

The Almanac

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

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Magali Gauthier

Winter wildflowers

Looking for wildflowers and berries in the winter can feel like a bit of a treasure hunt. The California Native Plant Society's project Calscape.org allows anyone to look up native plants by types, season and flower colors, among other criteria. Read our full story on how the state's native plants have evolved to withstand periods with little to no rainfall whatsoever on Page 7.

State certifies Woodside's housing element

Mayor calls two years of planning 'toughest' period as a council

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

The state certified the town of Woodside's housing element plan for 2023 through 2031 on Jan. 29, according to a state letter to the town. By adopting the housing element and meeting necessary rezoning requirements, the state Department of Housing and Community Development found the town's plans substantially complied with State Housing Element law.

The housing element is required by the state for all local

governments to develop a plan to meet housing demands across California every eight years. Woodside's housing element had been out of state compliance since Jan. 31, 2023 and is required to develop 328 new housing units between 2023-31.

"I think this has been the toughest two-year period we've gone through as a council," said Mayor Brian Dombkowski in a prepared statement. "We were all asked to do some things that weren't necessarily anything anyone wanted to do, but Woodside is committed to

doing our part in addressing the housing needs of the broader community and doing so in a way that ultimately improves the fabric of our community, supports multi-generational living needs and contributes to better accessibility and affordability in general."

In December 2024, HCD sent the Woodside Town Council feedback that the town's rezoning plans did not meet state requirements. In response, the town adopted an urgency

See **HOUSING ELEMENT**, page 15



Magali Gauthier

Independence Hall in Woodside on Nov. 10, 2020.

INSIDE

ARTS 19 | FOOD 22

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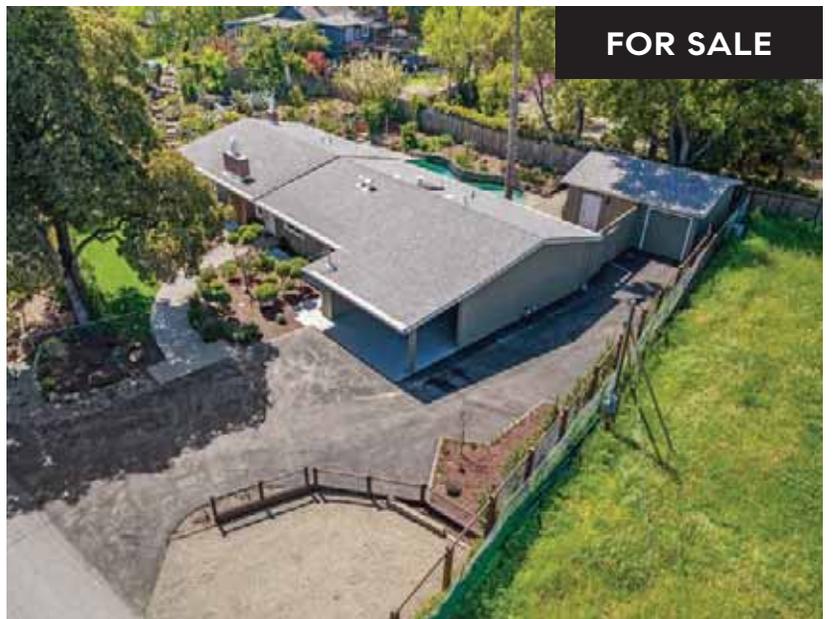
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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY



Courtesy San Mateo County Sheriff's Office

A San Mateo County Sheriff's Office drone captures footage of the June 3, 2024 fire at an affordable housing development in North Fair Oaks.

Cause of 2024 North Fair Oaks affordable housing development fire classified as 'undetermined'

Menlo Fire fire investigation report is released for fire that destroyed 104 housing units

By Hannah Bensen

The Menlo Park Fire Protection District's fire investigation into a June 2024 fire at an affordable housing development in North Fair Oaks reported

that the cause of the fire was undetermined.

The incident occurred at 2700 Middlefield Road in unincorporated San Mateo County, which was in the process of constructing two multi-family residential structures

for low-income families. The fire was confined to one of the two buildings — identified as "Building B" in the report — that would have included 104 units of affordable housing,

See **FAIR OAKS FIRE**, page 18

Menlo Park Fire Protection District recruiting for new fire marshal

Fire marshal Jon Johnston is departing after 25 years with the district

By Hannah Bensen

With fire safety top of mind amid devastating wildfires in Southern California, the Menlo Park Fire Protection District is searching for a new fire marshal to oversee the safety of people and property by enforcing fire safety regulations.

The MPFPD provides emergency response and fire prevention services to 90,000 residents in Atherton, Menlo Park, East Palo Alto, and parts of unincorporated San Mateo County.

Outgoing fire marshal Jon Johnston is departing after 25 years of service to the MPFPD, 10 of which he spent as fire marshal. In the role, Johnston helped educate homeowners on fire mitigation and home hardening techniques (the process of making a home more resistant to fires by using fire-resistant materials and landscaping practices). Efforts to compel homeowners to spend money on these projects was challenging, Johnston said, because Menlo Park doesn't have a history of wildfires.

"Predictable is preventable," said Johnston. "[We are] trying to prepare the community so that we can stay that way, where we don't have that [fire] history."

Johnston joined Menlo Park Fire in 2000 as a fire protection specialist before working his way up the ranks. He holds a bachelor's degree in biology from Pepperdine University, according to his company bio.

MPFPD Fire Chief Mark Lorenzen said the district plans to hire someone by April 15. As part of the hiring team, Lorenzen said he is looking for somebody



Anna Hoch-Kenney

Pro-housing community members make their way to a Menlo Park City Council meeting where council members listened to comments on the plans to build high density housing on three parking lots in downtown Menlo Park on Jan. 14.

Menlo Park could revisit Civic Center, parks for housing amid opposition to using downtown parking lots

By Neil Gonzales

Menlo Park's Civic Center area and public parks could return to the table as possible sites for residential development in the wake of the recent storm of opposition to potentially building houses on city-owned parking lots downtown.

During its Jan. 28 meeting, the City Council voted 4-1 to have staff prepare a report that

explores the feasibility of other public land as alternatives to the parking lots for developing housing units, particularly affordable ones.

Council member Cecilia Taylor dissented, believing that she and her colleagues could delve into the matter at the group's goal-setting session in March instead.

Council member Jeff Schmidt

See **HOUSING**, page 15



Courtesy of the MPFPD

Jon Johnston is sworn in as fire marshal for the Menlo Park Fire Protection District by then-fire board president Rex Ianson in 2014. Former Chief Harold Schapelhouman is on the right.

who is good at building relationships, has the right temperament and is a good collaborator.

"I'm also looking to figure out whether this person is going to

be a good fit for our team," said Lorenzen. "How are they going to deal with their internal staff?"

See **JON JOHNSTON**, page 15

Some in LGBTQ community express fear over Trump's presidency

Local support groups report growing anxiety

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Noah Reddy, a senior at Summit Preparatory Charter High School in Redwood City, was two weeks short of turning 18 before the 2024 presidential election. Had they been eligible to vote, Reddy said they would have voted for former Vice President Kamala Harris.

As a nonbinary and lesbian student, Reddy said they were frustrated and scared by President Donald Trump's potential re-election along with a ballot measure to codify marriage equality being up for vote.

Reddy was one of many LGBTQ individuals who felt anxious in the days before and after the election. The Trevor Project, an LGBTQ suicide

prevention and crisis intervention organization, reported a 200% spike in election conversations across its 24/7 crisis services.

The community is worried about the anti-LGBTQ and racist sentiments that have been growing online, said Reddy. That may be especially so for transgender and nonbinary individuals, who are concerned about continued access to gender-affirming care.

One of Trump's first executive orders on Jan. 20 was to declare the recognition of only the male and female sex.

While concerns about the overturning of LGBTQ rights increase, local organizations such as the San Mateo County Pride Center are working toward providing more mental health



Angela Swartz

San Mateo County Pride Center at 1021 S. El Camino Real in San Mateo on Jan. 29.

support and creating a safe space for LGBTQ individuals. The day after the election, counselors at the Pride Center said they saw a growth in people dropping in to gather resources to share with others, said Frankie Sapp, director of the San Mateo County Pride Center.

In the weeks after the polls closed, the Pride Center turned into a drop-in space for people looking to escape while enjoying

arts and crafts, playing video games or just hanging out with their peers.

The history of Trump's actions toward the community "further solidifies both the anxiety and worry, but at the same time, can make our need to prepare and plan and know what we actually need to take action more concrete," said Sapp.

See LGBTQ, page 17

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Bay Area Regional Climate Action Plan workshop takes place Feb. 11

The Bay Area Air District is hosting a virtual workshop on Thursday, Feb. 11, to share preliminary environmental strategies that could be included in a regional climate action plan for the Bay Area.

The district is asking Bay Area residents to participate in the workshop to share opinions on how the district can center equity, public health and communities in the regional plan.

The workshop will take place on Zoom from 5:30-7 p.m. Language interpretation can be provided upon request. Learn more and register for the event at tinyurl.com/BARCAPworkshop2.

Deadline to apply for Menlo Park commissions is Feb. 14

The city of Menlo Park is seeking applications for two vacant seats on city commissions: one on the Library Commission, and one on the Environmental Quality Commission. The two seats were left vacant after Jennifer Wise, a Library Commission member, and Jeff Schmidt, an Environmental Quality Commission member, were elected to the Menlo Park City Council in the 2024 general election.

All applicants to the empty seats must be 18 or older, a

resident of Menlo Park and willing to attend monthly commission meetings. The term for the Library Commission seat will expire on April 30, 2027, and the term for the Environmental Quality Commission will expire April 30, 2026.

Qualified and interested residents must apply by Friday, Feb. 14.

— Eleanor Raab

5v5 Tournament for Change at Sacred Heart

Sacred Heart Preparatory student Calder Zirn and Crystal Springs Upland student Ben Fair are organizing the first annual 5v5 Tournament for Change at 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. on Feb. 15 at Sacred Heart Preparatory in Atherton.

The tournament is coed and open to all ages for \$35 per participant. All proceeds from the event will be donated to It Starts With Soccer, a non-profit organization dedicated to helping children out of poverty in Africa. The fundraising goal for the event is \$25,000 which will be donated to families in Bethesda Village in Zimbabwe.

Donations will fund for a clean water borehole, sustainable farming initiatives and uplifting youth through soccer.

Donations and tickets for the event are available at 5v5tournamentforchange.crd.co.

23rd benefit for The Lighthouse for the Blind

On Feb. 23 at 7:30 p.m., Steve and Nancy Gill of Los Altos will be presenting the 23rd benefit for Lighthouse for the Blind's Enchanted Hills Camp at Menlo School's Martin Family Hall in Atherton.

The Enchanted Hills Camp is a summer retreat for deaf and blind individuals.

The event will feature musical covers of Willie Nelson's original compositions such as "Crazy" and "You're always on my mind" and many more from "The Great American Songbook."

The requested donation amount for the benefit event is \$20. Those who are planning on attending must contact Nancy Gill at 650-906-5264 or email gillnancyg@gmail.com.

Donations can also be made by checks sent to: Lighthouse for the Blind, Re: Gill Family Benefit, 1155 Market Street, 10th Floor, San Francisco.

Las Lomitas district asks for community input during search for next superintendent

The Las Lomitas Elementary School District has opened an anonymous survey asking for the community's input on the selection of its next superintendent.

The survey is open from Feb. 3-15 and aims to ensure a "collaborative and inclusive

process" for the recruitment of a new superintendent.

Fill out the survey at survey-monkey.com/r/LSK3N6K.

— Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Menlo Park Sister Cities is accepting applications for cultural exchange with Bizen, Japan

The Menlo Park Sister Cities organization is accepting applications for the city's cultural exchange with Menlo Park's sister city Bizen, Japan. The exchange will take place in late June/early July 2025. Exact dates are being finalized.

As an ambassador for the city you will have the opportunity to meet with Bizen city officials, live with a local host family and participate in unique cultural experiences. Past ambassadors have visited Japan's first public school to learn about Confucius philosophy, visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum, and visited a soy sauce factory and sampled soy sauce ice cream.

Applicants must be between the ages of 14 and 18 and reside within the city of Menlo Park.

The trip is \$3,000 and includes roundtrip airfare, accommodations, meals and ground transportation in Japan.

The application is due at 11:59 p.m. on Wednesday, Feb. 19. For more information and to apply, visit: menloparksistercities.org/programs/studentexchange.

— Angela Swartz

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 and Woodside for over 50 years

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Hunting for winter wildflowers

Spring isn't the only time to see local blooms. Here's how to spot them

By Magali Gauthier

Deep pink warrior's plume, red Toyon berries and white coast silktassels are among the many flowers and berries that bloom on the Peninsula each winter.

Though kaleidoscopic displays of wildflowers are a more common sight in spring, California's rare Mediterranean climate — one of only five in the world — lends itself to colorful blooms other times of the year. The state is home to about 6,000 plant species owing to its varied environments, including its coastline, deserts, mountains and grasslands.

"One of the reasons that we're able to sort of highlight these winter bloomers is because of that biodiversity, because we have so many different climates and so many endemic species," said Ryan McCauley, a spokesperson for Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District.

This time of year, madrones and toyons show off their bright red berry clusters. Other native plants, such as the brittleleaf manzanita, display bell-shaped white flowers clumped together on long branches, and the chaparral currant dazzles in shades of pink.

Large wildflower blooms typically appear throughout spring and early summer following wet winters. In 2023, after atmospheric rivers battered the state, satellite images showed hillsides in central and Southern California flushed with swaths of orange and purple.

But the state's native plants have evolved to withstand periods with little to no rainfall whatsoever.

"Historically, California was in a drought about a third of the

time," said Ann-Marie Benz, a horticulture expert with the California Native Plant Society. "(Native plants) co-evolved with the precipitation patterns, they've co-evolved with the microbes in the soil. And so they're going to tolerate it and do better than something from outside the area."

So far, this January has been relatively dry, allowing the native blooms to open up, but heavy rainfall is forecast for the first couple of days in February. And while native plants have an edge over invasive species during dry periods, McCauley said that winter precipitation stimulates the growth of invasive grasses.

"The grass can grow so quickly," McCauley said. "It sort of just takes up all that sunlight and real estate, and the native plants underneath, they're not able to sort of adapt as quickly."

McCauley added that MROSD mows grassy hillsides to "give our native wildflowers a jump or sort of an advantage that they lose."

Dana Page, the natural resource management program manager with the Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department, said cattle are also deployed to graze on invasive grasses year-round.

"They're basically acting as these large lawn mowers that are out there and eating the grass, and allowing to keep that grass controlled," Page said. "And then the native flowers can come up because that grass gets eaten by the cows."

The Bay Area's unique serpentine soil, a nutrient-poor rock, also adds another factor to the mix. Some native wildflowers, like the California poppy and California buttercup, have adapted to the soil and begin



Magali Gauthier

California gooseberry hang from a branch in Edgewood Park & Natural Preserve in Redwood City on Jan. 30.

Photos on Page 1, from left: Chaparral currant flowers are starting to open up in Edgewood Park & Natural Preserve in Redwood City on Jan. 30. Flowers grow on a wild cucumber vine in Rancho San Antonio County Park & Open Space Preserve in Cupertino on Jan. 28. Warrior's plume shooting up along a trail in Thornewood Open Space Preserve in Woodside on Jan. 28. Photos by Magali Gauthier.

blooming in it in the winter, while invasive weeds and grasses struggle to take root.

There are also invasive flowers vying for a spot in the sunlight, including mustard and Bermuda buttercups, which also began to spring up in January.

And with climate change causing prolonged droughts some years and heavy downpours during others, experts say it's difficult to know what's going to happen to winter blooms and between native and invasive species in the long run.

"It's an ever-evolving sort of study that we're trying to understand: How do wildflowers and native plants — how are they shifting to sort of adapt to this changing environment," McCauley said. "I will say that because California is already this biodiversity hot spot and we have so many different microclimates — that in itself is sort of a strength and an advantage that could help sort of combat some of these shifts."

Page said she thinks that development and habitat fragmentation is currently having a greater impact on native species than climate change, and that land trusts play a key role in conserving unique habitats.

Visitors can also have a positive impact on winter blooms.

"The other biggest thing is just letting people know if they're going out on those hikes or going out to a park, to respect the habitat," McCauley said, adding that flowers should not be picked or stepped on.

How to find local winter blooms

Looking for wildflowers and

berries in the winter can feel like a bit of a treasure hunt. The California Native Plant Society's project Calscape.org allows anyone to look up native plants by types, season and flower colors, among other criteria.

Santa Clara County Parks and Recreation Department also has an interactive map that outlines some of the best hikes to see wildflowers.

And through the application iNaturalist, people can post and search for plant sightings. Species' location details are accessible with or without an account.

Recent logged observations include:

- California gooseberry at Edgewood Park & Natural Preserve in Redwood City
- Warrior's plume at Thornewood Open Space Preserve in Woodside
- Summer snowflake in Foothills Park in Palo Alto
- Coast silktassel at Skyline Ridge Open Space Preserve in La Honda
- Chaparral currant at Monte Bello Open Space Preserve in Los Altos ■

Magali Gauthier is a Contributing Writer.



Magali Gauthier

A patch of daffodils bloom in Edgewood Park & Natural Preserve in Redwood City on Jan. 30.

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Privacy

Dear Monica: I have just bought a property and I'm concerned that all of the photos of it are on the internet. Can I have them removed? Beth C.

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Affordable housing project for teachers faces appeal

By Eleanor Raab

A neighbor of the Flood School teacher housing development has submitted an appeal, asking the Menlo Park City Council to revisit the Planning Commission's entitlement of the project.

The appeal was submitted by Skip Hilton, a resident of the Suburban Park neighborhood where the project is located. Hilton's appeal of the project argues that there are "significant deficiencies and inaccuracies" in the traffic studies commissioned by the developer and the city, and that the Planning Commission did not have "the full picture" when it approved the project.

The Planning Commission voted 5-1 on Jan. 13, with Commissioner Katie Ferrick dissenting, to approve use and architectural-control permits, as well as a below-market-rate housing agreement, for developer Alliant Communities to construct three multifamily buildings at the site of the former James Flood Magnet School. A total of 88 units are planned for the site, and all but the building

manager's unit would be offered at below-market rates and targeted specifically at educators.

The site is owned by the Ravenswood City School District, and has sat empty since the school closed in 2011.

Hilton's appeal is only for the commission's determination on the use permit, not the below-market-rate housing agreement or architectural-control permit. Hilton also told The Almanac that this appeal is not linked to the recent recall that was initiated against Mayor Drew Combs over the same project.

In his appeal of the project, Hilton wrote that he is not opposed to building low-income housing for teachers and other city residents at the site, and that he is not trying to stop the project from moving forward. He is appealing this specific plan because it is "lacking key elements that would dramatically improve the project for residents." He says it is inconsistent with several elements of the city's general plan and he believes that there are inaccuracies in the traffic and environmental assessments of the project.

"This is an opportunity to advance the city's general plan in harmony: housing, environmental justice, and circulation elements, and to approve this project after amendment to ensure it progresses the city's goals and policies," wrote Hilton.

He specifically cites the transportation impact analysis of the project conducted by city consultants, and says that the study did not include analysis of the traffic patterns at the intersection of Bay Road and Ringwood Avenue.

During the Jan. 13 Planning Commission meeting, Menlo Park Senior Planner Chris Turner said that the intersections that were analyzed in the city's transportation study were selected and vetted by the city's Transportation Division.

"The missing intersection is a major artery for all southbound/eastbound traffic on Bay Road, the main access point to downtown Menlo Park for area residents, and a safe route to school for Laurel Lower School, Menlo-Atherton High School, Encinal Elementary and Hillview Middle School," wrote Hilton. He calls



Rendering by SDG Architects

A rendering shows what the project at 320 Sheridan Dr., which aims to build housing for local educators, may look like when completed.

the omission of this intersection "gross negligence, a glaring oversight, or both."

At the Jan. 13 meeting, Ferrick, who ultimately voted against the project, said that it was "unfortunate" that the intersection was not included in the transportation impact analysis of the project, as it is a very highly used intersection that often backs up with traffic.

Hilton said he is also concerned that the Bay Road and Ringwood Avenue intersection will become even more congested, as Atherton recently approved new multifamily zoning overlays for four properties bordering the intersection as part of its housing element update process. According to the city's environmental justice element, Suburban Park/Lorelei Manor/Flood Triangle are the neighborhoods with the highest traffic burden in the city, and Hilton says he is not in favor of increasing that burden.

Hilton recommends that the council consider adding a second public access point to the property, located at the end of Van Buren Road — a feature which Suburban Park residents have been fighting for since the project's inception. A second full access would allow residents to drive to the development through the Flood Triangle neighborhood in addition to Suburban Park. However, the city would have to make use of a Caltrans right of way to build a full second access.

"A second access would absolutely help with congestion management, particularly at Bay Road and Ringwood Avenue," he wrote. He also said that a second access point would allow the teachers living at the Flood School site to access the pedestrian bridge over Interstate Highway 101 more easily.

The developer has already agreed to place a second emergency access point on the property, but some neighbors of the project see this as not enough to ensure the flow of traffic and fire safety. Currently, the emergency access point backs up to private property owned by LifeMoves, Inc., and was established by mutual agreement between Alliant Communities and LiveMoves — it is not a public right of way and cannot be used as a road.

At the meeting, Lance Crannell, principal for Brentwood-based SDG Architects, Inc., said that the developer is open to continuing to try to create a second public access point, but that their immediate goal is getting the project financed and built. He said that Caltrans, who owns the right of way between the Flood School property and Highway 101, has not been responsive to their inquiries, and that requiring Alliant Communities to develop agreements with Caltrans for a full second access point could jeopardize the project's funding timeline and overall feasibility.

"It's not something we want to give up," said Crannell. "But on the other hand, we have a schedule that we would love to keep meeting so that we can provide this affordable housing to your city."

In his appeal, Hilton also asks the city and Alliant Communities to develop an agreement with San Mateo County Parks to provide access directly to the park from the development so that residents can use the park to shorten their cycling and walking commutes.

This teacher housing project has previously found itself at the center of controversy. It sparked the citizen-sponsored Measure V in 2022, which would have restricted the Menlo Park City Council's ability to rezone single-family lots to higher density without putting the rezoning to a citywide vote.

According to the city's municipal code, the council must take action on the appeal within 75 days of it being filed. As the appeal was filed on Jan. 28, the council must address it before April 13. ■

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

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- React quickly if the alarm sounds—exit the home immediately and call for help.

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- Know the symptoms of CO poisoning: dizziness, nausea, and confusion.
- Ensure proper ventilation for appliances that could produce carbon monoxide (like gas stoves, heaters, or fireplaces).
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Fundraiser rallies support for Measure A, Sheriff's removal

With a special election set for March, supporters, opponents debate impact on democracy

By Simmerdeep Kaur

Law Enforcement Against Corruption, a group founded by the San Mateo Deputy Sheriff's Association, hosted a fundraiser on Jan. 29, at the DSA Hall in Redwood City to support Measure A and advocate for the removal of Sheriff Christina Corpus.

"I think with a lot of people, there was a sense of anticipation and hope that she would bring positive change. But we were very wrong about that," said DSA Secretary Eliot Storch. "That's why so many people supporting this campaign are the same ones who once advocated and voted for her. They now see how misled they were and just how bad she really is."

The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors passed an ordinance on Dec. 3 to initiate a special election in March 2025. If passed, Measure A would amend the county charter to allow the board to remove Corpus.

The board currently has no authority to remove a sheriff or any elected official from their post.

The board's decision was in response to the investigative findings in retired Judge LaDoris H. Cordell's 408-report report, released by supervisors Noelia Corzo and Ray Mueller on Nov. 12. The report accuses the sheriff of abuses of power, retaliation and fostering a culture of intimidation, and outlines a years-long affair between Corpus and her former Chief of Staff Victor Aenlle. It also details discriminatory behavior, conflicts of interest and ethical violations, including Aenlle's alleged improper access to weapons, unapproved outside employment and threats against employees.

"Judge Cordell's report shared some pretty scathing things that no elected official should be a part of," said Camryn McNab, the campaign manager for Measure A. "It's so inappropriate, some of the things that she's been doing, and it affects public safety all throughout the county."

Approximately 100 people attended the fundraiser, including several DSA union members. Also in attendance were California Assemblymember

Diane Papan, San Carlos Vice Mayor Pranita Venkatesh, and Julie Lind, executive officer of the San Mateo Labor Council.

According to McNab, the group plans to use the funds for voter outreach through phone banking, text messaging, signboards and social media to help pass Measure A.

"We are making sure that we're reaching as many voters as possible throughout the county and letting them know of the corruption that's going on in the sheriff's office, and that ultimately we have a sheriff that we cannot trust," said Vanessa Lemus Tapia, daughter of Carlos Tapia, president of San Mateo County DSA.

While many at the fundraiser were optimistic about the measure's chances, opponents have also been vocal on social media.

An Instagram page called transparencySMC claims the investigation was marred by misinformation and a lack of transparency, preventing the sheriff from addressing allegations in real time. Citing the political nature of the situation, the page's administrators declined

to reveal their identities.

In a written statement to this publication, the group said that the public has not had the opportunity to fully examine all sides of the issues leading up to Measure A.

"As the first female sheriff of SMC, she should be allowed to serve her full-term and correct any oversights identified in the first half of her tenure, especially given the leniency afforded to her predecessors by the DA and county supervisors for much more egregious allegations," said a spokesperson for the group.

The formal arguments and rebuttals, in favor of and opposing the charter amendment, are available on the San Mateo County Elections Division website.

The arguments in favor of the ballot measure were submitted and signed by former U.S. Rep. Anna Eshoo, U.S. Rep. Kevin Mullin, Supervisor Noelia Corzo, Sheriff's Sgt. Sean Harper, a board member of the Organization of Sheriff's Sergeants and Sheriff's Deputy Matthew Silano, secretary of the Deputy Sheriff's Association.

Dan Stegink, a resident of Pacifica, submitted and signed the arguments against the ballot measure.

Stegink mentioned in his rebuttal that the measure is "a political grab by a few local supervisors." He added that if the measure passes, it will take away voters' power to elect an independent sheriff, replacing democracy with bureaucracy.

James Johnson, a Redwood City resident, told this publication he plans to file a federal lawsuit against the Board of Supervisors in Northern California District Court in the coming weeks.

Some argue that the board's actions regarding Measure A were undemocratic, while others, like Storch, maintain that the final decision remains in the hands of voters.

"Christina likes to say that this is somehow taking away the voters power," Storch said. "But this is a vote. If the voters don't want this charter amendment to pass, they'll vote against it." ■

*Email Staff Writer
Simmerdeep Kaur at skaur@almanacnews.com.*

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Menlo Park seeks developers for downtown parking lots

By Eleanor Raab

On Wednesday, Jan. 29, the city of Menlo Park released a request for qualifications to seek potential developers to build affordable housing across three parking lots in the city's downtown. The RFQ is the first step in the process that the city will use to select a developer.

The council opted to release the RFQ following a heated Jan. 14 meeting where over 250 people attended to voice their opinions on the prospect of converting the parking plazas to housing. While many advocates of affordable housing rallied in support of the project, a large contingent of business owners and residents expressed concerns about the potential loss of parking and the disruption that may be caused during the construction of the buildings.

Following four hours of public comment and two hours of discussion on the topic, the

council decided to compromise by releasing the RFQ, but waiting to declare the parking lots as "exempt surplus land." Declaring the lots exempt surplus land is a necessary legal step that must be taken before the properties can be handed over to a developer.

The council hoped that by not taking the legal step of declaring the lots as exempt surplus land, those who expressed concerns about the project would feel that their concerns were taken seriously. However by releasing the RFQ, the city would still advance the project on the timeline promised to the California department of housing and community development in its housing element plans.

The RFQ outlines the city's objectives for the downtown parking lot development and key requirements for potential developers.

At a minimum, the city requires that developers create at least 345 units of housing that

are affordable at the very low-income level across the three plazas, provide replacement public parking spaces for those lost due to redevelopment and comply with all applicable development standards. Additionally, the city is encouraging but not requiring developers to consider including the following elements in their proposals for the lots:

Strategies to maximize the number of affordable units through utilization of the site's zoning, affordable housing overlays, state density bonus laws and other applicable state legislation

- More units that are affordable at the extremely low income level
- A diverse mix of unit types with an emphasis on multi-bedroom units that can house families
- Housing types that prioritize special needs groups, including units set aside for people with special needs or disabilities

- Innovative parking management strategies that would keep replacement parking spaces available for general downtown public parking and not utilized by residents of the new development

Sustainable building design

Publicly accessible open space such as pocket parks

Publicly accessible ground floor uses such as commercial space that does not detract from the primary affordable housing goals

A timeline to complete the project by 2027, as promised in the city's housing element plans

Plans to phase construction to minimize impact to businesses and downtown patrons

The city also asks developers to provide a community engagement plan and provide past examples of successful community engagement on similar projects.

The RFQ reveals that the city will transfer the parking lots to

the selected developer through a 55-year-long ground lease for a base rent of \$1 per year, with additional rent as needed from insurance and operational costs.

In the RFQ, city staff wrote that development of the downtown parking plazas presents an opportunity to advance downtown enhancement and vitality goals while addressing the city's housing needs.

"The city envisions development on the parking plazas serving as a catalyst for downtown enhancement," the RFQ reads.

Applications from developers are due by Monday, March 31, by 5:30 p.m., and the council is anticipated to review the applications at a meeting in late spring or early summer, and to make recommendations on next steps at that time.

The complete RFQ is available at menlopark.gov/downtowndevelopment. ■

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

Local schools alerted of data breach affecting past, present students, staff

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

The Menlo Park City School District informed current and former families and staff that a data security breach occurred in late December 2024 on its school information system, PowerSchool. The district learned about the breach on Jan. 7 and it contacted all families and staff going back to 2009 to inform them of the breach, according to emails sent to school community members.

PowerSchool is a software that serves as a database for student records across more than 16,000 customers, largely K-12 schools. The Portola Valley

School District is among local schools that use the database and was also impacted by the data breach.

MPCSD's resource page on the breach states that data was accessed for 10,662 students and 3,270 staff members. MPCSD and PVSD state that the data accessed included names, date of birth, home address, phone numbers, contact information, health records, race and ethnicity and gender.

PowerSchool included in its notice that Social Security numbers were included in the data breach.

MPCSD clarified it currently does not collect or store Social Security numbers in

PowerSchool, but after reviewing the accessed data it found that 386 student records from 2018 and earlier include a Social Security number. PVSD stated in its FAQ document that it discovered all former and current staff, along with two former student records including their Social Security number on file, however it no longer collects Social Security numbers in PowerSchool and has never been required for students.

All impacted individuals have been contacted by the school districts.

According to MPCSD, the school district's Technology Services Department is attending county meetings to address cyber security issues and meeting with other school districts to share resources.

"The MPCSD Technology Services Department, including its cyber security specialist, is actively following all PowerSchool updates, including attending webinars to better understand the impact of the data breach," said MPCSD in a statement to The Almanac.

In response to the incident, PowerSchool is offering two years of complimentary identity protection services to students and educators involved through Experian, a credit reporting agency. Adult students and teachers will also be offered credit monitoring services.

On behalf of PowerSchool, Experian will be directly contacting individuals who have been affected by the breach for whom they have sufficient contact information.

MPCSD's data breach resources page explains that PowerSchool does not anticipate the data will be shared and has been deleted due to its engagement with CyberSteward, a professional advisor in negotiating with cybercriminals. Their engagement with its services implies that a ransom was demanded and paid by PowerSchool in exchange for evidence of the data's deletion.

The school district advises current and former MPCSD community members to be alert for any phishing attempts following this data breach.

"Please remain vigilant, as PowerSchool will never contact you by phone or email to request your personal or account information," according to the district's resource page.

PowerSchool has also set up a call center for families and educators to ask questions about its complimentary identity protection services. Affected individuals can call 833-918-9464.

"As a result of the data breach, MPCSD is engaged in discussions about the data we keep and how we can minimize what information would be available were any of our applications breached," said Willy Haug, MPCSD director of technology and innovation.

According to the district, its technology services employees

regularly attend cybersecurity conferences to learn more about the threat landscape and what tools exist to combat cyber attacks.

MPCSD continues to work with PowerSchool and will be updating its resources page as more information is provided by the company.

For more information on the MPCSD data breach, visit tinyurl.com/MPCSDdatabreach.

Identity theft protection

PowerSchool advises individuals to regularly review account statements and to obtain a credit report from one or more of the national credit reporting companies including Equifax, Experian and TransUnion. Free credit reports can also be obtained on annualcreditreport.com or by calling 877-322-8228. Fraud alerts can also be requested from credit reporting agencies to ensure you will be notified and asked to verify identification before extending credit in your name.

Individuals can also request a security freeze on credit reports, which will prohibit agencies from releasing any information without written authorization. PowerSchool warns that this may also delay or interfere with any timely approval for requests on loans, employment, housing or credit mortgages. For more information on how to protect your identity visit tinyurl.com/PowerSchoolDataBreachNotice. ■

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

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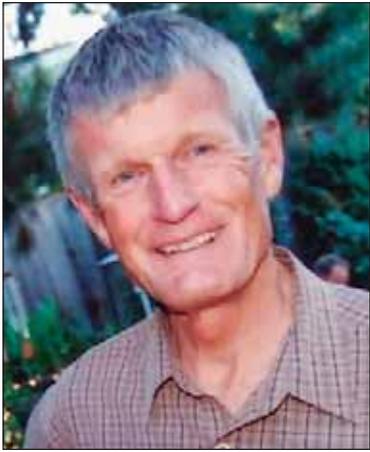


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Lindsay Glenn Crawford

October 3, 1940 – January 9, 2025

Lindsay Glenn Crawford, a devoted husband, father, grandfather, and accomplished aviator, passed away on January 9, 2025. Born on October 3, 1940, Lindsay grew up in Redwood City, California, where he graduated from Sequoia High School in 1958. Following four years of service in the United States Coast Guard, Lindsay joined United Airlines, in the pursuit of fulfilling his lifelong dream of flying airplanes.

Understanding the importance of seniority in aviation, Lindsay began his career as a baggage handler while taking flying lessons at San Carlos Airport. His dedication and determination paid off when he was accepted into United Airlines' flight school in Denver. Over a nearly 40-year career with United, he progressed from piloting propeller-driven Douglas DC-6 and DC-7 aircraft to flying advanced Boeing jets, culminating in his role as Captain of the Boeing 747-400 on routes throughout the Pacific Rim. Among his proudest accomplishments was serving as a United flight instructor and Check Airman, where he found immense joy in mentoring fellow aviators and shaping the next generation of pilots.

Soon after beginning his aviation career, and with the encouragement of his wife, Estelle, Lindsay rekindled his passion for cycling. He became a prominent figure in the Northern California bicycle racing scene, achieving victories at the local, national, and international levels. His record-setting accomplishments were even chronicled in *Sports Illustrated*. In 1981, Lindsay was selected for the first American team invited to compete in the prestigious Tour de France. Although the invitation was later rescinded by French race organizers, Lindsay remained undeterred in his sporting endeavors, shifting his focus to other athletic pursuits, including in-line skating, cross-country skiing, and lightweight backpacking in the Sierra Nevada.

After retiring at the age of 60, Lindsay returned to competitive cycling, supported by his wife. Together, they traveled to Europe, where Lindsay competed in numerous one-day events. In 2003, at the age of 63, he won his age category in L'Étape du Tour, a grueling one-day race that mirrored the hardest stage of that year's Tour de France.

Lindsay met Estelle Mascarin in Redwood City, and the couple married in 1963. They moved to Woodside in 1971, where they raised their two children, Heather and Christopher. Tragically, Heather passed away unexpectedly in 2007 after giving birth to her son, Oren. Lindsay and Chris shared a love of cycling, competing together as a two-person team in the challenging two-week Tour de Trans Alp.

Lindsay and Estelle shared 61 years of marriage, enjoying summers in Europe and exploring Spain, Italy, and France. Together, they pursued their passion for classic cars, showcasing their collection at various Pebble Beach events.

Lindsay will be remembered for his unwavering determination, compassionate mentorship, and the profound impact he had on the lives of those he touched. His legacy of strength, perseverance, and kindness will live on in the hearts of his family and friends.

Lindsay is survived by his devoted wife, Estelle; his son, Christopher; and his cherished grandchildren, Oren Hill and Callie Crawford. He is also survived by his brother, Kenneth Crawford.

A celebration of Lindsay's life will take place at St. Denis Church in Menlo Park on February 17, 2025, at 10:30 a.m.

In lieu of flowers, the family kindly requests donations to the Parkinson's Foundation.

PAID OBITUARY

Revisions to Atherton's housing element needed for state approval, headed to City Council

By Eleanor Raab

After the state told Atherton that its housing element plans still need a few minor tweaks, the planning commission revisited the plans at a special meeting on Jan. 29. The commission voted 3-0, with commissioners Paul Tonelli and Thom Bryant absent, to recommend that the council adopt all amendments to the general plan the zoning ordinances recommended by town staff.

The changes to the plan that were requested by the California Department of Housing and Community Development in December 2024 include additional analysis of the redevelopment

potential for school sites in town and restructuring of certain tables and figures. The state agency also asked the town to clarify that multifamily housing developments with certain levels of affordable housing do not require discretionary approval and revise the town's Senate Bill 9 lot split program to include analysis of development trends and to identify alternatives to meet the town's housing goals if too few SB 9 projects have been built by the middle of the current housing element cycle, which ends in 2031.

Atherton is on track to have a certified housing element in the near future, as the staff report prepared for the meeting states that HCD's comment letter does

not mention any issues with the substantive parts of the town's housing element approach.

Despite how close the town is to the finish line, several public commenters during the meeting requested that the planning commission go back to the drawing board on the lots that were chosen to be rezoned for multifamily housing. The commenters asked the commission to recommend that the council remove four lots along Bay Road and Ringwood Avenue from the plans that will be resubmitted to HCD over concerns about traffic congestion and safety.

The planning commission had previously recommended that the council remove the four lots from consideration for rezoning due to traffic concerns, but the council opted to include the lots in the adopted housing element that was sent to the state over fears of jeopardizing the town's progress toward achieving a state-certified housing element.

"The Planning Commission made all of our comments around traffic on Bay Road as part of our original recommendation not to include some of those homes," said planning commission Chair Eric Lane. "At this point they've made their decision, and coming back with another recommendation not to do it would be superfluous."

Lane said that at this point, he is more worried about the traffic that may come from development at Menlo Park's proposed "builder's remedy" development at 80 Willow Road. Builder's remedy projects are exempt from certain local development standards. He is also concerned that without a state-approved housing element, Atherton remains open to similar projects.

"Without a plan, builder's remedy is a real risk, as Menlo Park has already found out," said Lane.

The corner of Bay Road and Ringwood Avenue has been a topic of discussion in Menlo Park as well, as there is currently an appeal that has been filed against a teacher housing development in the Suburban Park neighborhood that cites traffic concerns at that intersection as a reason the development is unsafe.

Though the other planning commissioners agreed that the four lots along Bay Road, and especially the lot at the corner of Bay Road and Ringwood Avenue might exacerbate traffic issues, they also agreed that it was more

Audrey Jean Lampert

August 12, 1929 – January 28, 2025

Audrey Jean Lampert, 95, passed away peacefully on January 28, 2025, in Palo Alto, California, surrounded by her loving family.

Born on August 12, 1929, in Kansas City, Missouri, to Louis and Hattie Bernstein, Audrey grew up with a deep sense of family and community. She attended the University of Missouri before embarking on a new chapter out West.

It was in Redwood City that Audrey met the love of her life, Roland Lampert. They married in 1948, and built a beautiful life together, raising three children. Audrey had a keen eye for fashion, a vivacious spirit, and a natural ability to bring people together. A true social butterfly, she never passed up the opportunity to host or attend a lively gathering. Whether playing bridge or dominoes with her closest friends, she filled every moment with warmth, laughter and joy.

Audrey was deeply involved in her community, serving as a passionate advocate for Sequoia Hospital, Peninsula Volunteers, Peninsula Family Service, S.F. Symphony Mid-Peninsula League as well as playing an active role in the family's real estate business. She had a love for travel, always eager to explore new places and create lasting memories.

She was treasured by her son, David Lampert, and daughter, Julie Lampert Bell. Her adoring grandchildren—Tyler Bell (Haley), Jordan Bell (Anna), Joshua Lampert, Cameron Bell (Brittany), and Nicol Lampert—will forever hold her close in their hearts, as will her cherished great-granddaughters, Charlie and Adeline. Audrey will also be deeply missed by her many dear friends, brothers Bob and Arvin Bernstein, sister-in-law Phyllis Bernstein, and her beloved nieces and nephews.

She is now reunited with her beloved husband, Roland, and her son, Gary Lampert, whom she missed dearly.

A celebration of Audrey's life will be held in May. In honor of her memory, the family kindly requests that, in lieu of flowers, donations be made to Peninsula Family Service of San Mateo County (24 Second Ave, San Mateo, CA 94401) or to a charity of your choice.



PAID OBITUARY

See **ATHERTON HOUSING**, page 15

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San Carlos Airport tower-staffing trouble averted for now

'Not clear what solution is after 60 days'

By Neil Gonzales

San Carlos Airport was starting at the loss of air-traffic controllers when an 11th hour reprieve arrived.

The airport was set to lose staffing at its control tower after controllers for Oklahoma-based Robinson Aviation (RVA) refused to begin work there the past weekend because of a pay dispute, San Mateo County airports spokesperson Davi Howard said.

The Federal Aviation Administration through a bid process awarded RVA a contract to staff the tower starting Saturday, Feb. 1, after the one with longtime provider Serco was supposed to have ended the previous day, Howard told *The Almanac*.

But given the RVA controllers' refusal to work at the airport, the FAA has extended Serco's service there for another two months.

"RVA is contractually responsible for ensuring the continuity of air-traffic services when it takes over," the FAA said in a statement sent to this news

organization. "However, RVA informed the FAA it has been unable to hire controllers to work at San Carlos. To mitigate this situation, we are extending the prior service Serco provider for 60 days."

The tower at San Carlos like hundreds of other airports around the country is operated by a private company — which must follow the FAA's strict safety standards, the agency added.

The situation in San Carlos comes amid last week's deadly midair collision between a commercial airplane and military helicopter over Washington, D.C. — a tragedy that reportedly could have involved tower staffing issues.

Howard told this news organization that the county doesn't have jurisdiction over the tower and is not involved in staffing or labor negotiations there.

"But we have a vested interest in making sure the airport is run in a very safe manner," he said. "We want people to know the airport is safe and the control tower is fully staffed."

In a statement, the county said: "Airport operations at (San Carlos) continue without disruption, and pilots remain well-trained in non-towered airport procedures. Additionally, the surrounding airspace remains under the direct oversight of the FAA's Northern California Terminal Radar Approach Control."

Apparently, Howard said, the near-disruption in service stemmed from RVA declining to give controllers an \$18,000 housing stipend to account for the Bay Area's high cost-of-living.

RVA couldn't immediately be reached for comment.

The prospect of not having the tower staffed worried Bob Kearn, a pilot and board member for the nonprofit San Carlos Airport Association.

"I was very concerned," Kearn said in an interview with this publication. A lack of air-traffic controllers "makes the airport less safe."

Controllers keep separation among aircraft, guide air traffic and give landing clearances, he said.



Veronica Weber

An airplane comes in for a landing at the San Carlos airport on Oct. 17, 2014.

Such support is needed during prime flying hours of about 7 a.m. to 7 p.m. although the tower is not staffed a continuous 24 hours a day such as in the middle of the night when air traffic is light, he said.

During those times nobody is working the tower, Kearn said, pilots communicate with each other and their location through a common radio frequency. He pointed out that a vast number of airports nationwide don't have towers.

San Carlos is a busy airport with a congested airspace during the prime hours.

Last year, Kearn said, the airport saw 90,000 operations. That's 90,000 times that the

tower interacted with a pilot to give information during take-offs or landings, he said. The airport is also home base to about 500 aircraft.

Howard added that San Carlos plays a significant role in the area's aviation space as it accommodates small aircraft serves local business flights and provides a place for people to learn how to fly.

But while Kearn is relieved that the tower will remain staffed for now, he wonders about the long term. "It's not clear what the solution is after 60 days," he said. ■

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

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ATHERTON HOUSING

continued from page 12

important to have an approved housing element to avoid the possibility of builder's remedy.

"The issue that the council is going to have to deal with is that any changes at this point are going to disrupt the (process) with the state," said Lane. "It's worse if we just don't have a plan, by a lot, so that's the balance that I am trying to make."

The City Council will revisit the plan at its Wednesday, Feb. 19, meeting. It will do a first reading of the changes to the housing element and associated zoning codes. Currently, a second reading of the changes is slated for the council's March 19 meeting. ■

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



Michelle Le

The Historic Atherton Council Chambers.

HOUSING ELEMENT

continued from page 1

ordinance to amend its multi-family housing zoning and approved an ordinance to amend the objective design standards of multi-family housing sites on Raymundo Drive, High Road and 773 Cañada Road during a Jan. 14 Town Council meeting.

To maintain its housing element compliance, the town must continue to implement all of its adopted programs effectively. These programs include accessory dwelling units, Town Center Area Plan, Senate Bill 9 lot splits, rental assistance, supportive housing and more.

The town is required to monitor and report on the results of these programs through its annual progress report. HCD

authorities are allowed to review any of the town's actions or failures that it determines is inconsistent with the housing element, including failures to implement adopted programs. The state may revoke the town's housing element compliance if its actions do not comply with state law.

"HCD appreciates the dedication and commitment that you and town staff provided throughout the housing element update and review," said HCD Senior Program Manager Paul McDougall in the letter to the town. "HCD wishes the town success in implementing its housing element and looks forward to following its progress." ■

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

HOUSING

continued from page 5

requested that a report be placed on an upcoming agenda that would review what sites have been looked into already and whether such places as the Civic Center could still be viable — but without redoing the long process that updated the state-mandated planning document known as the housing element.

"So that's why I put this in front of our group — to ask for a simple open information or study session about alternative sites," Schmidt said, addressing his fellow council members last week.

"To be clear, I'm not asking us to reopen up the housing element and go down that path at this point," he said. "But I think it's important that people understand that these things have been considered. So let's level set and make sure we're all kind of operating from the same page now that so many more people are paying attention."

Two weeks prior, people packed the Council Chambers while many others watched on Zoom, focusing on the city leaders' deliberation of a strategy to convert three lots between Santa Cruz and Oak Grove avenues into 345 to 483 affordable units.

While holding off on declaring the lots exempt surplus land that would allow for development,

the council voted unanimously for the city to seek request for qualifications from developers interested in building units on those parcels.

Those against the city using the lots contend that losing those vehicle spaces would hurt downtown businesses. They have urged the city to consider other public property such as Civic Center parking lots and Burgess Park on which to place new housing.

Housing advocates, however, have countered that delaying development on the downtown lots jeopardizes affordable units from getting built at all. They also argue that building on those lots makes sense because it would put residents of new developments close to transit and reduce vehicle trips.

At the Jan. 28 meeting, former Housing Commission member Wendy McPherson voiced support for building affordable dwellings in Menlo Park but not at the expense of shops going out of business.

"I'm not in support of not being able to attract new business due to lack of parking," McPherson said, addressing the council. "I built and ran a small business for five years in Palo Alto. I know a lot about the availability of parking. It is a make or break deal for a small retailer."

At the same meeting, local business leader Alex Beltramo



Anna Hoch-Kenney

The Menlo Park City Council Chambers were packed for a meeting where council members listened to comments on the plans to build high density housing on three public parking lots in downtown Menlo Park on Jan. 14.

read out loud the names of each of the 116 downtown shops that oppose targeting the lots near them for housing.

"We hope you will consider alternative locations for affordable housing," Beltramo said.

However, the city had already studied the Civic Center and parks during the yearslong housing-element process and opted not to go that route, citing the importance of preserving community and green spaces for all residents to enjoy.

Still, Schmidt wants to put the question of the Civic Center "to bed one way or the other because there's a lot of speculation and assumption that it will work," he said. "But I just want to explore

alternative sites like our residents are asking us to. And I want to know one way or the other is it possible to be in the Civic Center and to some degree also is it possible to go to other city-managed, city-owned places. And I think if the answer is 'no, no, no, no' for very legitimate reasons I personally just want to hear that, and I think there are probably a couple thousand other people who want to hear it now, too."

Mayor Drew Combs expressed willingness to deliberate housing sites further given the council's new makeup with Schmidt and Jennifer Wise winning seats in the November elections.

"We have a new council, and so let's revisit those discussions,"

Combs said. "Maybe something might come out differently this time."

Resident Brittani Baxter told the council that she looks forward to hearing where the conversation leads but is not in favor of building on parks.

"When we think about what we're developing, I really think our green space should be at the very bottom of that list again," Baxter said.

She recalled strong community objection to putting housing on parks that arose when it was broached previously during the housing-element effort, including the launch of the Save Menlo Park Green Spaces petition in 2021 signed by about 2,500 people.

She predicts similar resistance to rise up again if talks about turning parks into houses continue.

"I feel a little bit like I'm having déjà vu," Baxter said. "There was a lot of public discussion around it, and it was really uniformly negative. ... But obviously, I would expect that if this does come up further we would see that same kind of debate get reignited."

Schmidt would welcome that engagement, saying, "I'm not afraid of people protecting green space, coming out and voicing their opinion." ■

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

JON JOHNSTON

continued from page 5

Are they good mentors and teachers? Do they have those qualities [of] leadership?"

The fire marshal, Lorenzen noted, is responsible for balancing business interests with the safety of employees and first responders. Since large companies like Meta are headquartered in Menlo Park, the fire marshal

ensures that companies can construct innovative new buildings while ensuring those developments comply with the city's fire and safety code.

According to Johnston, the hallmarks of a good fire marshal are somebody willing to listen to the community, look at data to understand problems that are arising, and proactively mitigate fears that the community might have.

Johnston also noted that population growth and a shift in the building stock to multi-story commercial and residential properties has necessitated technological adaptation and a larger fire prevention team in MPFPD.

"Being prepared is essential for all risks, and educating the public is necessary to see positive results," Johnston said in an email.

After Johnston departs the role this spring, he is moving to South Carolina to work with a team of fire protection engineers at a nuclear site. His favorite memories of his life here were as a volunteer through the Kiwanis Club, as an advisor to the Key Club at Menlo-Atherton High School and organizing the fire district's annual pancake breakfasts for the last 24 years.

"It's just been an absolute pleasure and a joy to work here for the fire district for 25 years," said Johnston.

According to the job posting, the pay for the role is between \$225,785-\$293,520 annually. The job posting can be found at tinyurl.com/mpfdjobposting. Applications are due Feb. 12. ■

Email Editorial Intern Hannah Bensen at hbensen@almanacnews.com.

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LGBTQ*continued from page 6*

The presidency impacts every person represented by a letter in LGBTQ in a different way, Sapp explained.

“There are different outcomes, consequences, impacts by different factors in the world. All of the disparities in terms of mental health, financial struggles, housing insecurity, each of those letters may be impacted differently,” said Sapp.

Elements of age, race, disabilities are also to be factored into the myriad struggles and concerns that are rising within the LGBTQ community, he added.

Supporting a community from within

Every Pride Center staff member is also a member of the LGBTQ community. Because the staff are part of the community that they serve, they are able to use what they’ve learned on how to take care of themselves and put that toward helping others, said Sapp.

In order to balance lived experiences with being a support system for others, the Pride Center holds regular staff check-ins, self-care days, appreciation parties and proactively

holds conversations on how to improve and train staff.

With an entirely LGBTQ-identifying staff, “there is a greater investment that our work is important,” Sapp said. During times of struggle, “there is also a collective rise in the action of supporting each other even more,” he added.

Marginalized communities are also being supported by San Mateo County leaders. The San Mateo County Board of Supervisors reaffirmed its commitment to protect and welcome immigrants, people of color, the LGBTQ community and people with disabilities on Jan. 29.

“You are loved and you are valued and this county will stand behind you,” said District 3 Supervisor Ray Mueller to transgender youth.

How are LGBTQ youth affected?

Leading up to the election, the increase in dialogue about transgender lives in the media created a negative impact on youth mental health, said Mimir Castro, director of Outlet Program, a local nonprofit that provides LGBTQ youth counseling services on the Peninsula.

“I heard a lot of anxiety around the way that trans people were being portrayed in the news and

a lot of fear that there would be a greater lack of acceptance or that people would be more comfortable vocalizing a lack of acceptance,” Mimir added.

LGBTQ youth often carry the feeling of being powerless and having to rely on a parent or guardian to sign off on hormone treatments and vote for their rights, said Sapp. This additional barrier for youth adds an additional “question mark” as to whether they will be able to access their rights.

Reddy, who is also a teen leader at SafeSpace, a local youth-led, mental health organization, said their transgender friends started hormone treatment before the election, because they wanted to make sure they could start it before their access could potentially be taken away.

“There’s a lot of people having fears for their future, that they won’t be able to be the person that they want to be,” said Reddy.

Young people like them are also now considering the political climate of states where they are thinking of attending college.

“Now that I’m going off to college, I have to think about what state I want to be in so that I know my rights will be protected,” said Reddy. “A lot of this is now going to be state-by-state,

like, abortion, trans healthcare and trans people being allowed to play sports.”

Even among high schoolers, Reddy heard a lot of misogynistic comments on campus and jokes about Trump regaining power the day after the election. “It was really difficult to hear people say things like that. You don’t realize there are people at their own school or in your community that harbor these feelings,” Reddy said.

Resources like Outlet and SafeSpace are open for youth to seek mental health support and be able to express themselves freely.

Youth specific spaces offer a place for community building and social interaction when generally, LGBTQ hubs can be found at bars and venues catered for ages 18 and up or in places that serve alcohol, said Castro.

Opening up spaces for LGBTQ youth is especially important because they are navigating through the “universal experience” of developing independence and self discovery while also exploring their sexual identity, he added.

“The goal with LGBTQ youth spaces is that we help them not feel so alone,” said Castro. “One of the biggest signs or symptoms we see with youth experiencing

anxiety and depression around their sexuality or gender is isolation, and that can be really dangerous.”

At Outlet, staff are also aware that the young people they see may also be children of parents who are in the immigration process. Trump’s agenda to increase mass deportation and end birth-right citizenship is increasing stress and anxiety among youth who are concerned for their parents and family. Outlet staff are trained to support all youth with resources and coping skills for mental health around these topics.

Having youth-centered spaces is “important so young people are able to feel like they are being heard and being empowered to make change,” Reddy added. “[SafeSpace] is where you can be accepted, even when you feel like you’re not being accepted by the larger world. Maybe right now, our country doesn’t accept me, but I know that there’s at least this place where I am.”

For more information on the San Mateo County Pride Center and Outlet program visit sanmateoprider.org. To learn more about SafeSpace visit safespace.org. ■

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

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Public Notices

Legal Notice of Dissolution of Project Moray, Inc., and

Notice of Limits to Rights of Creditors

Unfortunately, Moray was unable to secure new financing prior to exhausting the available capital of the company. Therefore, Project Moray, Inc. (including its dba Moray Medical) has been closed. Please find attached a Certification of Dissolution, as certified by the Secretary of State of Delaware on December 26, 2024.

Project Moray, Inc. (including its dba Moray Medical) has ceased all operations, distributed all available cash to creditors, and has disposed of all remaining non-cash assets. No cash has been distributed to the company's shareholders. Nonetheless, if you believe you have a valid claim against Project Moray, Inc. that you believe is worth pursuing, please note that:

1. Any and all such claims against the company must be in writing.
2. Any such claim must include a written statement reasonably identifying the creditor and describing the claim.

3. Any such claim must be sent to the following mailing address:

Mark Barrish and Phillip Laby, as Trustees of Project Moray, Inc.

3603 Hillcrest Dr.

Belmont CA 94002

4. Such claims MUST be sent to the trustees of Project Moray, Inc. AND received at the mailing address noted above prior to the claim deadline of April 15, 2025;

5. Any and all such claims will be BARRED if not received prior to the claim deadline;

6. Should any assets of Project Moray, Inc. be identified, the corporation or a successor entity can make distributions to other creditors and to the corporation's shareholders without providing further notice to you or other creditors; and

7. The aggregate amount, on an annual basis, of all distributions made by Project Moray, Inc. to its shareholders, based on their being shareholders of Project Moray, Inc. (rather than as payment for services rendered as either contractors or employees) for each of the three years prior to December 26, 2024 (the date the corporation dissolved) were:

The year ending December 26, 2023 - 0\$

The year ending December 26, 2024 - 0\$

The year ending December 26, 2025 - 0\$ Just because a claim is made against the company does NOT mean that such a claim will be paid, even if the claim is valid. To the contrary, as noted above the company does NOT retain any assets to pay, in full or in part, any claims by unsecured creditors, noteholders or other investors, former consultants or employees, or the like. If you believe that you are a secured creditor of the company please be sure to provide documentation of the collateral provided to you by or on behalf of the company, documentation of the agreement under which that collateral was provided to you, and a written summary your current understanding of the value, ownership, and any known disposition of that collateral.

(ALM Feb 7, 2025)

GREEN WHALE FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-299201

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

1.) GREEN WHALE, located at 123 Escalona Ave, EL GRANADA, CA 94018. Mailing Address: PO BOX 1541 EL GRANADA, CA 94018.

Registered owner(s): NICHOLAS GOLDSWORTHY PO BOX 1541 EL GRANADA, CA 94018

This business is conducted by: an Individual. Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on December 06, 2024. (ALM Jan 17, 24, 31 and Feb 7, 2025)

STUDIO BELMONT BELMONT HARDWARE FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-299423

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

1.) STUDIO BELMONT, 2.) BELMONT HARDWARE, located at 940 El Camino Real, Belmont, CA 94002.

Registered owner(s): COMPLEAT BALDWIN BRASS CENTER OF CALIFORNIA 940 El Camino Real Belmont, CA 94002

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA This business is conducted by: a Corporation. Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 02, 2025. (ALM Jan 24, 31, Feb 7 and 14, 2025)

BONOMI CABINETS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-299322

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

1.) MARK BONOMI, located at 2913 SHERWOOD DRIVE, SAN CARLOS, CA 94070.

Registered owner(s): MARK EUGENE BONOMI 2913 SHERWOOD DRIVE SAN CARLOS, CA 94070

This business is conducted by: an Individual. Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 09/01/2011.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on December 19, 2024. (ALM Jan 31, Feb 7, 14 and 21, 2025)

THE ARMSTRONG ENTERPRISE FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-299684

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

1.) THE ARMSTRONG ENTERPRISE, located at 441 Avenue Del Oro, El Granada, CA 94018. Mailing Address: PO Box 1707 El Granada, CA 94018.

Registered owner(s): PHILLIP CONNOR ARMSTRONG PO Box 1707 El Granada, CA 94018

This business is conducted by: an Individual. Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 10/23/2015.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 31, 2025. (ALM Feb 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2025)

BLUE SEAL POTTERY FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-299564

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

1.) BLUE SEAL POTTERY, located at 1220 Peralta Road, Pacifica, CA 94044.

Registered owner(s): ROBERT CHARLES MELHORN 1220 Peralta Road Pacifica, CA 94044

This business is conducted by: an Individual. Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 12/18/2018.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 17, 2025. (ALM Jan 31, Feb 7, 14 and 21, 2025)

C & E COMPUTERS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-299692

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

1.) C & E COMPUTERS, located at 165 Ramona Ave, South San Francisco, CA 94080.

Registered owner(s): CHRISTOPHER ROBERTS 165 Ramona Ave South San Francisco, CA 94080

This business is conducted by: an Individual. Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed

above on 12/28/1992. This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 31, 2025. (ALM Feb 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2025)

GIDEON SYSTEMS GIDEON SYSTEMS AI FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-299509

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

1.) GIDEON SYSTEMS, 2.) GIDEON SYSTEMS AI, located at 25 Amherst Ct, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

Registered owner(s): JERVIS E WILLIAMS II 25 Amherst Ct Menlo Park, CA 94025

This business is conducted by: an Individual. Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 01/06/2025.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 10, 2025. (ALM Jan 17, 24, 31 and Feb 7, 2025)

PAROLE PORTFOLIO SPECIALISTS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-299458

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

1.) PAROLE PORTFOLIO SPECIALISTS, located at 50 Dorchester Dr, Daly City, CA 94015.

Registered owner(s): AARON JEREMY LOWERS 50 Dorchester Dr Daly City CA 94015

This business is conducted by: an Individual. Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 12/01/2024.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 07, 2025. (ALM Jan 17, 24, 31 and Feb 7, 2025)

MONTESSORI@HOME FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-299436

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

1.) MONTESSORI@HOME, located at 413 Miramontes Ave., Half Moon Bay, CA 94019.

Registered owner(s): WENDY JOHNSON ROSSELL 413 Miramontes Ave. Half Moon Bay, CA 94019

This business is conducted by: an Individual. Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 03, 2025. (ALM Jan 17, 24, 31 and Feb 7, 2025)

BECK BROS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-299467

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

1.) BECK BROS, located at 1221 S El Camino Real #111, San Mateo, CA 94402.

Registered owner(s): 1221 S EL CAMINO REAL LLC 1221 S El Camino Real #111 San Mateo, CA 94402

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.

Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 12/07/2017.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 07, 2025. (ALM Jan 17, 24, 31 and Feb 7, 2025)

SPIFFY POTTERY STUDIO FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-299486

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

1.) SPIFFY POTTERY STUDIO, located at 1919 Menalto Ave, Menlo Park, CA 94025. Mailing Address: PO BOX 368 Palo Alto, CA 94302.

Registered owner(s): THE SPIFFY STUDIO LLC PO BOX 368 Palo Alto, CA 94302

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.

Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 01/09/2025.

This statement was filed with the County

Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 09, 2025. (ALM Jan 17, 24, 31 and Feb 7, 2025)

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

Case No.: 25-CIV-00188

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:

Petitioner: Lauren Elizabeth Peterson filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:

LAUREN ELIZABETH PETERSON to LAUREN PADILLA STEVENS

THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

NOTICE OF HEARING: March 17, 2025, 9:00am, Southern Branch of the Superior Court of California, County of San Mateo located at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063. A copy of this ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: ALMANAC

Date: January 14, 2025

Hon. Stephanie G. Garratt JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT (ALM Jan 24, 31, Feb 7 and 14, 2025)

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF:

FREDERICK BRUCE THIEMANN Case No.: PRO00084

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of FREDERICK BRUCE THIEMANN.

A Petition for Probate has been filed by: FREDERICK DONALD THIEMANN in the Superior Court of California, County of SAN MATEO.

The Petition for Probate requests that: FREDERICK DONALD THIEMANN be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests the decedent's will and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate.

The will and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court.

A HEARING on the petition will be held on March 10 2025 at 9:00 am in Dept. 3 of the Superior Court of California, County of San Mateo, located at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063.

If you object to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

If you are a creditor or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58 (b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law. You may examine the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Petitioner in Pro Per: Frederick Donald Thiemann 850 Piedmont Way Redwood City, CA 94062 650-814-6114 (ALM Jan 31, Feb 7 and 14, 2025)

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To place a legal notice visit AlmanacNews.com/legal_notices/

FAIR OAKS FIRE

continued from page 5

and was demolished due to damage it had sustained.

Building A, which includes 75 housing units and a childcare center, was spared in the fire. Both buildings were actively in the same construction phase and would have been completed together. Construction resumed on Building A a few weeks after the incident. The property also houses a medical facility that was unaffected by the fire. There were no injuries to construction workers or fire personnel in the incident.

MPFPD Fire Marshal Jon Johnston requested assistance in the fire investigation from the San Mateo County Fire Investigation Task Force and the Federal Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms and Explosives. Authorities performed multiple interviews, looked through pictures, videos, and other evidence, conducted testing, and validated any rumors in making their determination.

“The first fuel ignited was most likely the plastic wrapping” around insulation packaging, the Menlo Park Fire Protection District’s fire investigation report, released Jan. 29, said. “The specific ignition event remains undetermined. As a result, the classification of the fire is undetermined.”

Read the full report at tinyurl.com/mpfpdinvestigation2025. ■

Email Editorial Intern Hannah Bensen at hbensen@almanacnews.com.

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EXHIBIT PULLS ON COMMON THREADS

Group show at Palo Alto Art Center celebrates link between textiles and technology

By Sheryl Nonnenberg

The word “textiles” may bring to mind blankets, clothing and anything made by weaving thread. A visit to the current exhibition at the Palo Alto Art Center, “Cut from the Same Cloth: Textile and Technology” will quickly serve to expand your viewpoint. The 18 artists in this expansive group show challenge the notion that art and technology are mutually exclusive, while celebrating the historic roots of a very basic handcraft.

Palo Alto Art Center Director Karen Kienzle said that textile artwork has long been on the radar of the center’s staff but plans for an exhibition were halted by the COVID-19 pandemic. “During the pandemic, we learned about Christine Duval’s exhibition, which combined textile with the novel element of technology. We were excited about how the combination of these two seemingly disparate, but actually quite related media, would resonate with our audiences,” Kienzle said.

Duval, who is an independent curator, organized a version of the exhibition that was displayed previously at the French consulate in San Francisco and then at Currents 826 gallery in Santa Fe, New Mexico. For this iteration of the show in Palo Alto, she invited six new artists whose work she had seen while on museum and studio visits. Duval said that she had two main criteria when selecting artists, those who “brought a fresh perspective or unique twist to the central concept of the show, and artists who are California-based or have a strong connection to California.”

Upon entering the gallery, the visitor is met with a familiar and thoroughly Silicon Valley icon: the circuit board. Using Sunbrella cordage and gold thread, artist Windy Chien has created a knot-work and macrame wall-hanging that pretty much sums up the intent of the show: to marry hand-crafted techniques with the brave new world of technology and, in the process, create aesthetically

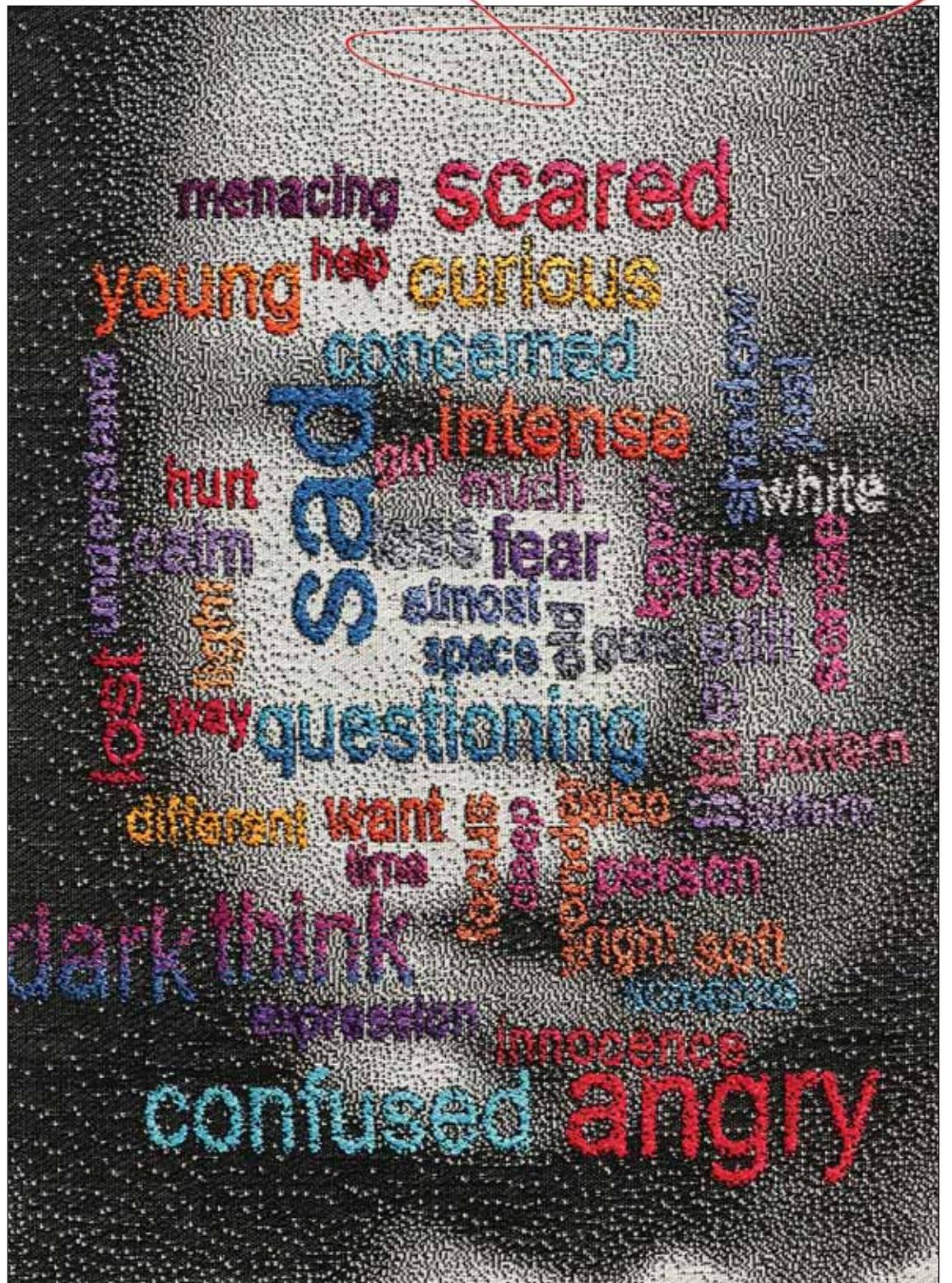
pleasing and conceptually challenging art.

Take the time to watch the short, informative video that describes the importance of the Jacquard loom, invented in 1801, and how it revolutionized the manufacture of textiles. The once laborious process of handweaving was made easier and faster thanks to punched cards that stored the complex patterns used to produce fabrics such as brocades and damasks. A display case in the exhibit features an example of a punch card. A few centuries later, this system of encoded information would become the inspiration for IBM’s first computer and the birth of an industry that is at the core of life here in the Bay Area.

Continuing into the gallery, it is obvious that Duval has gathered artworks that show both the hand of the weaver and art that has relied upon more high-tech methodologies. “The Visionary” by Guillermo Bert fits the bill for a traditional approach to the medium; it is a wall hanging, composed of naturally dyed wool and supported by wooden dowels. The strong center design in black and white seems to have a Native American influence, but look again and notice that Bert has actually created a QR code, a ubiquitous symbol of our modern lifestyle.

Lia Cook employs the Jacquard loom but updates it with a twist: digital weaving technologies that enable her to create realistic imagery like the portrait entitled “Intense & Questioning.” Cook recorded viewers’ responses to the work and used data visualization to weave representations of their reactions back into the work itself. This cotton rayon weaving catches your attention, first with colorful one-word proclamations like “scared,” “difficult,” “angry” and “confused.” But step back and you will see an image of a child’s face. It’s haunting and thought-provoking.

Many of the artists have taken the idea of weaving and translated it using more contemporary materials. Tara de la Garza uses LEDs wrapped in recycled bags



Courtesy Lia Cook

With pieces such as “Intense & Questioning,” artist Lia Cook recorded viewers’ reactions to an image and used data visualization to weave representations of their reactions back into the work itself.

to create a warp and weft pattern. According to the label, this tartan pattern reflects the artistic legacy of minimalist artists like Donald Judd, while making a statement about “society, wealth and waste.”

Clive McCarthy has dispensed with the loom entirely, using his own code and software to create a digital weaving that appears, slowly and row by row, before

your eyes. Daniel Canogar’s “Shred” also uses software and a screen to produce an in-your-face image that explodes with color and movement. The label explains that it is a generative animation that uses NFTs as raw material. As a comment on the “dematerialization of art” the artist says that the piece “invokes the incessant and indefatigable fever of digital collecting.”

Returning to more traditional methods, Susie Taylor’s lovely hand-dyed weavings are colorful tributes to geometric abstraction with the added twist of being so three-dimensional you want to touch them. According to the label, the artist sketches the designs on grid paper which are then translated into digital

See EXHIBIT, page 21

Where to celebrate Valentine's Day on the Peninsula

Find a wide array of activities for couples, singles and Galentine's Day

By Julia Brown

Chocolates and roses may be hallmarks of Valentine's Day, but when it comes down to it the holiday is all about love. Whether you're celebrating with a significant other or a galentine, there's a wide variety of local happenings both conventional and unique. From romantic prix fixe dinners and chocolate tastings to a wedding-themed murder mystery experience, a bookstore scavenger hunt and sweetheart dances for kids and parents, here's a sampling of Valentine's Day festivities on the Peninsula.

Art, music and dancing

Valentine's Day Events at Little Green:

The Redwood City plant bar, coffee shop and retail space is hosting several events for the holiday. Stop by for the Mushy Gushy Makers Market with artisan vendors Feb. 8, take a candle making and honey tasting class with State Street Honey Feb. 12, make a cement heart succulent arrangement and sip wine at the Galentine's Succulent & Sip Feb. 13 or get a handpoked tattoo at Tattoos For Two Feb. 15. *Mushy Gushy Makers Market is Feb. 8, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m., free admission. Candle Making & Honey Tasting Class is Feb. 12, 1 p.m., \$45 each. Galentine's Succulent & Sip is Feb. 13, 6-8 p.m., \$55 each. This event is 21 and over. Tattoos For Two is Feb. 15, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., prices vary. All events are at Little Green, 1101 Main St., Redwood City. littlegreenaplantbar.com/classes.*

Redwood City Sweetheart Dance:

Enjoy music, dancing, a photo booth, crafts and refreshments with the little ones. Families are encouraged to dress in semi-formal attire. *Feb. 8, 6-8 p.m. at the Veterans Memorial Senior Center, 1455 Madison Ave., Redwood*



Adam Pardee

Gamble Garden in Palo Alto is hosting an herbal tea party on Valentine's Day.

City. \$30 for an adult and child; additional family members are \$15. Children must be accompanied by an adult. tinyurl.com/rwcsweetheartdance.

Grapes and Giggles Valentine's Show:

Domenico Winery hosts a Valentine's version of its monthly standup comedy show. Dinner reservations are strongly encouraged for attendees who want to dine at Osteria, an Italian eatery and wine bar on-site, before the show. Beer, wine, cocktails and dessert are available to order during the show. *Feb. 12, show starts at 8:15 p.m. (doors open at 7:45 p.m.) at Domenico Winery, 1697 Industrial Road, San Carlos. 21 and over. Tickets start at \$33.85 each. tinyurl.com/valentinesgrapesandgiggles.*

"The Rocky Horror Picture Show:"

Spend the evening with the Bawdy Caste for a Valentine's edition of "The Rocky Horror Picture Show" at The Guild Theatre in Menlo Park. Tickets are being sold for an early show at 7 p.m. and the late show at 10 p.m. *Feb. 14, early show at 7 p.m., late show at 10 p.m. at The Guild Theatre, 949 El Camino Real, Menlo Park. General admission tickets are \$24.92 each. guildtheatre.com.*

"A Kiss and a Song":

If downtown San Mateo is your date night destination Feb. 14, head down B Street for accordion music by Michael Zampiceni and lip print readings for singles and couples. *Feb. 14, 5:30-7:30 p.m. on B Street, San Mateo. Free; event details are subject to change with inclement weather. Lip readings are first come, first served. instagram.com/downtownsanmateo.*

Alhambra Irish House:

2025 Valentine's Bash with DJ ShotDown playing Persian and

Turkish music on Feb. 14. The venue holds a Valentine's and Galentine's Party, 1920s Style on Feb. 15 with a buffet-style dinner, live blues music and dancing with a Prohibition era theme. *Feb. 14, 8:30 p.m. \$28.52. tinyurl.com/2025valentinesbash. Feb. 15, 7-11 p.m. at Alhambra Irish House. Tickets are \$44.52 each; price doesn't include drinks, tips or taxes. tinyurl.com/alhambraparty. Both events take place at Alhambra Irish House, 831 Main St., Redwood City.*

Food and drink events

Valentine's Choco-Stroll:

Get chocolate tastings at tasting sites throughout downtown Los Altos, plus a chocolate and wine tasting with special pairings at Rustic House Oyster Bar & Grill. All tastings are included with ticket purchase. The event is rain or shine. *Feb. 8, 2-5 p.m. at Main and State streets, Los Altos. \$45 advance/\$50 day of. downtownlosaltosValentine'sChoco-Stroll | DowntownLosAltos.org/event/valentines-choco-stroll.*

Valentine's at Feast & Floral:

The Redwood City wine bar will offer a pop-up flower bar with flowers sold by the stem, heart-shaped charcuterie boards, new wines available by the glass or in a flight and a four-course dinner menu. *Feb. 13-15 at Feast & Floral, 3770 Florence St., Redwood City. Prices vary. instagram.com/feastandfloral.*

Herbal Tea Party:

Make your own herbal tea blends from organic herbs and flowers, then drink the tea with homemade pastries. Gamble Garden's horticulture team will answer all gardening questions. *Feb. 14, 1-3 p.m. at Gamble Garden Tea House, 1431 Waverley St., Palo Alto. \$65 each. gamblegarden.org/event/herbal-tea-party.*

Bloody Valentine: 'Til Death Do Us Part:

Roger Bar and Restaurant at The Ameswell Hotel hosts an immersive murder mystery experience with food and drinks. Guests are encouraged to wear "the most ridiculous wedding attire you can come up with." *Feb. 14, 6-10 p.m. at Roger Bar and Restaurant, The Ameswell Hotel, 800 Moffett Blvd., Mountain View. Tickets are \$96.81 each plus \$10 for day parking. tinyurl.com/bloodyvalentine2025.*



Courtesy Feast & Floral

Find heart-shaped charcuterie boards, wine, a pop-up flower bar and a four-course dinner menu at Feast & Floral Feb. 13-15.

Galentine's Day

Brunch & Boutiques: Galentine's Edition:

Shop from local vendors and enjoy \$12 flights all day at Out of the Barrel Taproom in San Carlos. A photographer will also be on hand to take photos of guests' canine companions. *Feb. 2, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. at Out of the Barrel Taproom, 555 El Camino Real, Suite 150, San Carlos. Free admission. instagram.com/outofthebarrelsanarlos.*

Galentine's Wine, Cheese & Chocolate Party:

A Grape in the Fog wine bar is hosting an evening of dessert wine, wine cocktails, cheese and chocolate. Guests will also learn how to make cocktail garnishes. Tasting notes included. *Feb. 13, 7-9 p.m. at A Grape in the Fog, 400 Old County Road, Suite 1, Pacifica. Ages 21 and over only. Tickets are \$75 each. agitf.com/event/galentines-wine-cheese-chocolate-party.*

Galentine's Drag Brunch:

Alhambra Irish House hosts a drag brunch with Chai Auntea, brunch and bottomless mimosas, plus a brunch happy hour from 11 a.m. to noon. *Feb. 16, noon to 2 p.m. (doors open at 11 a.m.) at Alhambra Irish House, 831 Main St., Redwood City. Tickets are \$7.18 each plus \$5 cover; bottomless mimosas are \$24 each.*

All ages welcome. tinyurl.com/galentinesdragbrunch.

Outdoor and fitness events

Loving the Unloved:

Join Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District staff for a short morning pulling an invasive plant called vinca, followed by an interpretive hike to learn about the "more maligned" plants and animals in the redwood ecosystem. Bring lunch and leftover chocolates to share. *Feb. 15, 9 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. at Purisima Creek Redwoods Preserve, Half Moon Bay. Free. Reservations required, limited slots available. openspace.org/events/guided-activities/loving-unloved.*

Wild and Weird Valentines:

Docent naturalists will discuss mating and procreation in nature during a guided hike along the Fir and Tafoni trails. *Feb. 15, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. at El Corte de Madera Creek Preserve, Highway 35 and Skyline Boulevard, Redwood City. Meet at the Skeggs Point parking area. Free. openspace.org/get-involved/events-activities.*

Visit almanacnews.com/arts-culture for more Valentine's and Galentine's events. ■

Email SixFifty Editor Julia Brown at jbrown@almanacnews.com.

EXHIBIT

continued from page 19

designs. Using a floor loom, the process is slow and laborious. The piece “Jubilee” is small in size but a masterful blend of color, line, form and texture.

On the opposite end of the spectrum from creating with thread is the work of Aiko Tezuka. Her three pieces in the show are fabric deconstructions that question “what is behind the surface of an object.?” She has taken several elaborately designed pieces of material and, thread by thread, pulled them apart to create a new object. The end result, as in “Seep Out-Bird,” is elegant, striking and, if nothing else, impressive for revealing the quantity of thread needed to make a design on fabric — and the artist’s patience in what must have been a time-consuming, meticulous process.

The Glass Gallery is devoted to the work of Ahree Lee, whose work blends new media, video and textiles while highlighting the important role of women in the history of computer development. “Binary System” is inspired by the fact that both weaving and coding are based on binary systems: warp and weft in weaving and zeros and ones in coding. But she also points out that “the division of computer labor also fell along a gender binary. Men assumed the role of building hardware while the task of software programming, perceived as less important, was relegated to women.”

Duval acknowledges that while these contemporary artists are challenging the traditional notions of textile craftsmanship, some aspects of the medium remain the same. “While some artists in the show may employ programming and digital techniques, these methods are simply extensions of the creative process — akin to using a loom or a needle in traditional craft. The emphasis remains on intentionality, materiality and innovation,



Courtesy of the artists and Catharine Clark Gallery, San Francisco

Artist team LigoranoReese’s fiber-optic tapestry “I•AM•I” creates abstract portraits based on personal information from users’ Fitbit data.

whether the work is created by hand or through coding,” she said. She also noted that “weavers often refer to themselves as coders.”

Adjacent to the Glass Gallery is a large-scale tapestry titled “The Road” by the collaborative team of Aziz + Cucher. Tapestries have historically been a way to present big, dramatic recreations of monumental battles or royal ceremonies in a narrative manner. This piece, a Jacquard tapestry created using a digital weaving

file, will have you making a close examination as to who the figures are and what they are doing. Are they escaping oppression, searching for food? And what about the figures in hazmat suits? It’s a present-day mystery, made in a Renaissance-era artform.

While the gallery visitor should not expect to see woven blankets, embroidered samplers or your granny’s favorite quilt pattern, there is much here to both delight the eye and stimulate thought. Duval hopes that viewers “gain a deeper understanding of the rich connections between craft and technology, seeing how textiles have shaped not only artistic expression but also technological innovation throughout history.” ■

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“Cut from the Same Cloth: Textile and Technology” is on view through April 6 at the Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto. Admission is free. There are several events organized around the exhibition, including an apparel swap party, panel discussion and workshop with artist Ahree Lee. For more information, visit cityofpaloalto.org/textile.



Courtesy Aiko Tezuka and Maybaum Gallery, San Francisco

Aiko Tezuka’s pieces such as “Seep Out—Bird” deconstruct elaborately patterned textiles.

Worth a Look



Courtesy Del McCoury Band

Bluegrass master Del McCoury and his band play The Guild Theatre Feb. 7.

The Del McCoury Band

Bluegrass master Del McCoury has been on the music scene since he joined the legendary Bill Monroe’s Blue Grass Boys back in the early 1960s (Monroe switched him from banjo to guitar and vocals) and he’s been going strong ever since, including leading the Del McCoury Band, which also features his sons Ronnie and Rob on mandolin and banjo, plus Alan Bartram on bass and Jason Carter on fiddle. The band brings McCoury’s decades of experience and continued passion for performing to the Guild this week.

Feb. 7, 8 p.m., The Guild Theatre, 949 El Camino Real, Menlo Park; \$64-\$151; guildtheatre.com.

Kate Lamont

Singer-songwriter Kate Lamont returns for another performance at Feldman’s Books, this time with yet-to-be-announced special guests, and including acoustic and electric sets of original music and storytelling. Lamont was born in the United Kingdom, spent a good number of years in the Indiana arts and culture scene and has been based in the Bay Area since 2012. According to her website, she’s influenced by the writing styles and work ethic of Sade, Prince and Joni Mitchell and sees music as a unifying force to connect personal experiences to larger social issues.

Feb. 7, 6-7:30 p.m., Feldman’s Books, 1075 Curtis St., Menlo Park; \$19.98; feldmansbooks.net/events.

Renée Fleming

Acclaimed soprano Renée Fleming comes to Stanford Live to regale listeners with a program of favorite songs and arias and a multimedia performance of “Voice of Nature: the Anthropocene,” inspired by her Grammy Award-winning album of the same name. That performance includes an original film by the National Geographic Society and Fleming singing pieces by Handel and from “The Lord of the Rings.” A 2023 Kennedy Center honoree, Fleming has sung around the world, including at the Olympic Games, the Nobel Peace Prize ceremony and the Lincoln Memorial.

Feb. 7, 7:30 p.m., Bing Concert Hall, 327 Lasuen St., Stanford; \$112-\$200; live.stanford.edu.

James Ong

According to his website, the artist James Ong is inspired by “Eastern thinking and aesthetics, especially Zen Buddhism and Japanese art and design, because they free my imagination to wander and play without constraint.” An ex-engineer, he was born in Taiwan and moved to the United States at age 5 and earned an MFA from the Academy of Art University with a focus on designing children’s toys. Ong’s abstract, colorful work, which he creates by experimenting with paint on canvas, can be seen at Viewpoints Gallery, where it will be featured this month. “I drip, drop, scrap, brush, print paint onto the canvas,” he states on his site, “hoping for the best until a composition or a story appears.”

February, Wednesday-Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., Viewpoints Gallery, 315 State St., Los Altos; viewpointsgallery.com.

Food & Drink

♥ Romantic Restaurants

Here are the best spots to dine on Valentine's Day, according to local restaurateurs and chefs

By Adrienne Mitchel

If the way to a person's heart is through their stomach, then we have the love potion for you. We asked 10 local restaurateurs and chefs which Peninsula restaurants they'd take their loved ones to for Valentine's Day and which dishes they'd be sure to order. While some of these restaurants still have reservations available, many are filling up quickly and may not have availability.

Anthony Tam's recommendation:

Son & Garden

The founder of Peninsula crepe cake business Anton SV Patisserie raves about Son & Garden's pancakes, calling them "the best in the Bay Area." The Menlo Park brunch restaurant's ambiance is "always perfect for special occasions, making it a great spot to celebrate," Tam wrote in an email. Created by

the chef-owner of Farmhouse Kitchen, Kasem Saengsawang, Son & Garden also features the lush floral decor Farmhouse Kitchen is known for.

Anton SV Patisserie is collaborating with The Caviar Co. for a limited-edition Valentine's Day caviar crepe cake and partnering with The Traveling Stem to offer dessert and flower-in-cup arrangements. The crepe cakery opened its first brick-and-mortar shop in San Mateo in October and will soon open a second location at Stanford Shopping Center.

Son & Garden, 1195 Merrill St., Menlo Park; 650-665-7963, Instagram: @sonandgarden. Open daily from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Ayesha Thapar and David Nayfeld's recommendation: Robin

A personalized omakase experience at Menlo Park's Robin would be the Valentine's dinner of choice for both Thapar — co-owner of Palo Alto's Ettan, Menlo Park's Eylan and Los Altos' Little Blue Door — and Nayfeld, chef-owner of Che Fico. Originally established in San Francisco, Robin opened at the Springline development in 2023, offering contemporary chef's choice experiences for \$109-\$209 a person.

"I always look forward to the cold sesame noodles with truffle, which are served towards the end of the omakase experience," Thapar wrote in an email. "The sleek interior provides the perfect



Courtesy Son & Garden

Matcha mochi pancakes with green tea sauce at Son & Garden in Menlo Park.



Above: Kasem Saengsawang, chef-owner of Farmhouse Thai and Son & Garden, recommends Ettan's cocktails. Photo by Devin Roberts. Top: Meyhouse will offer a \$130 prix fixe menu with an optional \$60 wine pairing for Valentine's Day. Photo by Annette Chew.

ambiance, and the warm lighting is just right for a romantic evening."

Nayfeld said Robin's sushi is "the best in class in the region," and he especially enjoys the Kobe beef with sea urchin on a nori crisp. "It is fatty, briny and crispy. This dish is a great expression of how textures and flavors can be contrasting while also complementing," Nayfeld wrote in an email.

Ettan is offering a \$140 five-course Cal-Indian tasting menu for Valentine's Day (available in vegetarian and non-vegetarian), with the option of a curated wine pairing or a nonalcoholic beverage pairing for an added cost.

Che Fico Parco Menlo has a \$195 four-course family-style Italian tasting menu for Valentine's Day, with the option of a \$85 wine pairing.

Robin, 1300 El Camino Real, Suite C, Menlo Park; 650-204-1437, Instagram: @robinmenlo. Open Tuesday and Wednesday 5-9 p.m., Thursday to Saturday 5-9:30 p.m.

Donato Scotti's recommendation:

Meyhouse

The chef-owner of Redwood City's Donato Enoteca and CRU Wine Bar & Shop recommends Meyhouse, an upscale Turkish restaurant with locations in Palo Alto and Sunnyvale. Order a selection of mezze and grilled dishes and ask for an interesting wine pairing, Scotti suggests.

"Meyhouse feels sophisticated but it has a high energy that makes it a fun night out," Scotti wrote in an email. "The food is beautifully plated and is just unusual enough to feel special."

Meyhouse will offer a \$130 prix fixe menu with an optional \$60 wine pairing at both its Palo Alto and Sunnyvale restaurants. At its Palo Alto restaurant, enjoy a live jazz performance with the prix fixe menu for a total price of \$200.

Donato Enoteca is offering a three-course (\$74) or four-course (\$98) Italian



Adrienne Mitchel

Duck leg confit (\$42) with chestnut puree, sunchokes, braised leeks and pomegranate gastrique at Pausa in San Mateo.

prix fixe menu for Valentine's Day.

Meyhouse, Instagram: @meyhouserestaurant. 640 Emerson St., Palo Alto; 650-521-0935. Open Sunday to Thursday from 11:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5-9:30 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 11:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5-10 p.m. 187 S. Murphy Ave., Sunnyvale; 408-685-2255. Open Tuesday to Thursday and Sunday from 11:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5-9 p.m., Friday and Saturday 11:45 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5-10 p.m.

Kasem Saengsawang's recommendation: Ettan

Chicken biryani, black pepper cauliflower and cocktails are must orders at Ettan, according to Saengsawang, the chef-owner of Menlo Park's Farmhouse Kitchen and Son & Garden. Established in downtown Palo Alto in 2020 by Thapar and chef partner Sriyith Gopinathan, Ettan offers Indian flavors with California farm-to-table ingredients.

"The modern twist on Indian cuisine is exciting, the atmosphere is warm and romantic, and I appreciate the variety of dishes and creative cocktails they offer, all of which combine for a vibey experience," Saengsawang wrote via Instagram direct message.

Ettan, 518 Bryant St., Palo Alto; 650-752-6281, Instagram: @ettanrestaurant. Open Monday to Thursday from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5-9 p.m., Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5-10 p.m., Saturday from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and 5-10 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 1:30 p.m. and 5-9 p.m.

Manish Tyagi's recommendations:

Pausa and Red Hot Chilli Pepper

The chef-owner of Aurum, a Michelin-recommended Indian restaurant in Los Altos, suggests two restaurants at different price points for Valentine's Day. For an upscale Italian dinner, celebrate at San Mateo's Pausa, which holds a Michelin Bib Gourmand, and try their cheeses, flatbreads, house-cured meats and housemade pasta.

"In my view, Pausa is by far the most authentic and creative Italian restaurant," Tyagi wrote in an email.

If you're looking for something more casual, try San Carlos' Red Hot Chilli Pepper, which offers Indo-Chinese cuisine. Tyagi recommends ordering the chili chicken, momos, Manchurian

cauliflower, Szechwan eggplant and fried rice.

Aurum will offer a special Valentine's Day four-course dinner with complimentary Champagne for \$98.22 each.

Pausa Bar & Cookery, 223 E. 4th Ave., San Mateo; 650-375-0818, Instagram: @pausasanmateo. Open Monday to Thursday 4:30-9 p.m., Friday and Saturday 4:30-9:30 p.m. and Sunday 4-8:30 p.m.

Red Hot Chilli Pepper, 1125 San Carlos Ave., San Carlos; 650-453-3055, Instagram: @redhotchillipeppersancarlos. Open Monday to Thursday from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5-9:15 p.m., Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. and 5:30-10:15 p.m., Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 5:30-10:15 p.m., Sunday from 11:30 a.m. to 3 p.m. and 5:30-9:15 p.m.

Michael Ekwall's recommendation:

Protégé

Michelin-starred Protégé is the Valentine's pick for the owner of Palo Alto's La Bodeguita del Medio.

"From top to bottom, Anthony (Secviar) and Dennis (Kelly) have it dialed in," Ekwall wrote in an email. "I say this not because they are our neighbors and they are nice people; but the experience, the quality of the food, the quality of the service, and just being welcoming and well thought out, any guest feels that as soon as they walk in... everything is top notch!"

Ekwall and his wife Lara Ekwall recommend the crab and caviar snack made of Dungeness crab, yuzu sabayon and golden Ossetra caviar inside an eggshell atop a small sculpture. "It is a work of art," Michael Ekwall wrote.

He recommends pairing the dish with a glass of Champagne, specifically the Veuve Fourny Rose, and notes that his wife "might rather have a glass of pinot noir or perhaps a red Burgundy."

Protégé is offering a special \$305 five-course tasting menu Feb. 13-15.

Protégé, 250 California Ave., Palo Alto; Instagram: @protegepaloalto. Open Tuesday to Saturday from 5-9:30 p.m.

Omer Artun's recommendation:

Chez TJ

The executive chef and co-founder of Meyhouse suggests Michelin-starred Chez TJ for Valentine's Day. Located in a



Adrienne Mitchel

The interior of Chez TJ in Mountain View.

historic Victorian home since 1982, Chez TJ serves contemporary French cuisine using ingredients from its own garden located on the property. While the menu changes at the discretion of executive chef Stanley Michalski, Artun notes that the Hokkaido scallops were phenomenal.

"The food is always phenomenal, and the service is just as great," Artun wrote in an email. "It's an intimate spot with a special touch, perfect for a romantic night out."

From Feb. 14-15, Chez TJ will offer a special \$350 eight-course menu, with vegetarian options available.

Chez TJ, 938 Villa St., Mountain View; 650-964-7466, Instagram: @chez.tj. Open Tuesday to Saturday from 5-10 p.m.

Saif Makableh's recommendation:

La Stanza

Makableh, chef-owner of Mazra and a James Beard Award semifinalist, would take his wife and 2-year-old daughter to La Stanza Cucina Italiana in Menlo Park. He recommends ordering the fiocchetti aurora, pasta pockets stuffed with pear and Asiago cheese in a creamy tomato sauce.

"It's the perfect blend of sweet and savory, and that pear brings in a huge layer of flavor that I never knew I needed in pasta," he wrote in an email. "The space is pretty cozy yet elegant and makes for a great romantic dinner while still being family-friendly enough to bring our little one along."

La Stanza Cucina Italiana, 651 Oak Grove Ave., Suite H, Menlo Park; 650-326-1314, Instagram: @lastanzacucina. Open Tuesday to Sunday from 4-8:30 p.m.

Sunny Noah's recommendation:

Drunken Monk and Ethel's Fancy

Drunken Monk, a cozy Menlo Park izakaya which opened in 2023, "has many surprising high end ingredients to offer," according to Noah, co-owner of Palo Alto's Iki Omakase and Redwood City's Nagai Edomae Sushi. Must-try dishes include corn kakiage, A5 Hokkaido or American wagyu sukiyaki, kaizen don and sushi, which are "executed with precision and finesse," he wrote in an email.

Created by former Michelin-starred Chez TJ executive chef Scott Nishiyama, Ethel's Fancy offers California cuisine with an Asian twist. Noah recommends the milk bread, snap peas, grilled pork chop, charcoal-grilled octopus and crispy pork belly, but said "you can't go wrong with any selection."

Ethel's Fancy will offer a \$170 four-course prix fixe menu from Feb. 14-15, with multiple shareable dishes in every course.

Drunken Monk, 1438 El Camino Real, Menlo Park; 650-384-6668, Instagram: @drunkenmonk_official. Open Monday, Wednesday and Thursday from 5-9:30 p.m., Friday and Saturday from noon to 2:30 p.m. and 5-10 p.m., Sunday from noon to 2:30 p.m. and 5-9:30 p.m.

Ethel's Fancy, 550 Waverley St., Palo Alto; 650-561-4860, Instagram: @ethelsfancy. Open Tuesday to Thursday from 5-9 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 5-9:30 p.m. ■

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Natalia Nazarova

The bar at Protégé in Palo Alto.

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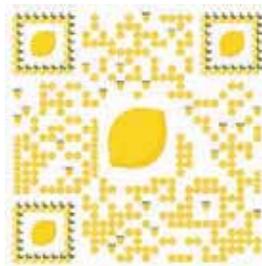
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#2

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#9

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