

# The Almanac

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



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**INSIDE:**

**Local news | Features**

**Readers' Choice award winners**



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# Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY



Magali Gauthier

Winter, center, presents her work on marble rollercoasters to SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory staff in Menlo Park on July 19.

## Oakland students invited to a free summer camp at SLAC

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Incoming fifth and sixth grade students from Ile Omode School in Oakland got to experience a free science summer camp at the SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory in Menlo Park for a week. Throughout the CORE Science Institute summer camp, students worked on multiple projects focused on energy, physics and engineering in a national facility.

On July 19, 21 students showcased what they learned at camp to parents and SLAC staff in a poster presentation of their

projects. Students as young as 10 years old were confidently using terms such as velocity and potential and kinetic energy to explain what they learned.

“Camps like these are fundamental to future scientists,” said Shirin Ketabfouroush, SLAC’s diversity, equity, inclusion organizational engagement specialist.

The camp was founded in 2016 as a part of an effort to give underrepresented youth the opportunity to work with real scientists and engineers while learning about science through hands-on activities led by SLAC staff. Students at camp get a

firsthand look into the opportunities they have in a STEM, science, technology, engineering and math career.

The camp provided transportation from Oakland to SLAC for all campers to attend. This is the youngest group of students to attend CSI summer camp.

“We’re not just camp. We’re educating our next generation of colleagues,” said Jane Shtalenkova, accelerator operations engineer and CSI camp coordinator. She added that a few camp alumni have come back as camp

See **SUMMER CAMP**, page 13

## Peninsula politicians rally behind Harris as Biden withdraws from race

Becker, Berman, Mullin among elected leaders who support Harris as presidential nominee

By Gennady Sheyner

Just hours after U.S. President Joe Biden announced his decision to withdraw from the presidential race, Peninsula politicians rallied to endorse his replacement atop the Democratic ticket, Vice President Kamala Harris.

Harris is well known in the region, having served as the San Francisco district attorney before California voters elected her to attorney general in 2010. State Sen. Josh Becker, D-Menlo Park, recalled hosting fundraisers for her when she was running for the attorney general position, which she held until 2017, when she was elected to the U.S. Senate.

Becker said in an interview Monday, July 22, that he became acquainted with Harris when he was running the Full Circle Fund, a nonprofit that supported social entrepreneurship in education and climate change. She attended Full Circle Fund events and supported its efforts, he said.

He said he was impressed by both her “warmth” and her “savvy,” qualities that weren’t always on full display during her term as vice president.

“The vice president is a tough role. You’re not there to really

stand out,” Becker said in an interview. “But the biggest thing for me is her warmth. I remember when I ran in 2010 for the Assembly and lost, she called me and left me this very uplifting voice mail that I kept for a very long time.

“To me that’s an example of warmth and caring. And she has a good sense of humor that many people haven’t quite gotten to see in her vice president role.”

Assembly member Marc Berman, D-Palo Alto, said he “could not be more excited” about Harris, particularly when contrasted with Donald Trump.

“She was a prosecutor for her career. She was the top cop of California. Former President Trump is a 34-count felon,” Berman said in an interview. “It could not be more stark, the difference between those two candidates.”

Berman said he believes Harris is also the perfect person to represent “the chasm that exists on policy between the Democratic Party and the Republican Party.”

“Whether you’re talking about climate change, whether you’re talking about bodily autonomy for women and the right to abortion, whether it’s science or anti-science — on every issue there is a massive gap between Democrats and Republicans and I think Vice President Harris will hammer that home over the coming days.”



Kamala Harris

See **HARRIS**, page 11

## Overnight goats: A herd of escaped goats snarls traffic along Alpine Road

By Eleanor Raab

Portola Valley residents faced an unusual kind of traffic jam on the evening of July 17. Cars at the intersection of Alpine Road and Highway 280 slowed to a standstill as the road was taken over by a very large herd of escaped goats.

“At first I thought it was an accident,” said Portola Valley resident Helen Wolter, who encountered the roving pack of goats as she drove along Alpine Road. “But then I realized that there were goats galore!”

Dozens of goats lined the hillsides and median along Alpine Road as they munched on grass, occasionally venturing into the road. Some goats even made their way onto the 280 on ramp, but did not wander onto the highway itself.

“The lovely thing was, everyone just stopped,” said Wolter. “In the middle of hectic Silicon Valley, everyone slowed down to a stop and enjoyed the goat jam. For a moment, we were reminded of our agricultural heritage.”

Atlee Frechette, farm manager at Webb Ranch confirmed that the goats did not come from

Webb. It is not yet known from where the goats escaped, but Wolter says that they were eventually rounded up and returned.

“Eventually the herder chased the goats off the road and traffic carried on,” she said.

Sophie Lu, a public information officer for the California Highway Patrol, confirmed that the agency did respond to calls about the escaped goats. However, by the time officers arrived on scene, the goats had already been rounded up. ■

Email Staff Writer Eleanor Raab at [eraab@almanacnews.com](mailto:eraab@almanacnews.com).



Courtesy Helen Wolter

A large herd of goats took over Alpine Road, impacting traffic on the evening of July 17.

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**READER'S CHOICE**  
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2024



Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Horse riding lessons at Chaparral Ranch's site at Wunderlich Park in Woodside on June 20.

## Chaparral Ranch location in Woodside remains open

The stable management company recently shut its doors in Golden Gate Park due to an investigation by the SF Standard

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

With the shutdown of Chaparral Ranch in San Francisco, stables owned by the Chaparral Corporation continue to operate in Wunderlich Park in Woodside but a renewal of its contract in 2025 is still pending.

Chaparral Corporation is a stable management company that recently shut its doors in Golden Gate Park due to an investigation by the SF Standard revealing mistreatment of horses and employees.

The current contract signed with San Mateo County Parks is a 10-year agreement that was signed in 2015, when Chaparral began operating at Wunderlich Park. There have been no internal conversations about terminating the contract early, according to county parks Communication Officer Carla Schoof.

"We have not received any accusations of any mistreatment of the horses there, in terms of the stables, the care they provide the horses boarded there or the horses that are there for services," said Schoof.

As with any contract, the county will be reviewing with

Chaparral "how they're providing services stipulated in the contract" at the end of the agreement in 2025. "That's the process that we will continue with unless there's a specific reason to not do that," Schoof explained.

When the news broke about Chaparral's mistreatment of horses, the main conversation between the county parks and the owners of Chaparral was that "none of the horses that had been located at Golden Gate Park or [Camp Mather] that had physical illnesses were to be brought to Wunderlich Park," said Schoof.

Conditions in Woodside appear to be in good condition unlike what was found at Chaparral's site at Golden Gate Park, based on an Almanac visit to the site. In San Francisco, horses were malnourished, showing signs of exhaustion and pain, had sores and some even bleeding, as documented in a 41-page whistleblower report by Chaparral employees.

"We're actively taking steps to ensure all the horses at Wunderlich are being treated in a manner consistent with the agreement with the county as well as our overall values," said Schoof.

In June, the county requested the Peninsula Humane Society to conduct two unannounced animal welfare checks but found no evidence of animals being mistreated, according to Schoof.

Although there have been no reports of animal abuse in Woodside, Claire Burnette, a former employee at Golden Gate Park's site in San Francisco said she doubts that there haven't been any complaints on the Woodside location.

**LEHUA GREENMAN**

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# The Almanac

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# Man accused of attempting to kidnap student at Sequoia High was released days before incident due to paperwork error

DA's office did not know he was on felony probation from Santa Barbara

By Arden Margulis

Just two days before 24-year-old Trey Von Duus attempted to kidnap a Sequoia High School student, he was arrested and released on his own recognition for trespassing at a strip mall and getting close to children because the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office was unaware of a previous felony conviction in Santa Barbara.

On July 16, Duus was arrested at 118 Old County Road in Brisbane for trespassing when employees saw him getting close to children, according to the DA's office. Two days before that, he was given a "stay away" order from that establishment for harassing customers, which he violated.

During his arraignment on July 17, according to a court transcript this news organization obtained, the DA's office did not ask for bail or speak during the arraignment. Judge Cristina Mazzei even cut Duus off when he offered to pay bail, instead releasing him with no conditions.

This is despite the fact Duus was on felony probation from an incident in Santa Barbara County where he was accused of breaking into a fire department official's home, rifling through his stuff, and even putting on his clothes.

According to the Santa Barbara District Attorney's Office, on July 10, he pled guilty to burglary and to violating his parole. He was required to undergo the Jericho Project Residential Treatment Program in Brisbane for

substance abuse and continue his parole until 2026.

According to the project's website, the program is at least six months, meaning Duus was likely in it during both alleged crimes.

Committing a crime, like he allegedly did on July 16, is a violation of his parole.

According to San Mateo County Chief Deputy District Attorney Sean Gallagher, the reason Duus may have been released after trespassing and getting close to children is because no one knew of his past conviction.

"That case doesn't show on his rap sheet," Gallagher said while trying to determine if the office knew of the Santa Barbara case.

"It looks like the attorney in court that day did not know about it but just that there was something in Santa Barbara."

The California Attorney General's office maintains the criminal records of state residents, but Gallagher theorized that they had yet to update Duus' file.

"I am thinking the paperwork must not have been updated yet and was stuck in Sacramento," he said.

The Attorney General's office was not immediately available for comment.

During the arraignment on Monday, July 22, for his kidnapping charge, Duus' court-appointed lawyer seemed to say he had no criminal record prior to the trespassing. However the DA's office now knows of the case in Santa Barbara.

Duus' bond was set at \$150,000.

Gallagher said, "it's really alarming conduct," and during the July 22 arraignment, Mazzei said, "I find the defendant a risk to public safety."

As Mazzei read out his charge of kidnapping, Duus seemingly admitted to the conduct, yelling: "That's not true. I was drunk ... I took a shot at the hospital." It is unclear whether or not the police tested his blood alcohol levels.

## New details about kidnapping attempt

During the July 22 arraignment, more information came out about the attempted kidnapping on July 18.

Duus allegedly told the 16-year-old student whose shirt he grabbed that he was with the police while pulling him out of the classroom and told the teacher, "I need to take him."

The 16-year-old student, who spoke limited English, did not know Duus, according to the DA's office. His motive for taking the student and trespassing remains unclear.

Duus apparently also said at some point, "I have a gun for whenever I need to take someone."

Police did not find a gun on him but did find a knife he brandished at a custodian, and he said, "This isn't for you. You have other problems."

Santa Barbara Court records indicate a warrant was issued for Duus' arrest on July 19. ■

*Email Editorial Intern  
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# San Mateo County paying \$8M to settle sexual harassment lawsuit from former SWAT team member

By Bay City News Service

San Mateo County has reached an \$8 million settlement with a former sheriff's deputy and SWAT team member who filed a sexual harassment and discrimination lawsuit in 2022, alleging she was sexually assaulted by a former SWAT team leader and discriminated against by the department for years.

Carryn Barker's attorneys Zak Franklin and Julianna Zalinski said in a statement Friday that the settlement came before the lawsuit's September trial date, when a judge was to decide whether Franklin could depose San Mateo County Sheriff Christina Corpus

about her possible role in the alleged harassment. A spokesperson for the department said the sheriff had no knowledge of the alleged harassment and wasn't sheriff at the time it allegedly took place.

Barker's lawyers said that during almost two years of litigation, documents and depositions of 21 current and former employees of the sheriff's office revealed that Barker — who they said is a UC Berkeley graduate, Medal of Honor recipient and only the second woman to qualify for the county's SWAT team — was subjected to sexual harassment by her SWAT team supervisor, Andre Moniot.

Barker alleged the harassment

and discrimination began shortly after Barker joined the SWAT team in 2018 and included Moniot making frequent vulgar comments about Barker's body, telling Barker and others that he wanted to have sex with her, instructing Barker to wear revealing clothing during team workouts, touching Barker inappropriately, requiring Barker to ride alone with him to and from SWAT functions, and eventually assaulting Barker at a SWAT team gathering in October 2021.

Barker's attorneys said the Sheriff's Office employees testified they reported Moniot's sexual

See **LAWSUIT**, page 10

## REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



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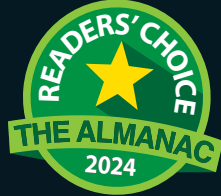
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## Traffic, noise biggest concerns at SRI site where up to 800 new housing units could be developed

Menlo Park Planning Commission reviewed a draft environmental impact report for the proposed Parkline project

By Eleanor Raab

Although there's excitement that redevelopment of the SRI International site in Menlo Park could bring more housing and bike and pedestrian access, residents and planning commissioners alike are troubled by the potential for increased traffic and noise from construction, based on a recently released environmental impact report.

The Menlo Park Planning Commission reviewed the 900-page document for the proposed Parkline development during a Monday, July 22 meeting.

The project proposes to 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 variant of the project that would include the property at 201 Ravenswood Ave., and would create up to 800 new units of housing, in addition to the other amenities.

One of the primary concerns discussed throughout the four-hour long public hearing and study session was the impact of increased traffic and car trips throughout the city, especially in neighborhoods surrounding the project site.

"I read that the number of parking spaces was going to be 3,319, and I'm extremely concerned," said Kevin Rennie, a resident of the Willows. He noted his neighborhood would see increased traffic in cut through streets like Woodland Avenue during commuter times.

Resident Adina Levin asked that the commission and city staff look at traffic calming measures on nearby streets to improve safety and prevent neighborhood streets from being used as cut throughs.

Commissioners asked the project team and city staff to consider any additional means by which



Anna Hoch-Kenney

The main entrance of the SRI campus in Menlo Park in May.

vehicle miles traveled and trips to and from the project could be lessened.

Despite resident and commissioner concerns, the draft EIR states that transportation impacts from the project are not considered to be significant, according to the state criteria used to prepare the EIR.

"It always surprises me how a project so large can say transportation impacts will be less than significant," said Planning Commissioner Linh Do. "I always have to remind myself that it doesn't say we are not going to see changes in our community. But it's more that it says that by certain criteria, as stated in the EIR, it does not exceed the defined threshold."

Planning commissioners asked the Parkline project team and city staff whether they considered a reduced parking alternative in order to further disincentivize car trips to and from the development.

"We're proposing two spaces for every 1,000 square feet," said Mark Murray, a representative for Lane Partners, the real estate firm working with SRI to design Parkline. "We feel that the financeability of the project in today's environment will require that minimum."

Murray also said that nearby residents have expressed concern about the possibility of overflow parking from the development impacting nearby neighborhoods.

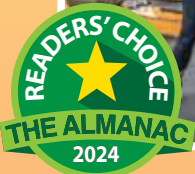
The draft EIR states that the project or project variant (an alternative plan which adds 250 additional units of housing to the original plan) would create several significant and unavoidable impacts to the community throughout the construction process due to construction noise and ground vibration. The report also found that the project would create significant and unavoidable impacts to historic resources on the site, as several of the buildings that the project team proposes to demolish are technically considered historic resources.

Though none of the structures on the site none of the existing structures are currently listed in the National Register of Historic Places, or the California Register of Historic Resources, the report's analysis found that three buildings are eligible for listing due to their association with SRI's advancements in computing, business, medicine and physical sciences.

See SRI SITE, page 10

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## Two pedestrians struck, injured by driver outside Sharon Heights Safeway

By Eleanor Raab

The Menlo Park police and fire departments closed off the intersection of Sharon Park Drive and Sharon Road after two pedestrians were struck and injured by a driver around 6:10 p.m. on July 17.

The driver, 44, remained at the scene and was not found to

be intoxicated, according to the Menlo Park Police Department. The driver was taking a right turn on to Sharon Park Drive from Sharon Road when they struck the pedestrians.

Police also confirmed that the two pedestrians, both 55, received non-life threatening injuries, and were subsequently transported to Stanford Hospital.

The intersection was blocked off for 30 minutes as the pedestrians who were struck were given first aid and as police investigated the incident.

This is the seventh pedestrian collision so far this year. The Menlo Park Police Department provided statistics detailing the last five years of pedestrian collisions in the city. ■

# Filoli's summer Pool Parties paused

Someone made a complaint to the county health department that the pool was not registered as a public pool

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Filoli's summer Pool Parties are currently on hold after a complaint was made that the pool was not registered as a public pool, said Filoli Chief of Staff Nova Maldonado on July 17. Ticket holders for the sold out event have been refunded and offered a complimentary ticket to any of its Summer Nights events.

The new event series marked the first time that the historic estate had opened the pool to the public. The pool has previously been used for private events and for staff.

Maldonado said that the problem may be resolved in the next few days or weeks but future dates are canceled for now. Refunded ticket holders will be the first to hear about the reopening of Pool Parties.

"The San Mateo County Environmental Health Division received a complaint from an individual that Filoli's historic pool is not permitted as a public pool. We are working to resolve this issue so we can continue Pool Parties for the future but we do not anticipate it will be resolved quickly," writes an email that



Courtesy Krishna Farol

Filoli Pool Parties are on hold after a complaint was made that Filoli didn't register the pool as a public pool.

Filoli sent to Pool Party ticket holders.

According to San Mateo County Health, a permit is needed to operate a public pool and must be inspected twice a year.

Prior to the halt of the events, Filoli had sold out Pool Party dates in July and August to which each date sold a maximum of 80 tickets, according to Public Events Manager MacKenzie Persen. While Filoli works on obtaining a public

pool registration, the estate will still continue hosting its Summer Nights events on Wednesday and Thursday evenings as well as its upcoming Summer Stage concerts in August.

For updates on Pool Parties and other summer events visit [filoli.org](http://filoli.org). ■

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

## ELECTION BRIEFS

### Atherton City Council

Atherton Vice Mayor Elizabeth Lewis has pulled papers to potentially run for Atherton's City Council in the upcoming Nov. 5 election, according to the town's website.

Lewis was first elected to the Atherton City Council in 2008. If elected once more in 2024, she would serve her fourth term on the council.

Lewis has served as mayor and vice mayor several times during her time on the council.

So far, Lewis is the only potential candidate in the Atherton race to pull papers. She has yet to file the papers, which would make her an official candidate.

Candidates could begin pulling papers on July 15. They must file the papers before the filing period closes on Aug. 9.

— Eleanor Raab

### Woodside Town Council

Woodside Mayor Jenn Wall and Council member Paul Goeld are seeking reelection in the upcoming November election. The town is seeking to fill three open seats for Districts 1, 4 and 5.

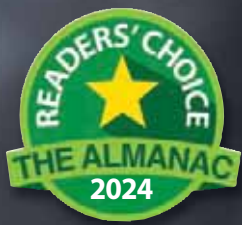
Wall has been on the council since 2020 as a District 1 member and is now pursuing her second term. Goeld was elected in a special election for a two-year term in 2022 to fill a vacant position. He currently serves as the 4th and 5th district member at-large but has previously served on the council from 1999 to 2007. Goeld has filed to run for District 4 in November.

The Town Council, which was formerly a seven-member body, is making the move to five members when it switched from the old "from-district" to a "by-district" elections system beginning in 2022.

Wall and Goeld will need to file their nomination papers by Aug. 9 to qualify for candidacy. The town is still seeking a third potential candidate. If papers are not filed by the deadline, the nomination period will be extended to Aug. 14 for non-incumbent candidates.

Information on candidates is updated daily at 5 p.m. on [woodsideca.gov](http://woodsideca.gov).

— Jennifer Yoshikoshi



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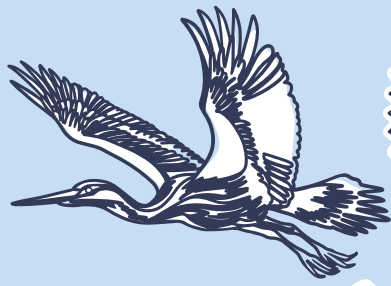
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### SRI SITE

continued from page 8

There are several mitigation strategies proposed by the report to lessen the impact of these unavoidable impacts, such as documentation and interpretation of historical sites. The report also suggests mitigation measures for construction noise, including equipping construction equipment with sound control devices, using electric motors when possible, installing sound walls and providing impacted residents with a construction schedule and onsite construction liaison.

Despite concerns about traffic and construction noise, the Planning Commission and public ultimately expressed excitement about the direction that the project is headed, and the potential benefits it could bring to the city.

Commissioners and commenters were particularly excited about the project variant, the increased pedestrian and bike circulation through the 62-acre SRI site and the community amenities that could be added to the site.

“I wanted to address a question that was asked in the applicant’s initial presentation, which is, are we headed in the right direction? And

I think my answer is absolutely,” said Planning Commission Chair Jennifer Schindler. “This is a once in a lifetime, once in a generation opportunity to create infill and change the fundamental dynamics of the city: The flow of traffic, the flow of people and the interactions between the two sides of town.”

The public comment period for the draft EIR is open until 5:30 p.m. on Aug. 5. 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., or access the report at [menlopark.gov/parkline](http://menlopark.gov/parkline).

Written comments can be emailed to Principal Planner Corinna Sandmeier at [csandmeier@menlopark.gov](mailto:csandmeier@menlopark.gov), or mailed by letter to Corinna Sandmeier, Community Development, 701 Laurel St. Menlo Park, CA 94025.

After the public comment period closes, city staff will review and respond to all substantive comments made on the draft EIR, and prepare a final EIR document. The Planning Commission is scheduled to make a final recommendation on the EIR in October. ■

Email Staff Writer Eleanor Raab at [eraab@almanacnews.com](mailto:eraab@almanacnews.com).

### LAWSUIT

continued from page 7

harassment of Barker to multiple high-ranking officers in the department, but they did nothing to investigate the allegations or protect Barker until after she filed the lawsuit.

The attorneys also said testimony revealed as of early 2021 — several months before Moniot allegedly sexually assaulted Barker — at least five high-ranking officers were aware Moniot was sexually harassing Barker but failed to intervene.

They said Moniot testified he wouldn’t have sexually assaulted Barker if anyone in a leadership position told him Barker and others reported his sexual harassment of her.

Barker’s lawyers said the department didn’t investigate the allegations until a retiring high-level officer notified the internal affairs department in August 2022.

Sheriff’s office spokesperson Gretchen Spiker said the department “is aware of the settlement relating to incidents that occurred years ago under the previous sheriff.”

“Sheriff Corpus is committed to improving the culture of the sheriff’s office by prioritizing accountability and implementing higher standards — setting the tone that misconduct will not be tolerated under her watch,” Spiker said. “Because this is a lawsuit involving a personnel matter, we are unable to comment any further.”

Barker took a leave of absence from the SWAT team in September 2022 to avoid having to attend the same SWAT team function where Moniot allegedly assaulted

her the previous year and where Moniot was expected to be in attendance that year.

Barker resigned from the SWAT team in November 2022 after the county still failed to do anything to protect Barker from Moniot, according to Barker’s attorneys. That was the same month she filed her lawsuit.

Barker’s attorneys said when the lawsuit became public, members of the SWAT team threatened to resign if Moniot wasn’t immediately put on a leave of absence. They also said other women allegedly victimized by men at the sheriff’s office also contacted Barker and her attorneys to share their own experiences of sexual harassment and discrimination. ■

### OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include:

**Nicole Sprague**, 69, much loved by her family and church community in Portola Valley, had a passion for aviation, first flying on the East Coast before becoming a Captain for Swissair, taking her talents abroad and to cross-country journeys in her 1947 Piper Club airplane. Among her talents was her dedication to being a mother and her joy for cooking and caring for her community. She passed away surrounded by loved ones on July 13.

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

**HARRIS**

*continued from page 5*

U.S. Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-16, said in an interview that she has seen “enormous energy and excitement” not just in her district but across the country in the 24 hours since Biden withdrew from the race and endorsed Harris to be the Democratic nominee. She pointed at the long list of governors, chief executives and other dignitaries across the nation who have already endorsed her.

“I think she will prosecute the case very well, just as she did as a prosecutor in San Francisco, just as she did as a prosecutor as an attorney general in the state of California, just as she did in the Judiciary Committee when the nominees of the Trump administration for the Supreme Court appeared before her,” Eshoo said in an interview.

The two candidates who are running to succeed Eshoo in the U.S. Congress similarly expressed their support for Harris on social media. State Assembly member Evan Low said that the vice president “will protect a woman’s right to choose while Trump will continue to take away reproductive freedoms.”

“The contrast for voters can’t be more clear,” Low said in a statement on X. “The stakes are too high. Kamala Harris is the right choice for this moment.”

His opponent in the race, former San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo, was also quick to endorse Harris.

“From the time I first met @KamalaHarris as a fellow Bay Area criminal prosecutor two decades ago, I’ve seen the indefatigable courage, compassion, and skill that our nation needs in this perilous moment,” Liccardo said in a statement on X. “I expect an open and robust process to select our next Democratic presidential nominee, but I’m proud — as I was five years ago — to support Vice President Harris as our next President.”

U.S. Rep. Kevin Mullin, D-15, released a statement lauding Biden’s decision. Mullin, who endorsed Harris during her 2020 campaign for president, said in a statement that Kamala Harris being at the top of the Democratic ballot “demonstrates that Democrats are poised to represent where America is going, not where it has been.”

He said he “wholeheartedly” endorses her to succeed Biden and lead the Democratic ticket.

“Kamala Harris can draw significant contrasts with Trump, and prosecute the case for why we must win,” Mullin said. “She will take the fight directly to Trump. She will ensure we keep the White House in Democratic control and will help us win back a majority in the U.S. House of Representatives.”

Harris also won support from the most powerful Democrat in Congress, U.S Rep. Nancy Pelosi. The former House speaker issued a statement on Monday endorsing the vice president.

“My enthusiastic support for Kamala Harris for President is official, personal and political,” Pelosi said in a statement.

“Officially, I have seen Kamala Harris’s strength and courage as a champion for working families, notably fighting for a woman’s right to choose. Personally, I have known Kamala Harris for decades as rooted in strong values, faith and a commitment to public service. Politically, make no mistake: Kamala Harris as a woman in politics is brilliantly astute — and I have full confidence that she will lead us to victory in November.”

Pelosi and other state and national politicians were also quick to express their gratitude to Biden for leaving the race.

“President Joe Biden is a patriotic American who has always put our country first. His legacy of vision, values and leadership make him one of the most consequential presidents in American history,” Pelosi posted on X.

“With love and gratitude to President Biden for always believing in the promise of America and giving people the opportunity to reach their fulfillment,” Pelosi said.

Eshoo said Biden’s decision

puts his patriotism on “full display.”

“His legacy of bringing us through the ravages of the pandemic, rebuilding our economy, and defending democracy at home and abroad will make him one of the most consequential presidents in American history,” Eshoo said in a statement.

Berman said in an interview he had looked up to Biden ever since he started paying attention to national politics as a college student. At one point, he had hoped to work for Biden, Berman said.

“President Biden has sacrificed for all of us time and time again,” Berman said. “This is another instance of that, where he’s putting his personal interests aside for what is best for the country.”

Harris posted on social media Sunday afternoon thanking Biden for his “extraordinary leadership” following his announcement that he will not run for reelection, adding that she intends to run for nomination as the Democratic presidential candidate in the upcoming November election.

“On behalf of the American people, I thank Joe Biden for his extraordinary leadership as President of the United States and for his decades of service to our country. I am honored to have the president’s endorsement and my intention is to earn

and win this nomination,” Harris wrote.

Meanwhile, all day Sunday, July 21, across the Bay Area, the state and the nation, public officials reacted to the news that Biden will not seek reelection.

“President Biden has been an extraordinary, history-making president — a leader who has fought hard for working people and delivered astonishing results for all Americans. He will go down in history as one of the most impactful and selfless presidents,” Gov. Gavin Newsom said in a post on X, the platform formerly known as Twitter, concluding, “Thank you, @JoeBiden.”

San Francisco Mayor London Breed praised both Biden’s performance as president and his decision to not run for reelection.

“He came into a time of great peril for our democracy, in the midst of a once-in-a-century pandemic, and he had the courage, wisdom and vision to stabilize our nation. ... President Biden has given his entire life to public service and this country, and once again he is showing what it means to put his country first,” Breed posted on X. ■

*Bay City News Service contributed to this report.*

*Email Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner at gsheyner@almanacnews.com.*

# Stanford campus art walks to take this summer

Stanford’s public art program includes more than 80 works of art that reflect the history, spirit, and dynamism of life on campus. From formal tours to serendipitous sightings, there are plenty of ways to engage with the art on Stanford University’s campus.

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

## CHAPARRAL RANCH

continued from page 6

“So many people complained to San Francisco and it did nothing, so I wouldn’t be surprised if it’s the same [in Woodside],” said Burnette, who worked for Chaparral for two years.

Two former Chaparral employees told The Almanac that the facility struggled with having too many horses and not enough staff. Burnette recalls days where staff members would not get a break during their labor intensive shifts leading to high staff turnover.

“With such a stressful job where you really have to be focused when you’re teaching, you may be sitting down but you always have to be ready,” said Burnette. “That’s stressful to not get breaks and that’s something I had never experienced before. It’s illegal.”

Staff were getting paid minimum wage for a job that former employees explain as “not an entry level job” and require a certain amount of equestrian knowledge. Employees are responsible for the safety of children and inexperienced riders.

When the SF Standard’s report was published, former employees felt relieved that these stories were finally in the spotlight. “It was nice that people believed the story,” said an ex-Chaparral employee who asked to remain anonymous for fear that commenting would impact their career.

Employees had been reporting animal mistreatment to the city of San Francisco for years but were never able to get any attention. Burnette worries that this will be the same problem for Woodside, Milpitas and Los Gatos. Chaparral also manages

stables at Ed R. Levin County Park in Milpitas and Bear Creek Stables in Los Gatos.

Former workers say horses were dying at Golden Gate Park and many showed signs of sickness. When employees would report ill horses to Chaparral’s owners Shawn Mott and Sue Pennell asking them to call a vet, they would take the horses to Woodside to recover and bring them back. Mott and Pennell declined to comment for this story.

Burnette said horses were being overworked, underfed and not receiving regular vet checks. “I never saw the vet and I was there for over two years,” she said.

The owners were more frequently at Woodside and were rarely onsite at Golden Gate Park, according to a former employee, who said if outsiders were to ask about the condition of a horse, employees were taught to tell them they were OK, despite knowing they were not.

A former employee said that the horses’ enclosures lacked wood shavings in their stalls and had to stand on uneven ground. Horses were forced to stand in puddles of their urine, they said.

Chaparral also holds a contract with Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District which overlooks Bear Creek Stables in Los Gatos. They continue to operate private horse boarding at this location but public programs including camps and horse riding lessons have been suspended, according to Midpen Public Affairs Specialist Ryan McCauley. None of Chaparral’s horses are held at Bear Creek Stables. ■

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

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## COMMUNITY BRIEFS

### Create a free succulent garden at the Belle Haven Library on July 29

Menlo Park residents are invited to a succulent-garden-making workshop at the Belle Haven Library at 100 Terminal Ave. from 2-3:30 p.m. on Monday, July 29.

Adults and teens alike are invited to choose their favorite succulents and decorations to assemble and take home and this free event. The event will take place in the makerspace at the Belle Haven Library, and will continue until supplies run out.

### Learn how to prepare for any disaster on Aug. 3

Join San Mateo County’s 20th Annual Disaster Preparedness Day on Aug. 3, to learn more about disaster preparedness, resources and response. The disaster preparedness day is free to attend, and will take place at 1346 Saratoga Dr., San Mateo from 11 a.m.-3 p.m. The event will include a resource and vendor fair, emergency preparedness classes and interactive demonstrations.

Activities include wildfire preparedness seminars, CPR classes, first aid classes, home and landscape hardening workshops and disaster food preparation classes. There will also be a kids area with kid-friendly activities such as storytime with a firefighter.

### California Competes tax credit applications due Aug. 12

Applications for the California Competes tax credit, a state incentive program available to businesses that want to locate in California or stay and grow in California, are due on Aug. 12. Any business in any industry can apply for the tax credit. There are \$215 million in tax credits available.

Learn more and find application resources at [business.ca.gov/california-competes-tax-credit](http://business.ca.gov/california-competes-tax-credit).

— Eleanor Raab

**SUMMER CAMP**

*continued from page 5*

counselors or interns at SLAC.

Camp staff have developed interactive curriculum including marble roller coasters, physics and basketball, paper bridge and rockets. They've "humanized" science and connected their learning to things that students are familiar with — reminding them that physics is around them even when they might not expect it.

The middle schoolers were also joined by college students of the Atlanta University Center Consortium who are currently taking part in the SLAC Summer Pathways Residency program. These college students work as camp counselors during the day and in the evening have the opportunity to tour SLAC facilities, meet with staff and learn about the careers within the lab.

The AUCC is an organization of four historically Black colleges which aim to support and expand opportunities to their students.

"It was amazing to see these young minds being put to work and actually having different ideas, but also learning how to collaborate with one another and learn that engineering is about collaboration," said Wynter Clemmons, a chemical engineering major from Clark Atlanta University.

Jayden Fleming, computer science and computer engineering major at Spelman College,

emphasizes that "the overall mission to increase the pipeline of Black engineers doesn't start in college. It starts from as young as K-12."

Dorian Bohler, accelerator physicist and co-founder of the CSI summer camp said "a lot of students have teachers in math and science who don't have a STEM background and that's one of the key pieces of data that correlate to the lack of representation in STEM."

In just one week, students have shown to have absorbed a great amount of scientific knowledge, as well as an understanding of teamwork, perseverance and trial and error.

Freddy, 11, presented with his peer Micah, 10, on their marble roller coaster project, explaining how the movement of the marble on their foam roller coaster is charged by momentum, kinetic energy and potential energy.

Michah's mother Tamara Forte said that everyday after camp, her son willingly talks about everything he learned without her having to ask any questions. "It's amazing," she said. He's told her he wants to pursue a career in engineering.

"I think it's important for Black students to see Black professionals and scientists in their spaces so that they know that they belong there as well," said Bohler. ■

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

Para más información sobre este aviso, por favor llame al número (650) 561-9709.

**Notification of Application Filed by California Water Service to Increase Rates in 2026-2028 for the Bear Gulch District (Application 24-07-003)**

**Why am I receiving this notice?**

On July 8, 2024, California Water Service (Cal Water) filed its 2024 Infrastructure Improvement Plan, known as a General Rate Case (GRC), Application (A.24-07-003) with the California Public Utilities Commission (CPUC). As part of the application, Cal Water is requesting to increase rates to fund needed infrastructure improvements, water system maintenance, water quality initiatives, safety measures, and business operations, as well as to adjust for inflation. If the CPUC approves the application, forecasted costs will be recovered over a three-year period, affecting your water bill no sooner than January 2026.

**Why is Cal Water requesting this?**

- Cal Water is required to file an application with the CPUC every three years so that water rates accurately reflect the cost of providing safe, clean, reliable tap water to customers.
- This multi-year plan enables the utility to upgrade and modernize the water system through proactive infrastructure improvements designed to keep water reliable for customers, make its communities safer, prevent small problems from getting bigger and more expensive to fix, increase sustainability, and provide high-quality service—both now and in the future.
- Some of the key projects Cal Water proposes in this cycle are to: replace approximately 53,543 feet of aging water mains, construct a new storage tank, and install new water treatment to keep providing safe, clean water.

**How could this affect my water bill?**

If Cal Water's proposal is approved by the CPUC as filed, beginning in 2026, the average residential bill in the Bear Gulch District (with a 5/8"x3/4" meter and using 5,984 gallons, or 8 Ccf\*, per month) would increase by approximately \$6.45, or 8.7%, per month. These numbers do not include temporary surcharges and credits. Over the course of the review process, which could take 18 months or more, some projects may be deferred or costs adjusted. Final rates approved may be lower than what was proposed.

\*1 Ccf = 748 gallons

Average Residential Customer Bill Increase

Customer Type	Monthly Usage	Current Bill	Proposed 2026 Bill Change	Proposed 2027 Bill Change	Proposed 2028 Bill Change
Residential	8 Ccf (5,984 gallons)	\$73.76	\$6.45 8.7%	\$5.61 7.0%	\$6.16 7.2%
Residential enrolled in Customer Assistance Program	8 Ccf (5,984 gallons)	\$53.22	\$1.56 2.9%	\$3.91 7.1%	\$4.29 7.3%

These adjustments to rates would allow for district revenue increases of \$11,858,937 in 2026, \$5,415,782 in 2027, and \$5,943,537 in 2028, which will offset the additional cost of needed infrastructure improvements, water system maintenance, water quality initiatives, safety measures, business operations, and to adjust for inflation.

Proposed Revenue Request by Customer Type\*\*

Type of Service Provided	Current Revenue Requirement	Proposed 2026 Revenue Increase	Proposed 2027 Revenue Increase	Proposed 2028 Revenue Increase
Residential Metered Service	\$ 57,478,913	\$10,046,031 17.5%	\$ 4,547,517 6.7%	\$ 4,987,867 6.9%
Nonresidential Metered Service*	\$ 10,254,447	\$ 1,792,243 17.5%	\$ 857,818 7.1%	\$ 942,520 7.3%

\*Nonresidential Metered Service applies to all customer classes that are not residential (such as business, multi-family, and public authority customers) and do not have a separate tariff. \*\*The sum of residential and nonresidential revenues will not equal total revenue due to other revenue sources such as construction meter charges, fire protection services, and recycled water.

**How does the rest of this process work?**

This application will be assigned to a CPUC Administrative Law Judge, who will consider proposals and evidence presented during the formal hearing process. The Administrative Law Judge will issue a proposed decision that may adopt Cal Water's application, modify it, or deny it. Any CPUC Commissioner may sponsor an alternate decision with a different outcome. The proposed decision, and any alternate decisions, will be discussed and voted upon by the CPUC Commissioners at a public CPUC Voting Meeting.

Parties to the proceeding may review Cal Water's application, including the Public Advocates Office, which is an independent consumer advocate within the CPUC that represents customers to obtain the lowest possible rate for service consistent with reliable and safe service levels. For more information regarding the Public Advocates Office, call (415) 703-1584, email PublicAdvocatesOffice@cpuc.ca.gov, or visit PublicAdvocates.cpuc.ca.gov.

**Where can I get more information?**

Contact Cal Water:

Phone: (650) 561-9709  
Email: infoBG@calwater.com  
Mail: 1720 North First Street, San Jose, CA 95112

A copy of the application and any related documents may also be reviewed at [calwater.com/iip](http://calwater.com/iip).

Contact CPUC:

Please visit [apps.cpuc.ca.gov/c/A2407003](https://apps.cpuc.ca.gov/c/A2407003) to submit a comment about this proceeding on the CPUC Docket Card. Here you can also view documents and other public comments related to this proceeding. Your participation by providing your thoughts on Cal Water's request can help the CPUC make an informed decision. If you have questions about CPUC processes, you may contact the CPUC's Public Advisor's Office at:

Phone: (866) 849-8390  
Email: Public.Advisor@cpuc.ca.gov  
Mail: CPUC Public Advisor's Office  
505 Van Ness Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94102

Please reference Cal Water's Application 24-07-003 in any communications you have with the CPUC regarding this matter.

CNSB # 3833488

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We have entered a new era where sellers are no longer permitted to offer any commission to buyer's agents in the MLS, which means that no commission details are advertised on sites like Zillow or Redfin. Buyers also need to sign agreements with their agents outlining the commission they will pay their own agents before they show any properties. If a seller wants to offer additional compensation to the buyer's agent, they can, but it is neither required nor encouraged.

While some listing agents will still try to contractually obligate sellers to pay 2% or more to the buyer's agent, DeLeon Realty has taken a different approach. Our sellers benefit from our industry-leading home preparation, staging, and marketing services while paying a total commission as low as 3%. Additionally, if a buyer chooses not to pay a buyer's agent, Ken DeLeon and his team will represent them on our listings at no cost to either the buyer or the seller.

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Audrey Sun  
DRE #01933274  
**650.785.5822**



# 5 ARTISAN WAY MENLO PARK



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A vibrant lifestyle awaits in this stylish townhome located within a half-mile of downtown Menlo Park. Step inside to discover a 3-level floorplan boasting beautiful engineered hardwood floors, air conditioning, and abundant natural light. The expansive living room, granite-appointed kitchen with stainless steel appliances, breezy outdoor spaces, and three en suite bedrooms—including a spacious primary suite—offer exceptional comfort. Additional amenities include in-unit laundry and an attached 2-car garage. Enjoy being within walking distance of the shops and restaurants along Santa Cruz Avenue, beautiful parks, the Stanford Shopping Center, and Caltrain, with Stanford University, downtown Palo Alto, and Highway 101 all just a short drive away. Plus, children may attend top-ranked schools including Oak Knoll Elementary and Menlo-Atherton High (buyer to verify eligibility).

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Listed by Audrey Sun of the DeLeon Team

Audrey Sun, DRE #01933274 電話: 650.785.5822 精通中英文和粵語 | Equal Housing Opportunity  
Michael Repka, DRE #01854880 | DELEONREALTY.COM | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224

# MEET THE ALMANAC READERS' CHOICE 2024 WINNERS!



Get ready to meet the 2024 Almanac Readers' Choice gold-medal winners as you check out the restaurants, retail shops, service providers and other businesses that rose to the top of the annual contest.

Readers have recognized these businesses by casting almost 12,000 votes for their favorite places to eat, shop, workout or spend time with family and friends.

This year's list includes some familiar favorites as well as some new places we're eager to explore. Here's your crowd-sourced guide to the very best of Menlo Park, Woodside, Portola Valley and Atherton.

## ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

### BEST LIVE MUSIC

#### **Alice's Restaurant**

Alice's Restaurant serves classic food like burgers, fries, scrambles and pie from a rustic-looking cabin among the redwoods and has live music on Thursday and Friday nights.

17288 Skyline Blvd., Woodside  
(650) 851-0303  
alicesrestaurant.com



### BEST PLACE FOR A DATE

#### **Bistro Vida**

Inspired by the Parisian bistro culture, Bistro Vida has been serving up French-influenced dishes with a slight Mediterranean twist for more than 25 years. The dishes on the market-driven menu are created with local seasonal ingredients. They also offer a carefully curated wine selection and a full bar featuring hand-crafted signature cocktails.

641 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park  
(650) 462-1686  
bistro-vida.com

### BEST PLACE TO MEET PEOPLE

#### **Alice's Restaurant**

See Best Live Music

## FOOD & DRINK

### BEST BAKERY

#### **Woodside Bakery**

Woodside Bakery offers pastries, cakes, cookies and other baked goods that have kept customers coming back for more than three decades. The family-owned European bakery makes its baked goods from scratch every day.

325 Sharon Park Drive, Menlo Park  
(650) 854-6207  
woodsidebakery.com

### BEST BREAKFAST

#### **Buck's of Woodside**

Knickknack-festooned decor lends a whimsical vibe to this veteran Silicon Valley comfort-food diner. Established in 1991, Buck's has become a beloved institution known for its quirky decor, hearty American cuisine, and lively atmosphere. Buck's menu features breakfast classics, burgers, steaks and seafood dishes.

3062 Woodside Road, Woodside  
(650) 851-8010  
BucksRestaurant.com



### BEST DESSERT

#### **Woodside Bakery**

See Best Bakery



Sara Hayden

**Buck's of Woodside** — Best Breakfast



Courtesy Lulu's Mexican Food

**Lulu's on the Alameda** — Best Take-Out & Best Mexican Restaurant

**BEST HAMBURGER**

**Dutch Goose**

Since opening in 1966, Dutch Goose has been the go-to place for Certified Angus Beef burgers, brews and pizza in a family-friendly atmosphere, where the staff "call you by name and not a number or a text."

**3567 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park (650) 854-3245 dutchgoose.net**



prepared-from-scratch food made from organic and sustainable ingredients.

**1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park (650) 327-0830 cafeborraine.com**

**BEST PIZZA**

**Amici's**

Amici's has been serving up pizza — along with pasta, soup and salad — to Menlo Park patrons for the past decade. The thin-crust New York-style pies are cooked in traditional brick ovens next to an open flame.

**880 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park (650) 329-8888 amicis.com**

**BEST HAPPY HOUR**

**Dutch Goose**

See Best Hamburger

**BEST INDEPENDENT COFFEE & TEA HOUSE**

**Cafe Borrone**

With outdoor dining in a plaza complete with a fountain, live jazz music and art exhibits, Cafe Borrone has been a beloved neighborhood landmark in the heart of downtown Menlo Park for decades. The cafe is known for its

**BEST PLACE TO BUY MEAT**

**Bianchini's Market**

Since 1998, shoppers have counted on Bianchini's Market for fresh local produce, gourmet cheeses and groceries from small producers whose items aren't found at chain stores. Readers praise the family-owned market for its meat counter and deli sandwiches,

which can be ordered online and are ready for pickup on arrival.

**3130 Alpine Road, Portola Valley (650) 851-4391 bianchinismarket.com**

**BEST SANDWICH**

**Bianchini's Market**

See Best Place to Buy Meat

**BEST TAKE-OUT**

**LuLu's on the Alameda**

LuLu's on the Alameda is known for serving Mexican cuisine, particularly tacos, burritos and other traditional Mexican dishes. The restaurant has a casual and friendly atmosphere, making it a favorite spot for both locals and visitors.

**3539 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park (650) 854-8226 lulusmexicanfood.com**



**RESTAURANTS**

**BEST AMERICAN RESTAURANT**

**Alice's Restaurant**

Alice's Restaurant serves classic food like burgers, fries, scrambles and pie from a rustic-looking cabin among the redwoods and has live music on Thursday and Friday nights.

**17288 Skyline Blvd., Woodside (650) 851-0303 alicesrestaurant.com**

**BEST ASIAN RESTAURANT**

**Chef Chu's**

Almanac readers continue to cast their ballots for Chef Chu's as the place to go for great Chinese food. Many of the signature dishes feature fish and shellfish, but there's also lamb, chicken and a vegetarian cold plate on the signature menu. There's also an extensive regular menu that ensures everyone will find their favorite traditional entrees.

**1067 N. San Antonio Road, Los Altos (650) 948-2696 chefchu.com**



**BEST CASUAL DINING**

**Alice's Restaurant**

See Best American Restaurant

**BEST DINING WITH KIDS**

**Alice's Restaurant**

See Best American Restaurant

**BEST FRENCH RESTAURANT**

**Bistro Vida**

Inspired by the Parisian bistro culture, Bistro Vida has been serving up French-influenced dishes with a slight Mediterranean twist for more than 25 years. The dishes on the market-driven menu are created with local seasonal ingredients. They also offer a carefully curated wine selection and a full bar featuring hand-crafted signature cocktails.

**641 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park (650) 462-1686 bistro-vida.com**

**BEST ITALIAN RESTAURANT**

**Ristorante Carpaccio**

Ever since Ristorante Carpaccio opened in downtown Menlo Park in 1988, it has consistently won Readers' Choice for best Italian restaurant. Carpaccio features weekly lunch and dinner special menus, while also offering a full range of appetizers, soups, salads, pastas, meat and fish dinners.

**1120 Crane St., Menlo Park (650) 322-1211 carpaccios.com**



**BEST JAPANESE RESTAURANT**

**Dashi Japanese Restaurant**

Dashi Japanese Restaurant offers Asian and Japanese cuisine including sushi, sashimi and light bites in a sophisticated, minimalistic and welcoming atmosphere.

**873 Hamilton Ave., Menlo Park (650) 328-6868 dashijapaneserestaurant.com**



Courtesy Bistro Vida

**Bistro Vida** — Best Place for a Date, Best French Restaurant, Best Outdoor Dining, Best Romantic Restaurant

See READERS' CHOICE, page 18



**READERS' CHOICE**  
continued from page 17

**BEST MEXICAN RESTAURANT**  
**LuLu's on the Alameda**

LuLu's on the Alameda is known for serving Mexican cuisine, particularly tacos, burritos and other traditional Mexican dishes. The restaurant has a casual and friendly atmosphere, making it a favorite spot for both locals and visitors.  
**3539 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park**  
**(650) 854-8226**  
lulusmexicanfood.com

**BEST OUTDOOR DINING**  
**Bistro Vida**

See Best French Restaurant

**BEST ROMANTIC RESTAURANT**

**Bistro Vida**  
See Best French Restaurant

**RETAIL**

**BEST BICYCLE SHOP**  
**Woodside Bike Shop**

Woodside Bike Shop sells accessories and bikes for all ages, ability levels and budgets. They carry mountain

bikes, BMX bikes, cruisers, road bikes, electric bikes and even unicycles. Full service repairs and custom builds are also offered.  
**1800 El Camino Real, Suite C, Menlo Park**  
**(650) 299-1071**  
woodsidebikeshop.com



**BEST BOOKSTORE**  
**Kepler's Books & Magazines**

With its broad collection of books, magazines and literary events, Kepler's Books & Magazines has been a beloved cornerstone in the community since it opened in the 1960s. The independent bookstore's nonprofit arm, the Kepler's Literary Foundation, has a series of online conversations, classes and seminars for adults and youth that has become part of its offerings.  
**1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park**  
**(650) 324-4321**  
keplers.com

**BEST BOUTIQUE**  
**Shady Lane**

For more than four decades, Shady Lane has been offering one-of-a-kind jewelry pieces, intricately woven scarves, artisan glass sculptures, wood carvings, handcrafted soaps and an array of other items handcrafted by local and international artists and designers. The boutique is open for in-store shopping as well as online shopping and curbside pickup. The store also offers gift wrapping.  
**325 Sharon Park Drive, Menlo Park**  
**(650) 321-1099**  
shadylanegallery.com

**BEST FLOOR COVERINGS**  
**Menlo Flooring & Design**

With over 20 years of experience in the flooring industry, Menlo Flooring & Design provides a wide selection



Courtesy Cheeky Monkey Toys

**Cheeky Monkey Toys – Best Specialty Store**

of flooring systems for both residential and commercial clients. Their design consultation services help clients choose the best flooring options for their tastes, needs and budgets.  
**807 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park**  
**(650) 384-6326**  
menloflooring.com

**BEST FRAME STORE / ART GALLERY**

**Portola Art Gallery**  
Portola Art Gallery provides space for Bay Area artists to exhibit high quality artwork, engage with the community and sell their art. Painting, photography, ceramics, paper sculptures and woodworking can be viewed at the gallery at the historic Allied Arts Guild.  
**75 Arbor Road, Menlo Park**  
**(650) 321-0220**  
portolaartgallery.com

**BEST GIFT SHOP**  
**Ladera Garden & Gifts**

Ladera Garden & Gifts is a one-stop shop for garden supplies, gifts and flower arrangements. Juan and Mercedes Navarro, who have operated the full-service nursery for nearly 40 years, provide custom floral arrangements as well as home goods and nursery items.  
**3130 Alpine Road, Portola Valley**  
**(650) 854-3850**  
laderagardenandgifts.com

**BEST GROCERY**  
**Bianchini's Market**

Since 1998, shoppers have counted on Bianchini's Market for fresh local produce, gourmet cheeses and groceries from small producers whose items aren't found at chain stores. Readers praise the family-owned market for its meat counter and deli sandwiches, which can be ordered online and are ready for pickup on arrival. The market also offers delivery in as little as one hour.  
**3130 Alpine Road, Portola Valley**  
**(650) 851-4391**  
bianchinimarket.com



**BEST HARDWARE STORE**  
**Menlo Hardware**

Menlo Park Ace Hardware has been the go-to hardware store for home, garden and building supplies since it opened in 2005. In addition to offering housewares and tools, the independently owned shop offers services, including key cutting, custom glass and acrylic sheet cutting, blade sharpening, window screen repair, propane exchange and product assembly and delivery.  
**700 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park**  
**(650) 325-2515**  
menlohardware.com



**BEST HOME DECOR & FURNISHINGS**  
**Anthem**

Anthem offers an exclusive collection of home decor, tabletop, lighting, furniture, accessories, jewelry and gifts - a "collection of the finest products, designed to inspire and delight," according to Anthem's website.  
**889 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park**  
**(650) 440-7400**  
AnthemSF.online

**BEST NURSERY**  
**Ladera Garden & Gifts**

See Best Gift Shop

**BEST PLACE TO BUY JEWELRY**  
**Gleim the Jeweler**

Gleim the Jeweler has earned a reputation for excellence in craftsmanship and customer service. Gleim offers a curated selection of both classic and contemporary designs with collections of precious gems, unique estate jewelry, timepieces, high jewelry lines and bespoke pieces.  
**111 Stanford Shopping Center, Palo Alto**  
**(650) 949-1122**  
gleimjewelers.com

**BEST PLACE TO BUY SHOES**  
**Fleet Feet**

Fleet Feet in Menlo Park helps customers find products that improve their fitness experience. They assess



Courtesy Shady Lane

**Shady Lane – Best Boutique**



Courtesy Portola Art Gallery

**Portola Art Gallery** — Best Frame Store / Art Gallery

foot type and gait cycle and have 3D scanners to measure feet, making their footwear recommendations uniquely tailored to each customer. For those who prefer to shop online, the shop is offering virtual shoe fittings via Zoom.  
**859 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park**  
**(650) 325-9432**  
**fleetfeet.com**

**BEST PRODUCE**

**Sigona's Farmers Market**

Sigona's Farmers Market is a family-owned grocery store offering locally sourced, high-quality produce, including fruits, vegetables, nuts, and other gourmet food items. Sigona's is known for its commitment to supporting local farmers and providing customers with fresh, seasonal ingredients. In addition to produce, they also offer a selection of artisanal products, including cheeses, olive oils and baked goods.  
**2345 Middlefield Road, Redwood City**  
**(650) 368-6993 | sigonas.com**

**BEST SPECIALTY STORE**

**Cheeky Monkey Toys**

A perennial winner in this category, Cheeky Monkey Toys is a family-owned shop that specializes in finding "just the right toy" for each customer. Since opening its doors in Menlo Park in 1999, the shop has provided interactive toys designed to stimulate children's minds to generations of local families.  
**640 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park**  
**(650) 328-7975**  
**cheekymonkeytoys.com**

**SERVICES**

**BEST AUTO REPAIR**

**Portola Valley Garage**

Portola Valley Garage's skilled technicians have been providing minor tune-ups and major overhauls since 1948. In addition to repair services, the garage offers 24-hour vehicle drop-off, online appointments and loaner cars. It is a "one stop shop" for all your service and repair needs.  
**4170 Alpine Road, Portola Valley**  
**(650) 851-7442 | pvgarage.com**

**BEST BARBER**

**Menlo Park Barber Shop**

The barbers at Menlo Park Barber Shop pride themselves on developing close relationships with clients, giving excellent cuts and "blending craft and tradition with a strong dose of humor."  
**2100 Avy Ave., Menlo Park**  
**(650) 391-9008**  
**menloparkbarbershop.com**

**BEST DAY SPA**

**LaBelle Day Spas & Salons**

For decades, LaBelle Day Spas and Salons has helped Silicon Valley clients to look and feel their best from head to toe. Moisturizers, serums and oils; treatments for problematic skin conditions, such as rosacea; scrubs, toners and eye care — everything for the face and body is available here with a one-on-one approach.  
**Town & Country Village,**  
**855 El Camino Real, Ste. #33 & #95,**  
**Palo Alto**  
**(650) 327-6964**  
**labelledayspas.com**

**BEST DENTAL OFFICE**

**Menlo Park Family Dental**

Menlo Park Family Dental offers advanced dental solutions to people of all ages, tailoring care to each person's unique situation. The office provides a wide range of services, including general dentistry, cosmetic dentistry, restorative dentistry, periodontal care, orthodontics and oral surgery.  
**1300 University Drive, Ste. 5,**  
**Menlo Park**  
**(650) 325-7711**  
**menloparkfamilydental.com**

**BEST DRY CLEANER**

**Ladera Cleaners**

For more than 30 years, Ladera Cleaners has helped customers properly care for their clothes, coats, comforters and other delicate handmade items. The shop, which has been a Readers' Choice winner year after year since 2015, offers one-day dry cleaning,

mending and reweaving services, as well as alterations for wedding dresses and other items.  
**3130 Alpine Road, Portola Valley**  
**(650) 854-2291**  
**laderacleaners.net**

**BEST FITNESS CLASSES**

**Studio K-Fit**

A five-time winner of the Readers' Choice contest, Studio K-Fit offers high-intensity but low-impact workouts focused on strength, mobility and cardio through high-intensity interval training (HIIT). The studio also offers lifestyle coaching and personalized nutrition guidance. The staff believes that "Health is your greatest wealth, and the journey is even better when you're part of a positive and supportive community of coaches and members."  
**3708 Florence St., Redwood City**  
**studiokfit@gmail.com**  
**studiokfit.com**



**BEST FLORIST**

**Ladera Garden & Gifts**

Ladera Garden & Gifts is a one-stop shop for garden supplies, gifts and flower arrangements. Juan and Mercedes Navarro, who have operated the full-service nursery for nearly 40 years, provide custom floral arrangements as well as home goods and nursery items.  
**3130 Alpine Road, Portola Valley**  
**(650) 854-3850**  
**laderagardenandgifts.com**

**BEST GYM**

**Studio K-Fit**

See Best Fitness Classes

**BEST HAIR SALON**

**Antonio Cremona Salon**

Clients at Antonio Cremona Salon enjoy a relaxing and stylish environment where they feel pampered while receiving professional hair care services. The stylists prioritize personalized service to enhance the clients' natural beauty and confidence by offering hair services, including coloring, haircuts, styling, and more.  
**104 Portola Road, Portola Valley**  
**(650) 851-5757**  
**antoniocremonasalon.com**

**BEST HOTEL**

**Stanford Park Hotel**

Stanford Park Hotel describes itself as an "oasis" that offers its guests "genuine tranquility." This luxury hotel features a library, pool and spa, complimentary in-room snacks and fireside spots for reading.  
**100 El Camino Real,**  
**Menlo Park**  
**(650) 322-1234**  
**stanfordparkhotel.com**



**BEST MANICURE / PEDICURE**

**A Touch of Elegance Nail Care**

Customers can expect quality service, a friendly staff and reasonable pricing at A Touch of Elegance Nail Care, a longtime favorite of Almanac readers. In addition to manicures and pedicures, A Touch of Elegance also offers facials and other services.  
**1150 Crane St.,**  
**Menlo Park**  
**(650) 321-0679**

**BEST PLUMBER**

**Guy Plumbing & Heating**

Guy Plumbing & Heating is a fourth-generation family-owned business that provides a wide range of services and operates a full-service showroom specializing in the sales and installation of Toto washlet bidet seats, as well as parts for Hansgrohe, Kohler and House of Rohl.  
**1265 El Camino Real**  
**Menlo Park**  
**(650) 323-8415**  
**guyplumbing.com**

**BEST YOGA**

**YogaSource**

YogaSource was built on the belief that "the practice of yoga should be both demanding and gratifying." They boast a wide curriculum of yoga classes, including vinyasa, power, yin, restorative, hot 26, pilates and more.  
**16185 Los Gatos Blvd.,**  
**Los Gatos**  
**(408) 402-9642**  
**yogasource.com**



Courtesy Studio K-Fit

**Best Fitness Classes & Best Gym** — Studio K-Fit

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[AlmanacNews.com/donate](https://AlmanacNews.com/donate)



## Concern over deaths at Maguire Jail

By Chris Rasmussen

### GUEST OPINION

Dear Independent Civilian Advisory Commission on the Sheriff's Office, NAMI San Mateo County and the NAMI Advocacy Committee are deeply concerned about the recent deaths at Maguire Jail, where five individuals have died since January 2023. Based on available information, it appears that two of these deaths were suicides, and two were drug-related. We urge the Independent Civilian Advisory Commission on the sheriff's office to initiate an independent review of these deaths to identify preventive measures for future incidents. Additionally, we ask the commission to request the Board of Supervisors convene experts to study best practices and develop and fund enhanced diversion services to save lives.

Sheriff Christina Corpus has noted that approximately 70% of individuals booked into San Mateo County's Maguire Correctional Facility are addicted to alcohol or drugs, and around 48% have a mental illness. Two-thirds of all incarcerated individuals leave the facility within five days. These percentages have been rising in recent years. While the sheriff has strengthened mental health and substance abuse services within the jail, these units, staffed with some medical personnel, still function within the correctional environment. Correctional officers and deputies are not trained to handle addiction and mental health crises, despite the long-standing use of jails and prisons

as de facto mental health institutions. This practice is ineffective, inhumane, and financially wasteful.

We need more community resources to offer safe and effective diversion. The Behavioral Health Commission has recommended a 24-hour drop-in crisis center as an alternative to jail when appropriate and NAMI San Mateo County supports this recommendation.

With the implementation of the new crisis response system through a contract for a Mobile Crisis Response Team with Telecare, we have the opportunity to lead the way in saving lives by planning and building a more robust diversion capacity.

Deaths in jails are increasing statewide, with suicides being the second most common cause.

Research shows that mental health conditions worsen in jail settings, which are not designed for treatment. As the California Budget and Policy Center has stated, "While California must continue to improve health care for people who are incarcerated, reforms are also needed to address the connections between mental health and the criminal justice system so that Californians who need mental health treatment receive the appropriate care in a timely manner rather than being confined in state prisons or county jails."

Those under the influence of

drugs may act out violently and be subject to arrest, but jail is not a suitable environment for drug treatment. Detoxification is a medically risky process that should occur in a clinical facility, not a jail. In 2019, NPR reported that "About 80% of all detoxification for drugs and alcohol happens in jails and prisons. And nationally, in the last 10 years, counties and states have paid out well over \$70 million for addiction withdrawal-related deaths of inmates."

The deaths in the county jail, all involved individuals housed at Maguire Jail who were booked but not tried or convicted, have raised significant questions and should prompt an independent review. Key concerns include whether different treatment options could have saved lives, such as immediate medical assessments at a secure substance treatment facility, screening for

mental health crises, or intervention by an unarmed crisis response team. The circumstances of their arrests, potential for medical evaluations to reveal critical illnesses, and the adequacy of suicide risk screenings are under scrutiny. A review would aim to identify lessons and improvements to prevent future deaths in custody.

We strongly advocate for the development of safe and secure medical facilities to manage these challenging cases in a clinical setting by trained professionals in mental health and substance abuse. This approach will not only save lives but also ensure that resources are used effectively. Thank you for your attention to this important matter,

Sincerely,

Chris Rasmussen  
President NAMI  
San Mateo County

### LETTERS

Our readers write

#### Losing our opportunity and democracy

Democrats are losing their opportunity to save our democracy. All the news about the Democratic party seems to be about the infighting and none of it about the looming threat of Project 2025 (the Republican

Mein Kamph).

By the time the smoke clears on the Democratic candidate at the September Democratic Convention there will be precious little time left to inform the public about the looming Republican disaster and their Horrific Project 2025.

NOW is the time to act decisively and make use of the full four months we have left until the November election.

Don Barnby  
Spruce Avenue, Menlo Park

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

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

**The O'Connor Tract Co-Operative Water Company no longer has levels of manganese above the secondary drinking water standard.**

Our water system is no longer in violation of any secondary drinking water standard.

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Letters should be no longer than 300 words.

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



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## Spinning under the stars

San Francisco Ballet brings dance to Frost's summer season



The company's program highlights contemporary and classical works, including an excerpt of 'Swan Lake'

By Akhil Joondeph

For dancer Nathaniel Remez, his journey with the San Francisco Ballet began as a young teenager over a decade ago, after he had spent two summers training in the company's summer intensive programs.

"When I was 17, I moved out to San Francisco," Remez said. "I got accepted into the school from the summer program in 2014, and I did a year in the school, a year in the trainee program, which is the interim program between the school and the company, and then was hired as an apprentice to the company in 2016. I was hired into the corps in 2017. And I've been working here ever since."

Since 2017, Remez has performed in a diverse array of S.F. Ballet productions, as both a member of the corps as well as in more dramatic, character-based roles. He will be one of San Francisco Ballet's dancers in their upcoming program of works at Frost Amphitheater, "Starry Nights," in which he will be playing the lead villain role of Von Rothbart in "Swan Lake."

"Rothbart is a role that I've done a number of times now," Remez said. "In this production, he's in his creature form — he's this bird of prey and human hybrid. I watched a lot of videos and did a lot of research on birds of prey, owls, falcons and hawks, and how they



Photos courtesy Lindsay Thomas

Above: Nikisha Fogo and Nathaniel Remez take flight in Helgi Tomasson's 'Swan Lake.' Top: San Francisco Ballet dancers perform in 'Swan Lake.'

hunt and interact with their environment. And I was able to find some things that felt comfortable and little details that felt natural that I could incorporate into my body language and the way I perform this role."

Act II of Tchaikovsky's "Swan Lake," choreographed by former San Francisco Ballet Artistic Director Helgi Tomasson and featuring Remez's avian alter ego, is one of five works presented by the Ballet as a part of "Starry

Nights." The show will also feature Rachmaninoff's "Three Preludes," choreographed by Ben Stevenson, as well as three choreographies by Dutch contemporary Ballet master Hans van Manen: "Variations for Two Couples," "Solo" and "5

Tango's," which will also feature Remez.

"I don't want to say '5 Tango's' is flirtatious, because that feels lighter than it actually is," Remez said. "It's heavy and sultry, and dynamic at the same time. There are so many different textures and speeds and attitudes in the piece. And still, I find it flows really well, and is really fun to watch."

Ranging from traditional to the modern, the show's pieces highlight the range of the S.F. Ballet's repertoire, and the versatility of its dancers.

"A lot of people when they think of ballet, they think of 'Swan Lake,' 'Sleeping Beauty,' these hundreds and hundreds of years-old classics that might not appeal to everybody," Remez said. "They might seem a little stuffy. But the contemporary work that we do might seem much more accessible to people. Some people love ballet for the classics. But again, some people don't, and it can be a barrier to entry for some audience members. And if they can come and see this and be like, 'I didn't love 'Swan Lake,' but that Hans van Manen stuff was super interesting,' then their conception of ballet can be broadened and they

See **BALLET**, page 23

# Kander and Ebb's 'The World Goes 'Round' comes to Foothill stage

The musical revue features over 30 songs by Broadway duo known for 'Chicago,' 'Cabaret' and more

By Ashwini Gangal

Every New Year's Eve when the ball is dropped at Times Square and "New York, New York" is played while couples kiss each other, the musical genius of composer John Kander and lyricist Fred Ebb is celebrated yet again, both by those who know their work intimately as well as by those who love their songs without knowing who created them.

"Kander and Ebb is embedded in our culture," said music director William "Billy" Liberatore, who will partner with stage director Milissa Carey in presenting some of the duo's best songs, including those from musicals like "Cabaret" and "Chicago," in the upcoming revue "The World Goes 'Round'."

A cast of 13 will perform over 30 melodies at the Lohman Theatre on the campus of Foothill College this month.

"Everyone is very unique in what they bring to the performance; I was really blown away by my first rehearsal with them as a group," said Billy, who is also the director of Gunn High School's choirs. "I'm excited about how great it's going to sound and what a terrific group of talent there is to do this show with."

Moreover, Liberatore draws his inspiration from collaboration and according to him there's nothing more collaborative than musical theater. "You have to be with people who want to explore and want to be challenged about their performance of a song," he said, highlighting the importance of exploring what the songs mean in the context of both the show and the era it's performed in, because he believes these factors affect the way the actors choose to express themselves while performing.

Speaking of contextualizing the performance, Kander and Ebb's material, other than being accessible, is also delightfully in sync with present times. "Some of the themes of their shows, like those in 'Chicago' and 'Cabaret,' though they were written so long ago, are so relevant now, more so than when these guys thought it up," Liberatore said. "There's so much upset and anxiety in just turning on the TV these days. It's like 'Chicago' — which is about being famous for being a convicted felon — is playing out on CNN everyday." That Kander and Ebb's material is life-affirming and uplifting, certainly helps matters.

In general, the local theater business appears to have come out of the pandemic-induced slump. "It's a really good time for local talent," Liberatore said. "Local theater companies are doing great work."

The work, of course, is intense because the actors have to emote without the benefit of a script and a character. "The challenge of musical revue is, you have to make the song come alive for the audience without the setup of the scene and who the character is," he said. "The actors have to establish for themselves where they're coming from dramatically ... how do you bring the dramatic intensity and up the stakes without the setup of the scene and the plot and the characters?"

For the performers, this can be both challenging and creatively gratifying. "Working on this show means diving into a trove of creative possibility," said Bay Area actor, musician and educator Kaylee Miltersen, who is one of the performers in this revue.

This will be her second time performing on the Lohman stage — she played the title character in

the musical "Violet" a few years back — but a first with this group.

For Miltersen, preparing for this show has been a little different from her experience with other musicals. How so? "There's not a specific track and character for me to dive into, but there are moments re-contextualized," she said. "It's been about finding what each piece means to me personally, rather than through the lens of a character, and finding my version of expression. I'm finding this to be a more gentle rehearsal process than a full-on show, because we get to show up as ourselves and explore with each other the shape of our story."

For her, rehearsals for the show have been nothing short of thrilling. "The original cast had assigned parts, but what is fun about ours is how we get to discover and imagine the story for our cast," Miltersen said. "No one has a designated role! But we all have our unique vignettes that carry the story along. Some have solos, duets, trios. Some songs weave through others and combine into something new. Some have backup dancers and for some we're all on stage to sing." ■

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

Foothill Music Theatre presents "The World Goes 'Round'" at the Lohman Theatre on Foothill College, 12345 El Monte Road, Los Altos on July 25 at 7:30 p.m., July 26-27 at 8 p.m., and July 27 at 8 p.m. and July 28 at 2 p.m. \$20-\$28, foothill.edu.

and the temperature, because if it's very cold, it's not easy for us to keep our bodies warm and flexible and ready to dance. That is something that we're all cognizant of going into this show, since we aren't used to performing outdoors."

However, the outdoor venue, in addition to increasing accessibility, also allows "Swan Lake" to be performed in a setting perhaps much closer to the forest and lake central to the story itself, allowing dancers like Remez to feel even more deeply in touch with their respective characters and bringing an immersive experience to audiences.

"Starry Nights" promises to bring world-class artistry to

Peninsula audiences in a picturesque setting, featuring strong characters, technical excellence and choreographic versatility. And perhaps a strikingly authentic portrayal of a bird of prey, too. ■

Email Contributing Writer Akhil Joondeph at akhiljoondeph@gmail.com.

July 26-27 at 7:30pm at Frost Amphitheater, 351 Lasuen St, Stanford. Tickets are \$15-\$250. live.stanford.edu.

## BALLET

continued from page 22

might be more likely to engage with our work in the future."

With a sprawling lawn and a casual, family-friendly atmosphere, the nontraditional venue that is Frost Amphitheater also expands the appeal and accessibility of the Ballet's repertoire, typically performed in the grand and posh War Memorial Opera House in San Francisco. This setting does not come without challenges, however.

"A challenge is definitely the weather," Remez said. "We are always anxious about the weather

## CORRECTION

In the July 12 issue, the story "Longtime Menlo Park bookshop Feldman's has become a flourishing community hub" misspelled the last name of Menlo Park resident Keyko Pintz. The Almanac regrets the error.

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# Worth a Look

## Niall Horan

Irish pop singer-songwriter Niall Horan, of One Direction (the mega-successful boy band) fame, now has a flourishing solo career. Since the band's hiatus, he's released the hit albums "Flicker," "Heartbreak Weather," and last year's "The Show," which includes the songs "Heaven" and "Meltdown." He'll head to Shoreline as a stop on his current world tour.

July 26, 7:30 p.m., Shoreline Amphitheatre, 1 Amphitheatre Parkway, Mountain View; ticket prices vary; [mountainviewamphitheater.com/events/niall-horan-26-july-2024/](http://mountainviewamphitheater.com/events/niall-horan-26-july-2024/).



Courtesy Universal Music

Irish pop singer-songwriter Niall Horan performs at Shoreline Amphitheatre on July 26.

## Rachel Spung and The Soul Service

South Bay R&B and soul band Rachel Spung and The Soul Service is next up in Red Rock Coffee's 2nd Story series, which showcases independent musicians. The groovy group released an EP — "Take 1 (Live From Muir Studios)" — in 2019. 2nd Story shows happen in Red Rock's upstairs space and the lower level stays open for drink service until 8 p.m.

July 27, 6:30 p.m., Red Rock Coffee, 201 Castro St. Mountain View; suggested donation \$10-\$15; [redrockcoffee.com/2nd-story](http://redrockcoffee.com/2nd-story).

## TechFest

At the Computer History Museum's upcoming video-game-themed TechFest (included with regular museum admission), attendees can get hands-on with vintage consoles courtesy of The Retro Roadshow, make their own pixel art, take part in a scavenger hunt, catch live performances of video game music by Character Select and Petriform and, naturally, learn about video game history. The all-day, family friendly festival includes presentations on "Mario Through the Ages" and "Revolutionary Women in Gaming with Miss CEO" on its agenda.

July 27, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., Computer History Museum, 1401 N. Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View; \$6.50-\$19.50 depending on ticket type, kids under 7 free; [computerhistory.org/events/techfest-3/](http://computerhistory.org/events/techfest-3/).

## Community Arts Day

Community School of Music and Arts (CSMA), which offers musical and visual arts education and enrichment, hosts an open day of activities for kids, teens and adults, including live music, food trucks, art and music activities and drop-in classes, public art projects, face painting, and the chance to check out some instruments. Activities will be held indoors and out throughout the Mountain View campus. CSMA was founded in 1968 with the goal of making the arts more accessible to people of all ages and abilities.

July 28, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., Community School of Music and Arts, Finn Center, 230 San Antonio Circle, Mountain View; [arts4all.org/concerts/community-arts-day-open-house/](http://arts4all.org/concerts/community-arts-day-open-house/).

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# Food & Drink

## Finding French influence at a Woodside winery

Winemaker Nicolas Vonderheyden  
is honoring family, heritage and terroir at Maison Areion

By Eleanor Raab

Nicolas Vonderheyden, winemaker and vineyard manager for the Woodside-based wine label Maison Areion, isn't a one-trick pony when it comes to winemaking. Vonderheyden, who was born in the United States but grew up in France, has been making wine from Woodside's Chaîne d'Or Vineyard for nearly 10 years. He got his start in the wine industry after following in his parents' footsteps.

"My parents are French, and they were importing and distributing wine on the East Coast back in the '80s," said Vonderheyden. "We also have a family vineyard in Margaux, just outside Bordeaux, that my uncle was running until the early '90s when he passed away suddenly."

His parents ultimately decided to move back to France to take over the family business when Vonderheyden was 5 years old.

"I grew up on the vineyard, so that's how I was exposed to the vineyard and winemaking and just basically fell into it when I was little," he said.

After completing business school and a food and science degree, Vonderheyden worked at several wineries around the world, including in California and France, and ultimately decided that California was where he wanted to make wine.

Vonderheyden worked several harvests at wineries throughout the Santa Cruz Mountains, including at nearby Thomas Fogarty Winery and Mountain Winery. He eventually took over vineyard and winemaking operations

for Chaîne d'Or vineyard in Woodside in 2015 while he was working full time as the vineyard manager at Mountain Winery.

"On weekends I would go to Chaîne d'Or vineyards and tend to the vines and take care of the wine," he said.

Now, as the vineyard manager for Chaîne d'Or and the winemaker for his own label, Maison Areion, Vonderheyden does it all. He has no full-time employees, so he wears many hats.

### Chaîne d'Or Vineyard

The 2-acre Chaîne d'Or Vineyard, where Vonderheyden sources most of the grapes for Maison Areion, was originally planted by Silicon Valley entrepreneur Jerry Anderson in 1987. He planted the vines in conjunction with local wine pioneers Bob and Jim Varner, who are known for planting some of the best vineyards in the northern part of the Santa Cruz Mountains.

Vonderheyden is currently the only winemaker who makes wine from the grapes grown on this nearly 40-year-old vineyard site, which is located just south of Alice's Restaurant on Highway 84, near the intersection with Skywood Way. The vineyard is not open to the public for tastings, though Vonderheyden occasionally gives private tours.

The name Chaîne d'Or, which means golden chain in French, comes from the name vintners like Paul Masson and Martin Ray gave the growing region on the eastern face of the Santa Cruz Mountains.

"The old winemakers around the turn of the century thought

that this was the best place in California to make wine, so they called the group of winemaking estates Chaîne d'Or," Anderson said in an interview with The Almanac in 2019.

Vonderheyden agrees that it is a very special place to make wine. "(The vineyard) is located at 1,400 feet elevation, and we're not very far from the coastline so there's a lot of Pacific influence," he said. "This tends to preserve the natural acidity in wines, and this is what I really love."

He now farms the vineyard site entirely organically, and aims to become organic certified by the California Certified Organic Farmers by 2026. He says that farming organically helps his wines better reflect the land where the grapes are grown. With minimal intervention in the vineyards, his wines showcase the influence that the soil and air have on these grapes.

"There is no use of herbicides, no use of insecticides," he said. "There's minimal canopy work, so there's no leaf pulling. ... It's very hands off."

The 2-acre estate is planted with chardonnay, cabernet sauvignon and smaller plots of cabernet franc, merlot and petit verdot. The red grapes, Vonderheyden said, felt very familiar to him: "This is kind of a Margaux-like blend, so this suited me well."

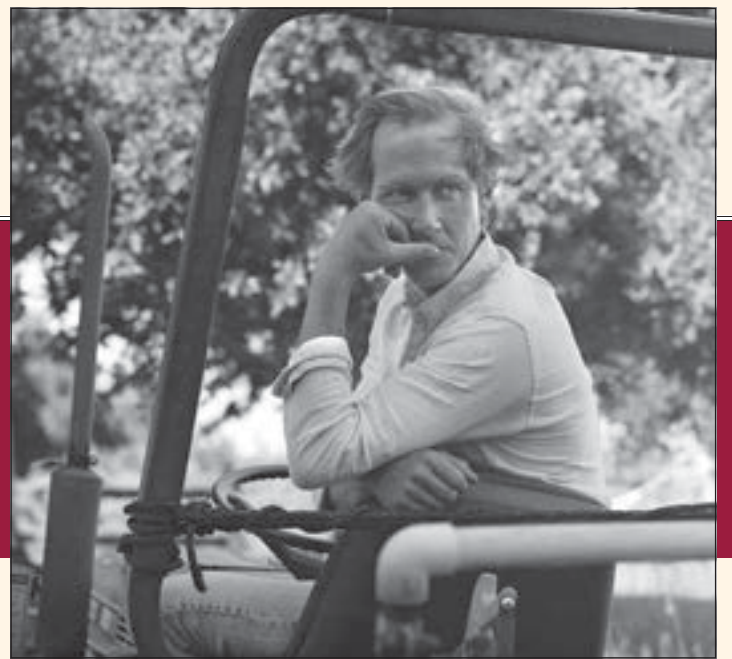
But Vonderheyden was nervous at first to make chardonnay, a wine grape which hails from the other large winemaking region in France, Burgundy.

"It's a little ironic," he laughed. "But I am enjoying it just as much."

Vonderheyden also sources grapes from other vineyards in the region when he can. He has made a pinot noir from Saveria Vineyard in Corralitos and a cabernet franc from Vogelzang Vineyard in the Santa Ynez Valley.

The small cellar that Vonderheyden uses to make his wine is located underneath Anderson's house. Despite being located under a residential living room, the cellar has everything that a professional winemaker might need.

"It's fully bonded and commercial," said Vonderheyden. "It's underground, it's kind of like a cave. It has very thick walls, and there's a little gallery tunnel to access the main tank room and barrel room. It's relatively small but it's extremely functional."



Courtesy Nicolas Vonderheyden

Winemaker Nicolas Vonderheyden mans the tractor at Chaîne d'Or Vineyard in Woodside.

### Maison Areion

Though Vonderheyden started out as the winemaker for Jerry Anderson's Chaîne d'Or brand, he soon found himself wanting to be able to have control over the wines he was making.

"In 2015 when I started at Chaîne d'Or, Jerry (Anderson) was still pretty active in the operations," said Vonderheyden. "He didn't want to just give up on his baby, so to speak. We made an agreement back then that he would keep his Chaîne d'Or brand, and I was looking for a brand for the wines that I wanted to make."

It turns out that just like his first forays into the winemaking business, Vonderheyden's family is what ended up inspiring him. His sister, who was a professional horseback rider, sustained a traumatic brain injury in a horseback riding accident.

"She fell from a horse, and that was right when I was looking for a brand name," he said. "I stumbled upon the name Areion, who happens to be a horse in Greek mythology, and it all came together."

For Vonderheyden, the name Maison Areion represents more than just his connection to his family: It also represents his connection to the land and the grapes that he tends to.

"Areion was born from Gaia, who is the mother of agriculture and earth, and Poseidon, god of oceans," he said. "I like to say that grapes — and eventually wine — are made of water filtered through the earth."

### The wines

Nicolas Vonderheyden says that his Maison Areion wines are meant to be consumed with food. The natural acidity that is maintained in the grapes by cool Pacific breezes are what make his wines, along with many other wines grown in the Santa Cruz Mountains, so food friendly.

"I was raised in France drinking wines that always pair very well with food," he said. "Especially

in the United States, with food that tends to be a little bit on the sweeter side, I find that the higher acidity complements it greatly."

Vonderheyden says that he doesn't like giving tasting notes for his wines. "Everyone has a different perception of the wines," he joked. But he's more than happy to suggest food to pair his wines with.

He recommends pairing his chardonnay with grilled chicken, smoked salmon or a pear salad with pistachios. He suggests pairing his cabernet sauvignon with meats of all kinds, though his favorite pairing is beef stew.

"It might be a little hot to make beef stew in the middle of summer," he said. "I also recommend pairing with a burger on the grill, or maybe a brownie."

Under the Maison Areion label, Vonderheyden only produces about 350 cases, or 4,200 bottles per year, so his wines are a rare commodity. Currently, the Maison Areion wines are not widely distributed, and there is no public tasting room. But local consumers can purchase Chaîne d'Or at Roberts Market in Woodside and Portola Valley.

"I sell the Chaîne d'Or brand to Roberts Market, because historically Jerry (Anderson) has always sold there," Vonderheyden said.

One of the only ways to see the vineyards and taste Maison Areion wines is to contact Vonderheyden himself. He's hoping to expand the brand's reach in the coming year.

"I'm developing sales for (Maison Areion) mainly in Southern California, because I have a broker there," he said. "I also have a distributor in Ohio, and another one in New York and New Jersey."

Vonderheyden is focusing primarily on direct-to-consumer sales. Individuals interested in purchasing a bottle or two of Maison Areion for themselves, or arranging for a private tour, can contact Vonderheyden directly on his website, maison-areion.com.

"I feel extremely fortunate to be able to make a living out of my passion," he said. "Not everybody is so lucky." ■

Email Staff Writer Eleanor Raab at [eraab@almanacnews.com](mailto:eraab@almanacnews.com).



Courtesy Nicolas Vonderheyden

The Chaîne d'Or Vineyard in Woodside was originally planted in 1987.



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