temperatures reached up to 90 degrees in Woodside but locals still gathered to celebrate the popular Fourth of July event.

“We appreciate the support from the community and we appreciate everyone coming out regardless of the heat. Everyone was responsible and it was a great family event,” said Anthony Riccardi, chairman of the junior rodeo.

Cooling stations were set up in the club house for elders and families to escape the heat. Families also enjoyed a petting zoo, mechanical bull, cotton candy and lemonade booth and a pig scramble.

Over 150 contestants from the ages of 6 to 18 competed in the junior rodeo showcasing their skills in steer riding, barrel racing, roping and more. The contestants are also participating in the Bay Area Buckle Series competing with other junior rodeos in Livermore, Woodside and Hayward. The Woodside Junior Rodeo is part of the Northern California Junior Rodeo Association, which holds a series of rodeos throughout the year. For more information on the event visit mpsmc.org/rodeo.

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

Second builder’s remedy application deemed incomplete by Menlo Park

By Eleanor Raab

A formal builder’s remedy application for a 140-unit residential building that would be located at 104 Constitution Drive in Menlo Park has been deemed incomplete by the city on July 3 due to “multiple required items missing from the application,” according to the city’s website.

The application, which was submitted by developer Greystar, is the second formal application that the city has received and responded to under the state’s so-called builder’s remedy provision, which allows developers to streamline building application processes and bypass certain local land-use regulations if a city’s housing element is not in compliance with state requirements. The state certified Menlo Park’s housing element on March 21, however both builder’s remedy proposals were filed before the city’s housing element was certified.

The first formal application that the city received was for the development of the 6.7-acre parcel at 80 Willow Road, which was once home to the Sunset Magazine headquarters. Both developers now have the chance to resubmit their formal builder’s remedy applications to bring them into compliance with the city’s application requirements.

Once the city receives a resubmitted application from a developer, it will have 30 days to review the application for completeness. Once an application is deemed complete, it will then be reviewed by the city for compliance with environmental and development standards, as well as other city requirements.

104 Constitution Drive is a 0.87-acre parcel of land located between Highway 101 and the Bayfront Expressway, near Meta’s headquarters, which is currently occupied by a surface parking lot. This parcel is located on a portion of the project site for the Vasara housing development, which

See BUILDER’S REMEDY, page 17

Inside article, ARTSCENE 19 | FOOD & DRINK 22

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Local News

Menlo Park seeks hotel-tax hike

By Neil Gonzales

Menlo Park will ask voters in November to consider raising the city’s hotel tax to help counter ongoing funding challenges.

On Tuesday night, July 9, the City Council approved placing a measure on the Nov. 5 ballot to increase the transient-occupancy tax (TOT) by 3.5% from the current 12% to 15.5% over a two-year span.

The higher hotel tax would go toward maintaining or enhancing key services such as street repair, recreational programs, emergency preparedness and police response, a city staff report said.

“City has faced the removal or the discontinuation of revenue sources that it has depended on for decades — one being the UUT (utility-user tax), which the city is no longer collecting,” Vice Mayor Drew Combs said during council discussion.

The city lost the use of the UUT last year when a San Mateo County Superior Court judge ruled in favor of a class-action lawsuit that challenged Menlo Park’s collection of that tax.

A higher TOT would serve as “restorative tax revenue,” Combs said.

The TOT is imposed on, and paid by, guests of hotels, inns and short-term rental stays of 30 days or less, the staff report said.

According to the report, the hotel tax if the ballot measure passes would go to 14% for 2025 and then 15.5% the following year.

The increase when fully enacted would bring an estimated $3.6 million in annual revenue to the general fund, according to the report.

It would preserve nearly $18 million in city reserve funds that would otherwise be needed to address a long-term structural budget deficit in which expenditures outpace revenue growth, the report said.

Last month, the council approved the city’s 2024-25 budget of $74.2 million with a deficit of about $820,000 to be plugged by money from the general-fund reserve.

Putting the hotel-tax measure on the ballot required four “yes” votes from the council, and the group did just that with member Jen Wolosin absent.

Just before voting, the council added language indicating that it could later adjust the tax up or down by way of a resolution just as long as the rate doesn’t go beyond 15.5%.

The council was seeking flexibility to be able to reduce the rate if deemed necessary so as not to overly burden hotels, especially if their business might be doing well.

Addressing the council, hotel representatives expressed deep concern over the proposed tax increase.

Avi Haksar, managing director at The Stanford Park Hotel, called the TOT’s potential 3.5% jump “extremely high” while noting that his establishment

Blue Shield says it has dropped Stanford Medicine from network amid negotiations

By Lisa Moreno

Blue Shield of California announced July 5 that Stanford Health Care would no longer be included in its network amid contract disagreements.

The decision went into effect on June 29 before the announcement was made, a Blue Shield press release says. However, Stanford Medicine said it plans to honor Blue Shield insurance pricing for current patients during the pending negotiations.

If the contract disputes aren’t resolved, Stanford Health Care Medical Center, Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital and Stanford Health Care Tri-Valley would no longer be covered by Blue Shield, the company says.

“Blue Shield recognizes the challenges of the rising cost of health care, and we negotiate on behalf of our members and customers to achieve our mutual goal of reasonably priced health coverage,” wrote Patty Gonzalez, vice president of network management at Blue Shield, in a written statement.

Instead, the insurance company recommends new patients consider other in-network hospitals like UCSF Benioff Children’s Hospitals, UCSF Medical Center, Good Samaritan Hospital and O’Connor Hospital.

Stanford Medicine and Blue Shield continue to negotiate the contract and hope to come to an agreement soon, Gonzalez wrote.

“Whether or not a new agreement will be reached, Stanford Health Care and Stanford Medicine Children’s Health will continue to welcome all Blue Shield of California patients and members to all of their facilities,” wrote Lisa Kim, Stanford Medicine media representative, in a statement.
Menlo Park’s Shoppers’ Shuttle service expands to Sunday

By Eleanor Raab

Menlo Park announced that it is expanding its Shoppers’ Shuttle program, which currently operates on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays, to include Sunday service. At this free community event, attended by regional residents, the shuttle service began on Sunday, July 7.

The shuttle service takes riders directly from their homes to their desired destinations, open to everyone and wheelchair accessible. The shuttle service is located at 600 Alma Street.

Meet live bats, and learn about the importance of bats in the environment and the truth about some of the harmful myths and fears surrounding these animals at the Belle Haven Library on July 14.

Meet bats at Belle Haven Library, July 14

Join bat rescue and public education organization NorCalBats and meet live bats, and learn about the importance of bats in the local environment, discuss harmful myths about bats, and meet real live bats. All of the bat animal ambassadors are licensed to handle wild bats.

Join the third Menlo Park Monster Truck Kid Jam, July 21

After hosting two successful mini monster truck kid jams at the Burgess Skate Park, Menlo Park resident Jared Carlson will be hosting more throughout the summer. During these monster truck kid jams, the skate park is reserved for kids to play with their mini monster trucks and mini cars on the skate ramps.

“I have coordinated with the park and we are planning on the third Sunday of every month to hold the event,” Carlson said in an email to this news organization.

The next Menlo Park Monster Truck Kid Jam will be held on Sunday, July 21, from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. at Burgess Skate Park, which is located at 600 Alma Street.

據Menlo Park's Shoppers' Shuttl...
Ladera and Woodland School reach agreement amid ongoing legal battle

La Las Lomitas School District calls lawsuit ‘ill-conceived, unfounded, and a waste of public resources’

By Arden Margulis

After months of intense discussions between Ladera residents and Woodland School, the Ladera Community Association and Woodland School signed a memorandum of understanding addressing key issues that sparked heated board meetings and a lawsuit.

The most contentious issue has been Woodland School’s exclusive use of a blacktop, playground and field. Woodland School and the LCA agreed that on school days, Woodland will have exclusive access to the blacktop and playground from 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., and to the field from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Despite the agreement between the LCA and Woodland, not all Ladera residents are satisfied.

The lawsuit by Ladera Taxpayers for Integrity in Governance is still progressing. The group’s attorney, Ladera resident Susanna Chenette, requested the San Mateo County Planning Commission only issue a temporary permit until the litigation is resolved.

“This is classic ‘putting the cart before the horse’ and must not be permitted,” she wrote to the commission before the June 12 meeting. “Woodland cannot, by intentionally failing to disclose, use a county permitting process to terminate a public easement or the public’s rights to public property.”

Such a result will end in (additional) legal action. More review, diligence, and research is thus necessary before the county authorizes Woodland’s proposed changes to its county use permit for longer than one year,” Chenette added.

The Las Lomitas School District filed a motion to dismiss Chenette’s lawsuit, calling it “ill-conceived, unfounded, and a waste of public resources.”

Judge William Orrick of the Northern District of California will hold a hearing on the motion to dismiss on Wednesday, July 10.

The San Mateo County Planning Commission approved Woodland School’s conditional use permit, which was amended to follow the MOU, on June 12 despite the pending litigation.

“Not everyone is going to get what they want. But I think that the MOU gives everyone a little bit of what they want. We aren’t going to make everyone happy, but we have a job to do,” said Planning Commissioner Manuel Ramirez during the meeting.

The MOU allows the community to use the playground, the blacktop and the field outside of the set hours. Even though the school will no longer have exclusive use of the space, Woodland can continue to run its after school activities and summer program.

Woodland has also agreed to withdraw its plans for a new parking lot and limit parking on East and West Floresta ways. The school is permitted to use the field and some street parking during major and minor events.

Email Editorial Intern
Arden Margulis at amargulis@almanacnews.com.

AT&T’s legislative solution for carrier of last resort designation canceled for now

By Bay City News Service

In a setback for AT&T, a bill that provided a pathway for the telecommunications company to be released from its designation as carrier of last resort for most of its territory was pulled from a hearing on July 1, making it unlikely to resurface in this year’s legislative session.

Assembly Bill 2797, which originally dealt with a license for horse racing, was gutted and reintroduced by Assemblymember Tina McKinno, D-Ingleswood. On Monday, McKinnor requested that the bill be canceled following concerns raised by the Senate Energy, Utilities and Communications Committee.

The carrier of last resort, or COLR, designation obligates a carrier to provide basic service to all customers within their territory no matter where they live. It can provide telephone service over any technology, such as copper, fiber, cable, voice over internet protocol (VoIP is a combination of copper and fiber), or wireless cellular. AT&T California has held the COLR designation since 1996.

“We will continue to work on this issue with stakeholders to get it right for our constituents. This transition is already in progress and guidance from the Legislature is important,” McKinno said in an email statement July 2. “We cannot pretend we’re protecting people by leaving them on an old and inferior network. We must continue to move toward helping them transition and achieving digital equity in California.”

AB 2797 would have created a way for AT&T to remain as COLR in certain rural regions, which the company estimates as involving about 100,000 customers.

Tedi Vriheas, AT&T’s vice president for external affairs, said in a June 19 interview that the bill would have released the company as COLR in those areas where the Census shows there is no population. They would also be released from the COLR designation in cities and suburbs, where people have a growing number of other carrier options, even if those alternatives are wireless carriers only.

In March 2023, the company applied to the California Public Utilities Commission to be released from the designation, adding that the cost of maintaining a copper network for less than 5% of their territory had become too costly. The move sparked a heated backlash from the public, and the CPUC voted June 21 to reject AT&T’s request.

Regina Costa, telecom policy director for The Utility Reform Network, a consumer advocacy organization, cautioned that the rules for carrier of last resort should not be adopted based on one company.

“They are industry wide rules. And they should not be rewritten in a piecemeal way, by looking at a single application, not just AT&T. The rules should be revised by the commission instead,” Costa said.

Commissioner John Reynolds said in that meeting that the CPUC received over 5,000 public comments and held eight public forums drawing more than 5,800 attendees, some driving for hours to protest what they perceived was a loss of landlines and a threat of access to emergency services to rural regions.

“The death of AB 2797 is a major win for California residents living in rural areas whose public health and safety is reliant on their landline service due to poor cellular reception and a fragile power grid,” said San Mateo County Supervisor Ray Mueller said in a statement Monday.

Mueller was one of the first public officials to speak out against the company’s request in March. He spoke at the CPUC’s meeting in June. San Mateo County has a lot of residents that live in rural and remote areas, where cellular service is spotty.

“My constituents scored a win with the withdrawal of state legislation that would have allowed AT&T to leave them without a landline to call 911 in an emergency and communicate daily in their rural settings where there is poor or non-existent broadband,” said U.S. Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Palo Alto. Eshoo’s district is in the South Bay, Mid-Peninsula, and coastal San Mateo County.

The CPUC will continue to address the issue in their rule-making proceedings in the coming months. Initial public comments are due Sept. 30. AT&T’s request to be released from designation as COLR must also be approved by the Federal Communications Commission.

Real Estate Q&A

by Monica Corman

Adding A Child to The Deed to Your Property

Dear Monica: I want to add my son to the deed to my property. Is this a good idea? Janine T.

Dear Janine: There are many reasons why this may not be a good idea. Your property will be your son’s asset too and vulnerable to his creditors should he be sued. You will also likely get a property tax reassessment. In addition, if your son is on the title, he will not get a step-up in basis when you die. Talk to an attorney for specific advice on this.

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

For the first time, the San Mateo County Libraries has launched My Summer Adventure, a new summer learning program started in partnership with the San Mateo County Parks to encourage the community to learn under the sun. From June 1 to Aug. 31, My Summer Adventure is hosting events every day in libraries across the county. The SMCL has organized activities for all ages including crafting, guided hikes, sewing, magic shows, gardening and more.

Participants of the summer program are encouraged to log their summer adventures in a journal that can be picked up at your local library branch. Adventures can also be recorded in an online journal. When adventures are logged, participants are entered into a raffle of various prizes that include San Francisco Giants tickets, Annual County Parks Passes, and a $1,000 scholarship for youth ages 0-18.

The new program creates an incentive for the community to go outside, learn and explore during the summer months, according to the library system. My Summer Adventure is one way that the county libraries are working toward building equity for the community. This is part of a statewide library system called Building Equity Based Summers, which looks at "how to engage the community as a whole."

"We decided to take it one step further and think about the fact that our communities learn in different ways and so we really encourage them to go out and have adventures this summer," said Elise Staples, youth and family services manager.

The program allows participants to learn in their own backyards, while considering different learning styles, busy schedules and instances where individuals may lack transportation to the library. Events also vary to include opportunities for children, adults and families. If participants are able to come back to the library, they can share their experiences with library staff and add an element of their adventure to the community wall. Staples said every community library has a different theme including beaches, gardens and trees. Participants can interact with the wall by bringing in flowers, seashells, leaves and other items found during their outdoor adventures.

Other events bring in education through STEAM (science, technology, art and math) events involving robots, crafting, 3D printing, LEGOs and math challenges.

"Even before My Summer Adventure, our emphasis has always been on learning and educational value because we know how important it is to keep everybody’s brain sharp by reading, learning and engaging (during the summer months)," said Staples.

SMCL’s partnership with the county parks system will allow children and adults to learn about the outdoors through Ranger Talks, gardening at Friendship Park in Redwood City, nature journaling at San Pedro Valley Park in Pacifica, birdwatching and more.

The new program also features artwork from local children’s book author and illustrator Shawn Harris, whose art can be found on the journals, stickers, tote bags and a special edition library card that can be won in a giveaway.

My Summer Adventure is a program that was reimagined from the Summer Learning Challenge, which is still ongoing at locations within the Peninsula Library System. System libraries include Atherton, East Palo Alto, North Fair Oaks, Portola Valley and Woodside.

More information on locations and events can be found at smcl.org/summer-adventure.

Email Staff Writer Jennifer Yoshikoshi at jyoshikoshi@almanacnews.com.
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We’ve got this.
New law pressures water agencies to meet 2040 goals

By Bay City News Service

The California State Water Resources Control Board approved a new regulation on July 3 that places conservation requirements on the state’s largest water utilities, urban retail water suppliers that serve 95% of California residents.

Under the new law, there will be a gradual reduction of the amount of water that each of the state’s 402 urban retail water agencies can use between 2027 and 2040. The law does not apply to individuals or households.

Each water supply agency must establish a water budget. Then they must implement commercial, institutional and industrial performance measures. Finally, they must submit regular reports to the Water Board.

Water agencies have flexibility to tailor their conservation strategies around their local needs and climate. Potential penalties for non-compliance could result in the Water Board issuing a civil liability of up to $10,000 on the water agencies. However, the policy is loaded with guidance, best management practices and advisory services to help agencies meet their conservation objectives.

With pressure to avoid rate increases, water suppliers will be encouraging less indoor and outdoor residential water use. They will be aiming for reductions in water for commercial, industrial and institutional landscapes with dedicated irrigation meters. There will be an increase in education and outreach, leak detection, rebates, and direct installation of efficient appliances or landscapes. Big green front lawns will not be the trend in California’s future.

“This is the first regulation in the country to use a water budget to promote conservation,” Nick Cahill, a spokesperson for the Water Board, said in a July 3 statement. “Actions already underway by suppliers, businesses and residents, combined with the regulation are expected to produce about 500,000 acre-feet of water savings annually by 2040 — enough to supply more than 1.4 million households for a year,” said Cahill.

The complex law considers special circumstances.

Water supplier may request variances, or additional water budgets, for unique and significant uses of water, such as uses associated with horses and other livestock, supplementing ponds or lakes that sustain wildlife, evaporative coolers, and irrigating existing trees.

“The law includes a bonus for water recycling and a budget variance for watering existing trees. It incentivizes planting new, climate-ready trees. Many disadvantaged communities will have an alternative compliance pathway.

The instigation for the new regulation came in 2018 due to hotter and drier weather conditions. That plan calls for agencies to diversify the number of water sources they use, including water recycling and conservation measures.

“This is not a perfect regulation,” said Water Board chair调节水。根据新条款，地方供水机构必须制定水预算。水预算包括但不限于以下几点：

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   - Providing advisory services to help agencies meet their conservation objectives
   - Encouraging less indoor and outdoor residential water use

2. **Performance Measures**
   - Submitting regular reports to the Water Board

3. **Civil Liability**
   - Potential penalties for non-compliance, up to $10,000
   - Civil liability for water agencies

The law is expected to be in effect by Jan. 1, 2025.

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HOTEL-TAX HIKE continued from page 5

In comparison, according to the Menlo Park staff report, Palo Alto is at 15.5%, Half Moon Bay is at 15% and Redwood City is at 12%. Toward the lower end, Santa Clara County is at 8%, Portola Valley is at 9.25% and Mountain View is at 10%.

New four-story housing unit gets approval despite resident pushback

In another matter, the council unanimously approved going ahead with the construction of a new four-story, eight-unit housing project at 1220 Hoover St. The project would include one below-market-rate unit and initially serve as a rental property before being converted at some point into a condominium complex with for-sale units, a city staff report said.

In moving forward with the project, the council denied an appeal by residents opposing the Planning Commission greening the project in April. Among their concerns, the residents criticized the project for its size, sight and fit within the context of their neighborhood.

But city staff concluded that the project would be compatible with the neighborhood. It would also create and promote much-needed additional housing in and around downtown, staff said.

Email Contributing Writer Neil Gonzales at ngonzales92@yahoo.com.
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FILE NO. M-297626

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Milbrae, CA 94703.

Registered owner(s):

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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 26, 2024.

(ALM Jul 5, 12, 19 and 26, 2024)

**ASBESTOS ABATEMENT CONTRACTOR**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**

FILE NO. M-297661

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

1.) **ASBESTOS ABATEMENT CONTRACTOR**, located at 1669 HIGGINS WAY, PACIFICA, CA 94044.

Address: PO BOX 242258

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)

**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.

Address: 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)

**PROAM SPORTS**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**

FILE NO. M-297693

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

1.) **PROAM SPORTS, 2) RAD ATHLETICS**, located at 2196 QUEENS LANE, SAN MATEO, CA 94402.

Address: 205 De Anza Blvd #16, San Mateo, CA 94402.

Registered owner(s):

**ALFRED HAYASHI MURAMURA**

2196 QUEENS LANE

S AN MATEO, CA 94402.

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 July 01, 2024.

(ALM Jul 12, 19, 26 and Aug 2, 2024)

**LEGALEASE PARALEGAL SERVICES**

**FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT**

FILE NO. M-297629

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

1.) **LEGALEASE PARALEGAL SERVICES**, located at 888 N. San Mateo Dr., APT 40424, SAN MATEO, CA 94401.

Address: 888 N. San Mateo Dr. Apt. 40424

SAN MATEO, CA 94401.

This business is conducted by: an Individual.

Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 28, 2024.

(ALM Jul 12, 19, 26 and Aug 2, 2024)

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

Case No. 24-CIV-02974

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

Petitioner: Jeffrey Armando Avila-Serritoss filed a petition with this court for a decree changing name as follows:

JEFFREY ARMANDO AVILA-CERRITOS

TO JEFFREY ARMANDO AVILA-SERRITOS

THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the 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 filed with the court, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING: 7/22/2024, 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

JEFFREY ARMANDO AVILA-SERRITOS

JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT

(ALM Jun 21, 28, Jul 5 and 12, 2024)

To place a legal notice visit Almanacnews.com/legal_notices

The deadline is Sunday at 11:59 pm.

For assistance email LegalNotices@almanacnews.com.
White sturgeon fish moves closer to endangered status

By Ruth Dusseault / Bay City News Service

A fter over 100 million years of existence, the white sturgeon may be fading from the San Francisco Bay estuary.

On June 19, the California Fish and Game Commission approved white sturgeon as a candidate species for listing under the California Endangered Species Act. Bay Area scientists say their decline is due to increased pollution and a loss of deep-river spawning grounds.

The listing could not only affect the sport fishing industry but throw more legal weight behind the argument against state and federal projects that divert and store water from the Sacramento to Canada.

Efforts are underway to have the white sturgeon protected under both the state and federal Endangered Species Acts.

According to Rosenfield, new water conveying projects are going to directly affect the white sturgeon, which only spawns when river levels are excessively high.

“There’s this myth out there that there is surplus water that could be diverted when it’s wet and there’s plenty of water in the ecosystem, that it doesn’t get used or brings no benefit,” said Rosenfield. “That’s not true. The white sturgeon are the poster child for the need for big river flows.

The sturgeons don’t come along all that often, said Rosenfield. They live a long time - up to 20 years — so they can wade out droughts, but they need to get into high river flows when it’s wet out.

White Sturgeon are capable of living in the ocean but prefer freshwater, specifically the rivers systems from Northern California to Canada.

Commercial fishing of white sturgeon has been outlawed since 1917. A century ago, they grew to the length of 20 feet, and lived for almost 100 years. Today, a full-grown sturgeon is half that size, and it takes them 17 years to reach full maturity.

In 2022 and 2023, the San Francisco Bay experienced a bloom of a brown algae, that feeds off the nitrogen in wastewater. It infected the Bay and damaged aquatic ecosystems. Hundreds of white and green sturgeon died, as well as thousands of small fish.

The conditions for that bloom were warm water temperatures, combined with wastewater overflows and reduced freshwater flows from the Delta, said Tom Cannon, with California Sportfishing Protection Alliance.

“When the ESA listing, you could say they’re violating their incidental take permit, and you have something to base your case on,” said Cannon.

An Incidental take permit is a rule set by each law to protect the species.

This June, steelhead trout, which is listed as threatened under the federal Endangered Species Act, were swimming too near to the intake pumps for the State Water Project.

“Federal biological opinions say if you incidentally take more than 100 steelhead into the pumps, you have to turn off the pumps,” said Cannon. “So, they had to cut back on exporting this June because they hit the numerical limit, but it really just triggered a consultation. It didn’t stop anybody. They talked and agreed to cut back a little in June.

On the first day of July, they went to pump like hell, full blast all month.

Notice of their decision to pursue the classification will be Friday. At that point, fishing for white sturgeon could close during the year-long review process.

LEHUA GREENMAN

“A good life is when you smile often, dream big, laugh a lot and realize how blessed you are for what you have.”

LEHUA GREENMAN

“Good life is when you smile often, dream big, laugh a lot and realize how blessed you are for what you have.”

The Almanac

July 12, 2024

AlmanacNews.com

The Almanac

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PAID OBITUARY

Lawrence Victor Riches, Jr.
April 3, 1944 - June 28, 2024

Lawrence Victor Riches, Jr., husband, father, grandfather, brother, uncle, cousin, and friend passed away peacefully at age 80, on June 28, 2024 in Carmel, California. He was born on April 3, 1944 to Lawrence Victor Riches, Sr. and Gwendolyn Helen (Low) Riches in Laramie, Wyoming. He was the eldest of their five children: Kathleen (Garth) Pett, Dennis (Pat) Riches, Lynn (Betty) Riches and Tom Riches.

Vic was married and sealed for all eternity to the love of his life, Carolyn Cutler, on June 18, 1965 in the Oakland California Temple of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They had four children: Michelle (Ted) Helvey, Kevin (Melissa) Riches, Kenneth (Katherine) Riches, and Angela (Derek) Banks; twelve grandchildren: Brittany (Corbin) Smith, Michael (Annie) Helvey, Cameron (Mckenzie) Helvey, Lindsay (Calvin) Millett, Nathan (Gillian) Riches, Jordan (Mado) Riches, Hannah Riches, Rebecca Riches, Porter Banks, Calvin Banks, Brandt Banks, and Simon Banks; and ten great-grandchildren and counting: Will, Cooper, & Sam Smith, Gwennie, Ollie & Jack Helvey, Lyla, Russell & Que Helvey, and Grace Millett.

Vic was a faithful member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and had a powerful testimony of his Savior Jesus Christ. He was grateful for the opportunity to serve in the Oakland California Temple for the past 22 years as an ordiner worker and as a sealer. During his life, he led in many ways, both individually and at his wife's side. He loved serving and ministered in a very personal way. He will be remembered for his wise counsel, generosity, loving heart, and sense of humor. He was patient, kind, non-judgmental and accepted everyone as a valued, loved, and important person. He gave freely and abundantly of his time and shared everything he had with many of Heavenly Father's children.

Vic was a man of many gifts and talents. He taught the principles of the gospel, service, and hard work to his children by his example. He loved learning and was always involved in a project or two. Whether he was gathering honey from his beehives in Carmel, working his ranches and farms in Idaho and Utah, or leading family and friends down the slopes at Deer Valley in Park City, he always had a smile on his face and his iconic laugh could be heard all around. And his wife, Carolyn, made an incredible team as they enjoyed working on grand endeavors together. He always finished any project he started and did it with perfection. He had a tremendous and lasting impact on those with whom he interacted and enabled many people to do things that would have been otherwise impossible.

Vic's final resting place is at Alta Mesa Memorial Park near his parents, wife, and son, Kevin, who passed before him. A memorial service will be held in his honor at 11:00am on Saturday, July 20th at The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Morgan Hill located at 1790 East Dunne Avenue. He will be deeply missed by his family and friends. God be with you till we meet again.

PAID OBITUARY

Sam Eletr
March 24, 1939 – May 15, 2024

Dr. Sam Eletr, a visionary scientist, engineer and entrepreneur, passed away in San Francisco on May 15, 2024 after a long illness. He created many successful biotech companies and in the late ’70s founded a company that developed machines for DNA analysis, later used to facilitate the Human Genome Project.

Dr. Eletr was born in Alexandria, Egypt in 1939 and at 17, left alone for France to pursue his education. With meagre means in Paris, after only a year of preparation, he was accepted into France’s prestigious and highly selective, Grandes Ecoles. He studied Electrical Engineering at the Institute National Polytechnique in Grenoble. With little English, Dr. Eletr left for the United States in 1959 to pursue a Physics Masters at Virginia Tech, Blacksburg and finally a Ph.D. in Physical Chemistry at the University of California, Berkeley.

Following post-doctoral research at the esteemed CNRS Bordeaux, France and University of California School of Medicine San Francisco, he joined the staff of the Hewlett-Packard Corporate Research Laboratories in Palo Alto. There, as Head of Research & Development, he worked on a panoply of medical instrumentation, including the first blood oximeter, “intelligent” respirators and cardiac monitoring systems.

In 1979, Dr. Eletr founded GeneCo, later renamed Applied Biosystems, in Foster City, CA, which built instrumentation to accelerate discovery in the then new field of biotechnology. The company first developed a gas-phase protein sequencer, a DNA synthesizer, and then a DNA sequencer used to sequence the entire human genome for the first time. Under Dr. Eletr’s leadership, ABI (Applied Biosystems) became a household name in gene sequencing and a major presence in the biotech revolution. It developed tools for automating laboratory processes that enabled groundbreaking advances in biology and medicine.

Dr. Eletr resigned from Applied Biosystems in 1987, due to ill health, but his entrepreneurial spirit was irrepressible and he continued to work around the world. He enjoyed a close friendship with the Nobel Science Laureate Dr. Sydney Brenner, and in 1992 they created Lynx Therapeutics, another visionary technology company, to vastly improve the ABI sequencers he began with. In 2004 he combined the Lynx technology with that of Solexa (UK), of which he was Chairman, and in 2005 engineered the acquisition of Manteia (Switzerland) to complete Lynx Therapeutics’ original vision. The technology combination of these three companies resulted in a billion-fold increase in the speed of DNA sequencing. The company was acquired by Illumina in 2006 and the technology was used extensively in COVID’s PCR nasal swab test.

Tirelessly determined and energetic, he never stopped devoting himself to his scientific objectives and was involved in other life science companies too: Domain Therapeutics, Population Genetics, blood testing systems iStat, (acquired by Abbott in 2004), lab-on-a-chip systems (Spinx Technologies, Switzerland) and Andrew Alliance, a laboratory robotics company (acquired by Waters in 2020) and most recently, Rhythm Diagnostic Systems. He served on the board of directors for several additional companies in related fields, Third Wave technologies and Faust Pharmaceuticals.

When not engaged with discovery, invention and company building, Dr. Eletr, was a gifted artist, formidable chess player, loved sailing on the San Francisco Bay, baring in France, traveling to exotic destinations, classic cars, films, good food and wine. He read extensively in both English and French, and enjoyed engaging in conversations with diverse people in Berkeley cafes and had a social conscience. He watched many episodes of “Finding Your Roots” and strongly believed that one’s identity was not determined by birth. By his admission, his gift was the ability to see how disparate things fit together. He was a good friend, a modest, generous man who enjoyed holding court in his garden and cooking for his many friends. Dr. Eletr is survived by his wife Shelley.
incidents that prompted a police response. During the July 4 night shift, officers responded to a reported carjacking and a reported robbery, as well as apprehending a suspect on suspicion of sexual assault.

That arrest led to police seizing two pistols and high-capacity magazines, as well as heroin and amphetamines totaling roughly $250,000 in value, the city said. "Despite the successes of our officers last Thursday (July 4), we know more can be done," López said.

The East Palo Alto seizures come as many Bay Area cities try to crack down on illegal fireworks, which are often responsible for house and brush fires. Heightened temperatures on July 4 made the region particularly susceptible to such fires, according to officials.

"The dry grass vegetation across the state coupled with triple-digit temperatures and the wind is the perfect recipe for a disaster," California State Fire Marshal Daniel Berlant said at a July 2 briefing. "Now when you add fireworks, whether they're improperly used 'safe and sane' or whether they're illegal fireworks, they can potentially create a catastrophic fire."

— Bay City News Service

Home burglary interrupted in Atherton in early morning hours of July 5

An Atherton resident was woken up by their burglary alarm early on July 5, to find an intruder in his home. The burglar ran out of the front door when resident chased him down. There, the resident saw a second burglar, who also fled, according to an Atherton Police Department news bulletin.

Nothing was taken from the home, which happened around 6:31 a.m. on the 100 block of Toyon Road, between Menlo-Atherton High School and the Laurel School Lower campus, according to police. Both suspects were male wearing dark clothing. The resident wasn’t sure which direction they fled, police said. APD doesn’t know if the suspects are associated to any vehicle.

Investigators are using the automated license plate reader system to track down cars that could be linked to the incident, said Atherton Police Cmdr. Dan Larsen in an email.

The Atherton Police Department asks nearby residents to check their surveillance videos and report any possible leads to police at 650-688-6500.

— Angela Swartz

Local residents who died recently include:

Lawrence Victor Riches Jr., 80, an active member of Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints who founded Garden Supply Hardscapes (formerly Los Altos Garden Supply), and whose projects included gathering honey from his bee hives in Carmel and working ranches and farms in Idaho and Utah, on June 28, 2024.

Robert Masik, 76, who grew up in Palo Alto and graduated from St. Francis High School before serving in the Peace Corps, where he helped build roads, bridges and other projects in El Salvador, and who later worked with Tijuana Ministry to help build housing for struggling families in Tijuana, on June 6, 2024.

Sam Eletr, 85, who received a doctorate in physical chemistry at U.C. Berkeley and worked for Hewlett-Packard in Palo Alto before launching his own company called GeneCo, later Applied Biosystems, in Foster City, which designed DNA sequencing equipment used for the Human Genome Project, and whose hobbies included chess, traveling, classic cars and sailing in the San Francisco Bay, on May 15, 2024.

To read full obituaries, leave memorials and post photos, go to Lasting Memories at AlmanacNews.com/obituaries.
NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

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

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that said consideration is set for hearing by the Planning Commission at its meeting on July 24, 2024, at 6:00 PM in-person and via teleconference accessible through the information provided below, at which time and place all persons interested may participate and show cause, if they have any, why the projects listed in the public hearing section should or should not be approved. This meeting will be held via teleconference pursuant to Government Code section 54953(e) to provide the safest environment for staff and the public while allowing for public participation. The public may participate in the Planning Commission Meeting via Zoom Meeting or by attending in-person in the Council Chambers at 80 Fair Oaks Lane, Atherton, CA 94027.

Topic: Atherton Planning Commission
Regular Meeting
Time: July 24, 2024, 6:00 PM Pacific Time
(US and Canada)
In person Option: 80 Fair Oaks Lane, Atherton, CA 94027
Zoom Meeting Option and Details: https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84150249099
Meeting ID: 841 5024 9099
One tap mobile:
+13017185892 (Washington DC)
+13052241968 (US)
Find your local number: https://us02web.zoom.us/u/ukgVcVN4cq
Remote Public Comments: Meeting participants are encouraged to submit public comments in writing in advance of the meeting. The following email will be monitored during the meeting and public comments received will be read into the record.
Email: planningcommission@ci.atherton.ca.us

Financial literacy to be required to graduate high school

By EdSource via Bay City News Service

G overnors Gavin Newsom signed an agreement on June 27, making personal financial literacy a required course to graduate high school in California, according to a news release from the governor’s office.

“We need to help Californians prepare for their financial futures as early as possible. Saving for the future, making investments, and spending wisely are lifelong skills that young adults need to learn before they start their careers, not after,” Newsom said in the release.

The semester-long course must be offered to all California high school students by the 2027–28 school year and be part of the graduation requirements for the class of 2031.

The agreement to require the personal finance course was also signed by Senate President pro Tempore Mike McGuire, D-North Coast, Assembly Speaker Robert Rivas, D-Salinas, and NGPF Mission 2030, which is a national financial literacy nonprofit.

Rep. reporting by The Economist, California joins a list of at least 25 other states that have made personal financial literacy a required course for high school students.
Lots of people can claim to have a workspace with a view but it would be hard to compete with Timothy Zerlang. That’s because his “office” is on the 14th floor of Hoover Tower on the Stanford University campus and encompasses panoramic vistas from the foothills to the bay. Zerlang is Stanford’s carillonneur — the person responsible for the melodic sounds that emanate from the historic building.

Born and raised in Fresno, Zerlang holds undergraduate and graduate degrees from California State University, Fresno, in piano and keyboard instruments. He came to Stanford in 1983 in order to obtain his doctorate and it was at this time that the carillon entered his life. He could hear the instrument being played from his dorm room and decided to find out more about it. This led him to Jim Angell, a professor in the electrical engineering department, who had performed on the carillon since 1960. Zerlang began to take lessons with Angell each week and within a year was proficient on the instrument.

Zerlang was already performing piano and organ in public settings like churches so the carillon was not as difficult for him as it might have been for a complete novice. “This was just a different keyboard for me,” he said. The carillon has two keyboards, like an organ, and the 48 bells overhead are controlled by wooden hand levers and foot pedals. Notes are played when the clappers strike inside the bells. He further explained that his background playing the organ provided experience using both hands and feet and that the piano provided the expression.

“Still, it’s a very different sensation,” he said, adding, “It’s a very physical instrument and in that sense it is difficult. If you don’t play with energy, the sound won’t be strong.”

Zerlang explained that he is “moving a certain amount of mass — the bigger the bell, the bigger the clapper.” Made of cast iron, the biggest clapper weighs 50 pounds, requiring some physical effort to get the desired effect. “I used to joke that playing the carillon is my only form of exercise,” he laughed.

Just how Stanford came to own a carillon (many universities have bell towers but few have carillons) is a long story that has been thoroughly documented by former Hoover Institution archivist Elena S. Danielson in her 2002 essay, “For Peace Alone Do I Ring.” In brief, in 1939 Herbert Hoover requested that a carillon be installed in his namesake tower, a building that would be a repository for his presidential library and archives on the Stanford campus. Hoover had played a major role in providing relief to Belgium during World War I and, according to Danielson, “a library topped by a carillon from Belgium, where his career as a public servant and humanitarian began, would be a concrete expression of Hoover’s legacy.”

The 35-bell carillon was installed in 1941 and worked well for decades until the Loma Prieta earthquake in 1989, which disabled the mechanism for the automatic playing function. A long campaign to overhaul the bells had begun decades earlier and in 2000, they were sent to the Netherlands, where they were restored and expanded. In 2002, the new carillon had 48 of the original 35 bells was installed. Noted Zerlang, “It could always be bigger but we now have 48 bells providing a four-octave range.”

In 1990 Zerlang became the university’s carillonneur, which was a volunteer position until 2008. He is paid, per performance, by the Hoover Institution which determines the schedule of carillon concerts. The instrument is also played for official university events such as commencement.

“I am kind of the Muzak that entertains the campus while they are walking to activities,” joked Zerlang.

He tends to play music that is specially written for the carillon although just about anything can be adapted. “The carillon is a public instrument and was originally made to play traditional folk songs and hymns.”

Zerlang went on to relate that one of the biggest reactions he has ever gotten to his playing was when some of his students gave him the music from the Mario video game. “I immediately got emails saying things like ‘that was the water theme from Mario 7? They knew exactly what it was and they were super excited to hear it.”

And what is it like, after a long career of performing in churches and music venues, to be alone in a 285-foot tower and realize that many people can potentially hear you play? “It is a bit of a trip being up there with all that sound and it can be very expressive — it’s a very powerful voice up there.”

Does he miss the immediate response of an audience? Zerlang broke into laughter and responded, “No! It’s great because you play and then you just go out the back door!” He plays, he said, because “I just enjoy doing it.”

Zerlang quickly pointed out that the instrument is played on a limited schedule because he cannot perform when the Hoover Tower is open to visitors due to concerns regarding the sound level (it can reach 120 decibels). He also said the Hoover Institution determines a schedule that he proposes and that they have the ultimate decision. “Please don’t ask me to play during your wedding,” he laughed.

Over the years, other music students have been inspired by hearing the carillon to pursue lessons with Zerlang. “I don’t make it easy for them, they really have to hunt me down,” he said.

In addition to his work as a piano instructor in the music department, Zerlang is also director of music for St. Mark’s Lutheran Church in San Francisco. Still, he has taken on three graduate students who want to learn the instrument. One of them is well on his way to becoming a qualified carillonneur, a process that involves a live performance before the National Carillon Guild. “Playing carillon is rarely a full-time job,” he said, adding that it is often hard to find an instrument. In the Bay Area, there is another carillon located in the Sather Tower at University of California, Berkeley.

“I don’t know what will happen after me,” said Zerlang. “I think there will always be people interested in playing it. I know what it was like for me when I heard it for the first time. It puts a spring in your step and a smile on your face. It really feels like academia and it feels of the place.”

Zerlang has played carillons around the country, including the one across the Bay. So it had to be asked which carillon is better, Stanford’s or UC Berkeley?

He responded with a smile, “Why, Stanford’s, of course!”

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

Zerlang is off for the summer, but carillon performances will continue in July and August with other musicians. The next performance is July 12, 5:30 p.m. For the full schedule, visit events.stanford.edu/department/tower_carillon_bells.
Longtime Menlo Park bookshop Feldman’s has become a flourishing community hub

The store hosts a variety of events each month, from live music to therapy dog visits to dance parties

By Karla Kane

For more than two decades, Feldman’s Books in Menlo Park has been a favorite spot for local readers, a treasure trove of second-hand books. But the shop, which moved from its location on El Camino Real to Curtis Street in 2021, also has increasingly become a community gathering space and a venue for a variety of live events, including musical performances, author visits, discussion groups and more.

“At a time when many feel disconnected from community, these events offer an opportunity to interact with one another, and a welcome sense of human connection,” Menlo Park accountant and friend of Feldman’s Laura Redmond told this news organization in an email. Redmond co-hosts the monthly Stoic book club and has helped host other Feldman’s events as well.

Growing as an event venue and community hub has been a goal of owner Jack Feldman and store manager Aidan Stone ever since they planned the store’s move (the original building was demolished). After bringing in the bookshelves and stock, they found their new digs were roomier and more comfortable than their old ones — the perfect setting for their quirky collection of chairs, many of which have interesting histories of their own. They even had room to bring in a piano, which had belonged to Feldman’s daughter and is available for anyone to play.

“They ended up being this big space left over and we thought, ‘Well, (we will) do something with it,’” Feldman recalled, noting that some of the bookshelves are also on wheels, and can be reconfigured as needed.

“I said to Aidan, ‘You could be my event coordinator.’ It just started taking off after a while,” he said.

Success wasn’t immediate. It was, after all, the middle of the COVID-19 pandemic and live events were heavily impacted. But a concert by local rock duo Effie Zilch in December of 2022 drew a big crowd.

“Jack and Aidan’s conversations with customers uncover lots of local talent right under our noses,” Redmond said. “Feldman’s hosts customers, writers, musicians, artists, florists, philosophers, teachers, actors, chefs, bike mechanics and so on. An interesting conversation often leads to an event. And the event invites the community into the conversation.”

Most events are on Friday nights but, due to popular demand, they’ve now spread to other days and times as well. Some feature musicians on the East Palo Alto record label Redbone Records, such as the aforementioned Effie Zilch, which has become the house band of sorts. Redtone’s Justin Phipps even works in the shop on occasion.

“You can’t really discount how much Steve and Evane (Wyreman and Barcenas, both of Effie Zilch), and lately Justin, have really now become part of the furniture here, bringing people in here just by their music,” Stone said. “For months after (Effie Zilch’s) first concert in 2022, people were coming in here and being like, ‘Oh I was there, I was there.’”

The Grammy award-winning musician and producer Wyreman has played in all sorts of venues but Feldman’s holds a special place in his heart, as it has ever since he was a Menlo Park teen, shopping at the old location after school.

“It’s just a cool all-ages thing; there’ll be kids and there’ll be old-timers telling stories,” he said, likening Feldman’s to a Greenwich Village or North Beach coffee shop during the beatnik heyday. As a musician, performing there is a different, more intimate and casual experience from the electric, full-band shows he often plays.

“It’s nice to construct to be able to do acoustic music and try things out and see what may work,” he said. Phipps often plays piano before events, and when Wyreman is there, “I’ll play a little, even if we’re not on the bill,” he said. “It’s a great community of other artists, too, that Aidan puts together.”

Storyteller Steve Budd has performed many of his one-man shows, and musicians Rory McNamara and Chandran Sankaran are both frequent performers, to name just a very few. There’s a monthly poetry night, political discussions, photography exhibitions and gardening talks. In May, Feldman’s staff member Gwen Minor offered a presentation on “The Iliad,” “The Odyssey” and “The Aeneid,” with recitations in Ancient Greek by Stanford University’s Florence Lienhard. Other recent events have included “Hardboiled Truth: A Celebration of Local Crime Authors,” co-sponsored by California Writers Club, and Feldman’s own 28th birthday bash, which included performances by numerous musicians.

Sometimes, on Sunday mornings, The Bike Kitchen, headed by mechanic Clayton Keller, offers bike maintenance (while donuts and coffee are served), and Sabine the therapy dog drops by for some puppy love. There are even, by Feldman’s own request, dance parties.

“It’s quite a beautiful vibe, I think.”

Email Assistant Lifestyle Editor Karla Kane at kkane@almanacnews.com.

Suzi McKee and Bill Hildebrand perform at Feldman’s Books 28th birthday celebration May 31. Visit almanacnews.com/arts-culture to see more photos of Feldman’s anniversary event.

Margo Davis (the photographer, who showed her work at Bell’s in the fall) here, and that Faith Bell will come and participate because really I love that book store,” he said of his former employer. “There’s no competition; that’s what’s so encouraging about the community.”

“There are so few bookstores left,” Feldman added. “We kind of help each other out.”

Looking ahead, Feldman and Stone plan to continue making the space welcoming to event attendees, shoppers and casual passersby alike.

“Yeah, people are sitting in the audience watching but often-times people just drift away and go and browse for books,” Stone said of Feldman’s dual role as a bookshop and venue. “You can still go off and be by yourself and get to hear this beautiful live music concert just sort of wafting through the air here ... it’s quite a beautiful vibe, I think.”

Email Assistant Lifestyle Editor Karla Kane at kkane@almanacnews.com.

Upcoming this weekend at Feldman’s are French Poetry Night with Flo on July 12, 6 p.m., and jazz with Colin Hamilton on July 13, 5 p.m. Admission for both events is pay-what-you-can.

feldmansbooks.net.
Clay and Glass Festival
Each year, the Association of Clay and Glass Artists of California (ACGA) and the Palo Alto Art Center present a bonanza of works in clay and glass, featuring more than 120 juried artists creating in a variety of styles, from sculpture to functional pottery. It can be a great place to shop for gifts for art lovers, as pieces can be purchased directly from artists. And those interested in someday joining the ranks of clay and glass artists themselves — or just in learning more about these art forms — can watch live demonstrations and try their hands at interactive exhibitions. Food and beverage vendors will also be on site.
July 13-14, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto; free; acga.net.

Zohar Dance Company
Palo Alto’s Zohar Dance Company presents the second of its two summer dance programs: “World Dance,” a global celebration of dance styles featuring Oleksandra Bobrychenko (Ukrainian folk dance), Red Thistle Scottish Dancers (Scottish County and Highland dance), Stacey Fong (Bachata), Mind’s Eye featuring Jill Parker (belly dance fusion), Swathi Lakshmanan (Bharatanatyam), Danielle & Dennis (Salsa), Grupo Folclorico Yolotli Guerrerense - (Mexican folkloric dance) and Lu Yang (Chinese folk dance and classical dance). Prior to the performance, The Waffle Roost Food Truck will be offering a special menu at 6 p.m., plus live musical performances by guitarist Spencer Oey and jazz trumpeter Jacob Jackman. July 13, 8 p.m. (pre-show event at 6 p.m.); Zohar Studio Theater, 4000 Middlefield Road Building L, Room 4, Palo Alto; $18-$25; eventbrite.com.

‘La Bohème’
Before there was “Rent” there was ‘La Bohème,’ Puccini’s beloved opera classic about young bohemians struggling to survive and live artistic lives in Paris. The Pocket Opera — a long-running San Francisco-based chamber opera company offering accessible performances in English — presents a production of the classic featuring Nicholas Huff and Diana Skavorinskaya as tragic love birds Rodolfo and Mimi, with conductor Mary Chun leading the Pocket Philharmonic and stage direction by Elly Lichenstein.
July 14, 2:30 p.m., Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View; $37-$87; https://tickets.mvcpa.com.
Downtown Redwood City’s oldest building is now home to The Yard, a cafe brewing up coffee, community and history. The business had its soft opening on June 26, serving beverages to go out of its Carriage House.

Located at 1018 Main St., The Yard consists of three spaces on the historic property: the main building (Offerman House), the Carriage House and the courtyard.

Listed as the John Offerman House in the National Register of Historic Places, the Folk Greek Revival style home was built in 1857 and named after a prominent local family that owned the property from 1889 to 1973. Saved from demolition in 1979, the home was restored and later enlarged to its current footprint. It was previously used by The Main Gallery, which began exhibiting contemporary art by Peninsula-based artists in 2000 before moving to Menlo Park.

The Yard will take advantage of the property’s distinct architectural features, including a wrap-around porch, sun room and brick-laden courtyard. While coffee is currently served only out of the Carriage House, a compact outbuilding adjacent to the courtyard, The Yard plans to open the Offerman House in the fall for service and events.

Owner John Feig and operations manager Chris Sakelarios, both Redwood City residents, met serendipitously at a children’s birthday party in May 2023. Feig, a longtime home coffee brewer, had been interested in launching his own business and was a fan of Sakelarios’ Back Yard Coffee, which closed in Redwood City in 2018. With a passion for great coffee, Feig decided to open The Yard, tapping Sakelarios as the manager given her previous small business experience and knowledge of the community.

The pair are finalizing renovations at the Offerman House to bring the full cafe experience to life, with hopes of creating a true “third place” in Redwood City. The Carriage House currently serves a variety of coffee and tea beverages for to-go service, which will be the same menu offered at the Offerman House. The goal is to provide flexibility for customers seeking to go or sit-down service while taking advantage of the property’s footprint and architectural features.

“Third place, as defined by sociologist Ray Oldenburg, is “a physical setting that encourages a sense of warmth, conviviality, and that special kind of human sustenance we call community.” Examples of third places include bookstores, gyms, bars, clubs and cafes. But not all cafes evoke that sense of warmth that The Yard hopes to cultivate.

“A lot of modern coffee shops tend to be as sparse as possible,” Feig said. “The intent for The Yard is to be a very welcoming and comfortable third place for the community to spend time together, talk and hang out.”

In other words, long coffee chats, get-togethers over drinks and catch-ups with friends and family are very much encouraged. The Yard currently serves coffee roasted in-house using a small batch Bellwether, plus tea drinks, sipping chocolate, matcha and lemonade. Their coffee bean blends include Ethiopia single origin organic — Shanta Golba (effervescent, fruit-forward flavors and exquisite aromatics); Guatemala single origin — Manos de Mujer (notes of orange blossom, toffee, stone fruit, and hazelnut); Offerman House blend (mix of African and South American beans); and decaf organic Swiss water process (sweet tasting notes and a syrupy body).

In the future, The Yard will serve beer, wine and a variety of desserts such as cakes, pies and
pastries made by Dana Bloom of Bloomies Bakery, a home-based cottage kitchen in San Carlos. Plans are in the works to host a packed calendar of events and performances, bringing in bands and local talent and hosting events for a variety of groups once The Yard is fully staffed.

For Feig, the new coffee shop expands on his personal interest in coffee roasting, which he first started experimenting with in 2009. But his passion for the craft sparked much earlier, having worked at local coffee shops in high school and college in his home state of New York. From 2016 to 2017, Feig and his wife Elizabeth and his brother Jack ran Red City Roasters, roasting from CoRo Coffee Room in Berkeley and selling bags online.

“I found that roasting my own coffee allowed me to explore different origins and roast profiles,” Feig said. “Over the last few years, I’ve finally gotten to the point of being able to make excellent espresso at home.” Having previously owned Back Yard Coffee for nearly a decade, serving the community again is what Sakelarios is most looking forward to. In addition to managing The Yard, Sakelarios also runs a small online business, Auntie Lou’s Brew. Known for sipping on a daily mocha, her aunt Louise Prado, a Redwood City resident, started her coffee business at the age of 105 before her death in 2022.

Sakelarios continues to sell five unique blends of organic coffee beans online as a way to honor her late aunt, and one drink on The Yard’s menu is inspired by a beverage Auntie Lou enjoyed as a child. Called “La Azteca” in a nod to their Mexican Aztec heritage, the drink consists of cocoa, cinnamon, confectioners’ sugar, nutmeg and cayenne powder, mixed with a double shot of espresso with steamed half-and-half.

As a Redwood City native, Sakelarios is excited for guests to experience The Yard and beverages like La Azteca.

“I love Redwood City and being involved in community events,” Sakelarios said. “I feel like a lot of small businesses are kind of fading away...so we hope (The Yard) will be a good place for people to interact, relax and come together.” Sakelarios has brainstormed ways to reflect her community within the space. Ideas include featuring vintage lithography from Menlo Park’s former Acorn restaurant, creating a teaup chandelier using heirloom pieces from Redwood City residents and hanging paintings by local artists on the cafe walls. This art will serve as a centerpiece at the Offerman House once the space opens to the public.

With their new business, Feig and Sakelarios hope to breathe new life into this stretch of Main Street. As The Yard works toward a full grand opening, including the Offerman House, the team is excited to serve customers out of their Carriage House in time to enjoy beverages for summer in the courtyard. Email Contributing Writer Edwina Dueñas at eduenas3@protonmail.com.

The Yard, 1018 Main St., Redwood City; Instagram: @theyardrwc. Open daily from 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.
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