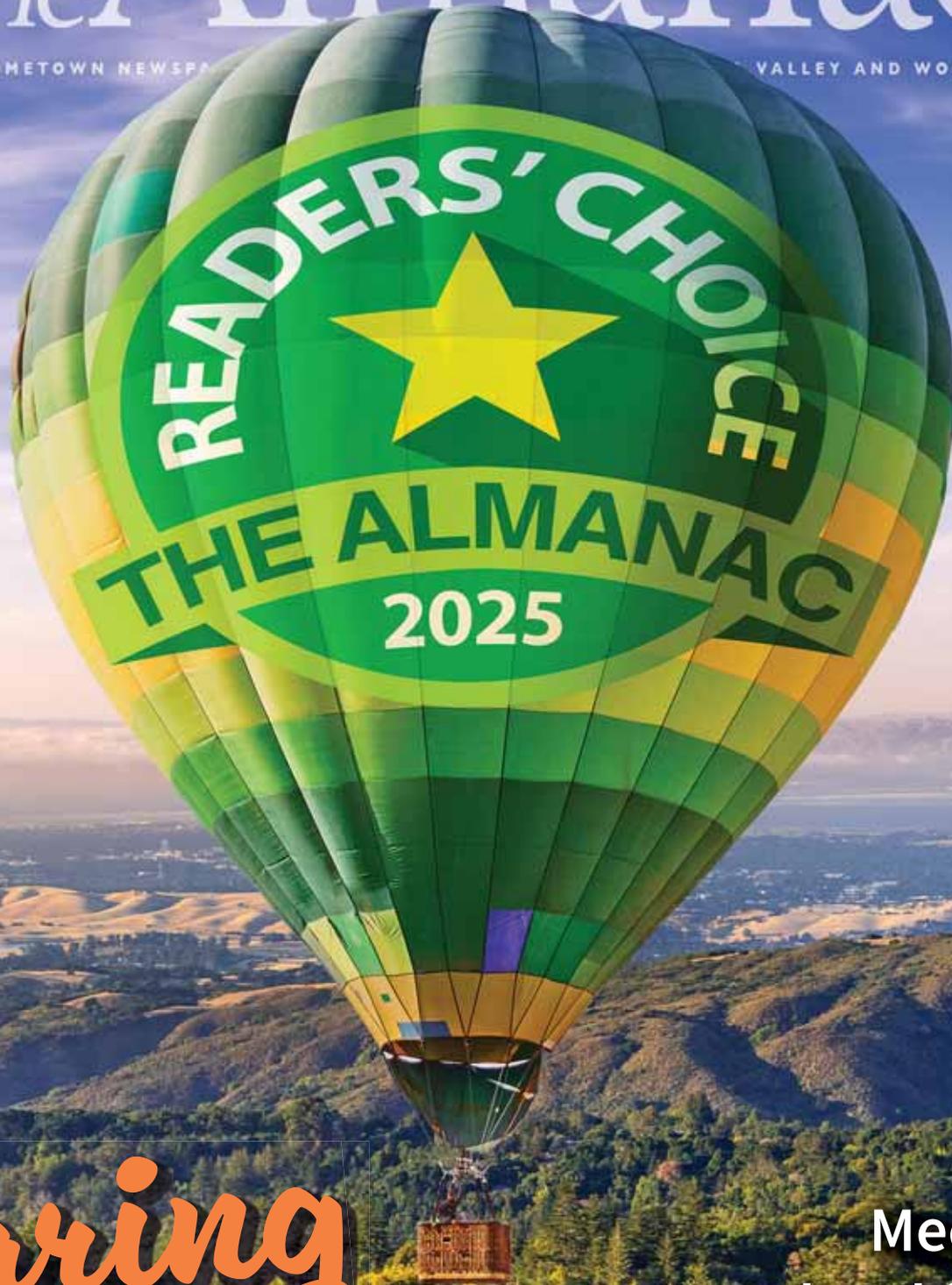


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Local News

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Portola Valley to appoint new town manager

Smith brings experience from city of San Bruno

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Portola Valley anticipates the appointment of its new town manager at its upcoming Town Council meeting on July 23. Darcy Smith, who was selected after a nationwide recruitment and selection process, is expected to start on July 28 if her contract is approved by the council.

Smith recently served as the assistant city manager for the city of San Bruno and previously held the position of community development director for San Bruno and Millbrae. She brings over 28 years of experience in the public and private sectors to her new role in Portola Valley.

According to the town, Smith is not a stranger to Portola Valley. As a Stanford student in the 1990s, Smith learned about Portola Valley through her coursework, studying the town's land use and environmental plans. As an avid hiker and cyclist, Smith says she is familiar with the town's trails and roads over the past 30 years.

She holds a bachelor's degree in Earth systems from Stanford University and a master's in urban and regional planning from San Jose State University. She is also a member of the International City and County Management Association, Municipal



Courtesy Darcy Smith

Darcy Smith, Portola Valley's top selection for town manager.

Management Association of Northern California, American Planning Association and Urban Land Institute.

Smith is known for her collaborative leadership style and expertise in budgeting and finance, land use planning, public policy, team mentoring and inclusive community engagement.

"Ms. Smith impressed the Town Council with her understanding

of our community, her experience working on a broad range of local governance matters in San Mateo County and her enthusiasm for working with the Town Council, our Commissions and Committees, our residents and other stakeholders to address the challenges facing Portola Valley," said Mayor Judith Hasko in a press release.

See **TOWN MANAGER**, page 20

Aging population will further stress in-home support network

New numbers point to looming crisis

By Chasity Hale

Natascha Walker works full-time as her 22-year-old autistic daughter's caregiver. Walker is a provider through California's In-Home Support Services program, which enables disabled people and older adults to live independently outside of an institutional setting. Originally from Texas, the former high school teacher and mother of two decided to move her family to Santa Clara County in 2021 because of the lack of adequate services and support available where they lived.

Walker's husband, 67, is a retired member of the pipefitters union. His physically demanding job took a toll on his body, limiting his mobility. Walker, a 57-year-old veteran, is partially disabled herself from a knee replacement surgery. Someone needed to stay home with their daughter whose language processing disorder made it difficult for her to communicate. But the family still needed to make a living. At first, Walker found it difficult to find information about resources available to her in California. Then one day, on a grocery run during the pandemic, she found out about the support services program.

"This program has just been amazing for us," Walker said. "I don't have to worry about the roof over my head anymore. Well, I didn't until November of last year."

Each day tens of thousands of residents like Walker do the essential work of caring for the physical, social and individualized needs of disabled people and older adults in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties. These workers, disproportionately women, people of color and immigrants looking after their family members, make up a patchwork system of paid and unpaid home caregivers.

In the coming decades, as the number of persons 65 years and older is projected to surge, the demand for long-term care will inevitably increase. The question is whether local health and long-term care systems are prepared to meet the moment and, at the same time, navigate the trickledown effects of state and federal cuts to Medicaid, the primary funding source for long-term services.

The Mid-Peninsula's Aging Population

The population in the mid-Peninsula is aging rapidly. Between April 2020 and July 2024, the number of residents aged 65 and older grew 13.4% and 12.2% in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties, respectively, according to U.S. Census data released in June. As of last year, Santa Clara County — the most populous of the Bay Area's nine counties — had the youngest median age at 38.1 while Marin County had the highest at 47.9. The median age in San Mateo was 41.3, three years higher than the state median age.

Across California and the nation, the number of older adults is increasing as the Baby Boomer generation ages and people live longer, according to a recent report by the Public Policy Institute of California. Immigration patterns, falling fertility rates and other factors also contribute to the demographic shift.

In 2019, to prepare for 2030 when a quarter of the state's population will be aged 60 or older, Gov. Gavin Newsom penned an executive order calling for the development of a Master Plan for Aging. Released in January 2021, this 10-year strategy focuses on housing, health, affordability, equity and caregiving; the state has released annual reports every year since. However, despite attempts to plan for the next decade, gaps in the state budget and federal funding cuts make for an uncertain future.

Earlier this month, President Donald Trump signed a massive tax and spending bill into law, which will have far-reaching consequences for millions of Americans. Included in the GOP package are significant cuts to Medicaid, the low-cost insurance program known as Medi-Cal in California. As a result of the new law, the governor's office says that the state expects to lose at least \$28 billion in federal funds, which account for more than half of the program's funding. This will compound a preexisting multi-billion dollar deficit in the state's Medi-Cal budget.

"The [federal] budget bill is going to hurt a lot of people,"

See **AGING**, page 14

StarVista to cease operations Aug. 1

Announcement comes with 'deep sadness' amid financial challenges

By Angela Swartz

StarVista, which has provided mental and behavioral health services in San Mateo County for nearly 60 years, will shut down on Aug. 1, the nonprofit announced Thursday, July 17. Officials said they made the decision, "with deep sadness," following a failed merger last month with another county nonprofit. The decision came amid financial challenges.

In June, the Burlingame-based organization explored options to ensure the continuation of StarVista's services under new stewardship, but that was unsuccessful, according to a press

release. StarVista declined to share the name of the other nonprofit it hoped to merge with last month.

"We are heartbroken to share this news," said acting Chief Executive Officer Shareen Leland in a prepared statement. "Our team, our potential merger partner, and our San Mateo County partners worked together in good faith to navigate StarVista's complex situation. We are deeply grateful for their time, care, and thoughtful consideration of our programs, clients and staff. While this was not the outcome we had hoped for, we remain committed to supporting a thoughtful transition."

The organization did not share more details about its financial struggles, but in 2023, a former employee pleaded not guilty to embezzling \$700,000 from the nonprofit. StarVista's required 2023 financials, filed with the IRS, showed that its revenue totaled \$16.3 million and expenses amounted to \$16.7 million.

StarVista began as a small human services agency focused on local suicide prevention in 1966 as "Peninsula Suicide Prevention, Inc.," according to its website. It adopted the name "StarVista" in 2011. It employed 240 doctors, clinicians, social

See **STARVISTA**, page 7

Alison Slone Hengehold

June 12, 1946 – July 9, 2025

Alison Slone Hengehold, 79, of Menlo Park, loving daughter, wife, mother, grandmother, sister, aunt, neighbor and friend, passed away on July 9, 2025.

Alison was born on June 12, 1946, in Patterson, California, to James Woodward Slone and Charlene Elfers Slone. She attended Northmead Elementary, Las Palmas Middle School and Patterson High School, where she played tennis and was a cheerleader. After graduating, she earned a nursing degree and quickly realized that caring for others was her true calling. She began her career at Del Puerto Hospital in Patterson and later continued at Good Samaritan Hospital in San Jose. It was during her time in San Jose that friends introduced her to her future husband, James Hengehold.

Alison and Jim were married on September 6, 1975, at Mission Santa Clara. They made their home in Menlo Park, where they raised two children, Matthew and Ann. Jim ran the family business, Hengehold Trucks, with his brother Dave for many years. While Alison did not work at the business, she supported Jim wholeheartedly in both his professional and personal life.

After becoming a mother, Alison retired from nursing but never stopped caring for others. She redirected her compassion and energy toward her family and friends, becoming a constant, nurturing presence in their lives. She extended that care to Jim's father, Fred Hengehold, founder of Hengehold Trucks, lovingly supporting him in his later years until his passing at the age of 103. She also cared for her mother, whom the family affectionately called Nana and who was a regular presence at the Hengehold home in Menlo Park, often found playing cards and making her infamous Chex Mix—a recipe Alison thankfully passed on. A devoted wife, Alison was Jim's primary caregiver and a steady source of strength as the family faced his battle with Parkinson's disease. Alison and Jim's marriage spanned 42 years, until his passing in 2017.

When not tending to family and friends, Alison could be found in the NICU at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, cradling premature newborns. She cherished her mornings in the Cuddlers Program and afternoons driving local seniors to medical appointments. Alison was active in the National Charity League with her daughter, Annie. For a decade, she served as a devoted board member and volunteer with the Ecumenical Hunger Program in East Palo Alto.

Alison will be remembered for her generous spirit, her deep loyalty to family and her unwavering kindness. She was always thinking of others, quietly doing thoughtful things to lift those around her. She was the thread that tied four generations of Slone and Hengehold families together, embracing the role of matriarch with love and ease. Her fun nature and willingness to laugh at herself endeared her to many. We will miss her beautiful smile, her warm embrace and her selfless love.

Alison is survived by her children, Matthew Hengehold (Christina) and Ann Hengehold (Cesar Ramos); her grandchildren, Alexa, Reed and Josephine Hengehold, and Slone Ramos; her brother, John Slone (Shauna); her brother-in-law, Dave Hengehold (Cathy); her nieces and their families; her childhood best friends, Georgia Leese and Michele Knapp; and the first dog she ever owned, Daphne, who she truly adored. She was preceded in death by her parents; her beloved aunt, Geraldine Edwards; her brother, Michael Slone, and his wife, Virginia; her sister-in-law, Diane Hengehold; and her loving husband, Jim.

A celebration of Alison's life will be held in the near future, with details to be shared by the family. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests a donation to the Ecumenical Hunger Program.



PAID OBITUARY

Sheriff investigates burglary spree

Portola Valley home among those hit

By Michelle Iracheta

The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office is investigating whether three recent residential burglaries in Portola Valley and Emerald Hills are connected and urging the public to stay alert, check home surveillance systems and report any suspicious activity.

The first incident occurred around 9:30 p.m. Thursday, July 17, in the 300 block of Golden Oak Drive in Portola Valley. Video surveillance showed suspects forcing their way into an unoccupied home. The burglary was reported early the next morning. Authorities have not yet determined the total loss.

On Friday, July 18, at about 10:30 p.m., deputies responded to an attempted burglary in the 200 block of Scenic Drive in Emerald Hills. The victim was home at the time and told deputies the suspects broke in through the rear of the residence. They fled before law enforcement arrived, and

nothing was reported stolen.

Roughly an hour later, deputies were called to another burglary in the 3800 block of Woodland Way in Emerald Hills. Suspects reportedly forced entry and took valuables before leaving the scene. The total loss remains under investigation.

Detectives are actively investigating all three incidents to determine if they may be related. Deputies have increased patrols in the neighborhoods and have been canvassing for leads.

The Sheriff's Office is reminding residents to keep homes well-lit, use alarm systems, trim overgrown landscaping that could provide cover for intruders and avoid publicizing travel plans on social media.

Anyone with information is asked to contact Det. Baggetta at abaggetta@smcgo.org or 650-363-4192. Anonymous tips can be shared by calling 1-800-547-2700. ■

Email Michelle Iracheta at miracheta@almanacnews.com.

Smoke shop appears in west Menlo Park, again

Owner previously tried in August 2024

By Arden Margulis

A west Menlo Park smoke shop may be trying to open in the unincorporated enclave after the owner's previous smoke shop was blocked from opening in the same space in August 2024.

Earlier this month, a sign displaying "Blazin Gifts" appeared at 3536 Alameda de las Pulgas. If that sounds familiar, it may be because in August 2024, a sign reading "Smoke Shop" appeared at the same space, prompting outcry from neighbors who were concerned about the potential of a tobacco retailer located close to local schools and a dance studio.

At the time, San Mateo County supervisor Ray Mueller said county staff spoke with Ahmed Omar, the owner, and said Omar mistakenly relied on information from the city of Menlo Park, which does not regulate the area where the shop would operate.

"The shop owner just relied on information that wasn't accurate," Mueller said at the time. "The shop owner told the county that the city didn't identify any problem. But the problem was that it wasn't in the city's jurisdiction."

A county ordinance prohibits the sale of tobacco, cannabis or

paraphernalia at the location since it is within 1,000 feet of Phillips Brooks School and La Entrada Middle School field.

Mueller said at the time that Omar agreed to voluntarily comply. However, Omar may be trying to open a shop there again.

Omar registered Blazin Gifts LLC with the Alameda de las Pulgas address with the state of California on June 28. Omar owns Grizzlys Smokeshop in San Jose. While the state of California does not list owners of tobacco retail licenses, it lists 3536 Alameda de las Pulgas as the address of a licensed tobacco retailer.

"County inspectors have recently been out to the site and notified the owners that a smoke shop may not open at the location. Additionally, a gift store selling smoking paraphernalia may not open at the location," Mueller said in an email to this news organization.

Mueller previously said a type of gift shop might open in the space, which he later clarified the county staff believed would be unrelated to smoking.

The owner of the property, Atherton resident Mostafa Ronaghi, did not respond to a request for comment. ■

Email Staff Writer Arden Margulis at amargulis@almanacnews.com.

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The Almanac

Serving Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley, and Woodside for over 50 years

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Branch Services changing lives for adults with intellectual delays

Organization partners with Willow Commons to provide programming

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

In the community kitchen at Willow Commons, tenants are chopping vegetables, squeezing lemons and cutting tofu to prepare dinner. On the menu is Asian tofu salad with peanut sauce. The cooking program is one of many hosted by Branch Services to support adults with intellectual developmental delays in building the necessary skills to lead an independent life.

Branch Services is a nonprofit organization that focuses on building independence and community engagement for adults with intellectual developmental delays and autism. Cooking is one of many programs that residents can try.

“There’s a huge gap out there for adults [with developmental delays] who are seeking engaging programming and seeking community,” said Executive Director Brenda Bachechi. “With this space, we can offer more classes, more opportunities for people to come in and more opportunities to share.”

The organization was founded in 2023, providing support to three young women at a house on Thistle Street in Portola Valley. Over the last two years, the organization has grown exponentially through word of mouth, said Bachechi.

Willow Commons opened its door in June, providing individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities with supportive housing that encourages social interaction, community and autonomy. The project was started by Portola Valley locals Jim and Patty White, who were inspired by their daughter Amy, who has a disability.

Now, Branch Services operates out of Willow Commons, providing support and programming

to eight tenants with the support of over 30 staff members. By December, the complex will house 16 adults.

“Branch Services and Willow Commons have an aligned mission in that we believe in the community, we believe in the neighborhood, we believe in changing the narrative about what we’re doing with adults [with intellectual developmental delays],” said Bachechi, who was formerly an educator.

She met the Whites in 2011 while working with the Portola Valley School District to create an inclusivity program for students with disabilities. At that time she met many of the current tenants of Willow Commons and their families. Bachechi said she has known some of the residents since they were 8 years old.

Years later, the Whites approached Bachechi with the idea to partner with them on a project in 2020. At the time, Bachechi had lost her husband to brain cancer and was looking for a change. She took the opportunity to retire from education and help the Whites build what is now Branch Services.

“While housing [for individuals with disabilities] remains an issue, the programming piece became even more important of an objective for parents because they wanted their young people to continue to grow, to continue to develop and to be a part of a community where they felt happy,” said Bachechi.

Engaging programs to strengthen skills

Along with educational and employment support, social activities and wellness services, Branch Services also provides a space where adults with developmental delays can grow and form friendships with other Branch



Kensie Pao

A Branch participant pours out her chopped green onions into a salad bowl during the Branch Services nightly dinner at the Willow Commons in Portola Valley on July 21.

participants and staff.

“Our goal is for all of the adults to engage with the community they live in,” said Bachechi.

Through local partnerships, Branch Services participants can be seen working in the kitchen and cafeteria at Woodside Priory and Alpine Hills Tennis and Swimming Club. It also partners with the Portola Valley Theatre Conservatory for performing arts programs and National Center for Equine Facilitated Therapy for speech, language and mental health therapy. Down the street from Willow Commons, the community may also run into residents during a gym session at Pacific THERx.

Providing programs that encourage participants to interact with the community helps

break the stigma that people carry around individuals with intellectual delays, Bachechi explained.

In addition to developing self advocacy and independence, Bachechi has seen the adults become more willing to challenge themselves. While trying new things can be intimidating, Branch Services mentors spread the message that failure is not a negative thing but rather an opportunity to learn. Participants are also reminded that they have the support they need, said Bachechi.

She’s also witnessed adults with improved language skills, the

ability to use longer phrases, communicate clearly and interact with others.

Bachechi hopes that the work of Willow Commons and Branch Services can serve as an example for other organizations on how to effectively provide a supportive program for adults with intellectual delays.

“If we can make it happen, other people can do it too,” she said.

For more information on Branch Services visit branchservices.org. ■

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

STARVISTA

continued from page 5

workers, and professionals, along with 45 clinical interns, according to the website. It served about 38,000 clients in 2024, according to GuideStar.

StarVista programs will be ending, but the StarVista Crisis Center and San Mateo County Pride Center will continue to operate through other organizations in the county, according to Audrey Bockholt, a senior marketing manager at StarVista.

“We look forward to sharing more updates about these programs soon,” she said in an email.

The press release also addressed recent rumors that the closure of StarVista’s youth housing programs resulted in the loss of secure housing for its clients.

“Despite working with a very

tight timeline and significant challenges, our team has collaborated extensively with San Mateo County partners to secure ongoing housing and services for youth in these programs,” the release states. “The youth remain safely housed, and we are committed to ensuring as smooth and thoughtful a transition as possible.”

In 2024, the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors funded an around \$2 million, two-year program to integrate StarVista’s crisis response team within the Menlo Park, San Bruno and East Palo Alto police departments. The program expanded to eight police departments earlier this year, according to StarVista’s

website, including in Redwood City and North Fair Oaks. This news organization has reached out to the county about what will happen to these programs. ■

Angela Swartz is a Contributing Writer.

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REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



The Summer Doldrums

Dear Monica: Is the July real estate market particularly slow this year or is it just my property that isn’t selling?
Agatha D.

Dear Agatha: Depending on where your property lies, most areas are seeing a quiet July. It used to be that August was a dead month for real estate, but it seems July has taken this over. Schools now start sometime in mid-August instead of September so July is now the favorite month for vacations. Agents too, are taking vacations in July because their clients are away.

Because there is little happening in real estate at the moment, it is not advisable to do a price reduction because it may not get noticed. Wait until activity picks up and then do what is needed to attract buyers.

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

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Atherton town center popularity leads to parking permits

Area residents can get 4 permanent permits

By Arden Margulis

The town of Atherton is moving forward with a residential permit parking program to address ongoing congestion in neighborhoods near the Town Center and library, the council unanimously decided on July 16.

The City Council voted to restrict on-street parking on Maple Avenue, between Station Lane and El Camino Real, and Ashfield Road, between the Town Center and El Camino Real, to residents and their guests during weekdays from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. The program aims to ease parking overflow tied to increased library usage and community events.

It will be the only parking permit program in the town.

Residents along the affected streets have raised concerns about non-resident vehicles occupying parking spaces for extended periods since the library has opened. Earlier measures — including speed humps, red curb-painting and outreach — provided some relief but did not fully resolve the

problem, according to the town.

Households on Maple Avenue and Ashfield Road are eligible for up to four resident permits and additional temporary guest permits. Enforcement would begin after signage is installed, with police and code enforcement officers responsible for ensuring compliance.

The policies and procedures of the program are undecided. Town Manager George Rodericks will be responsible for determining the criteria and how the program will work.

Atherton plans to conduct a larger review of parking and traffic circulation near the Town Center later this year. The town will also review adding a pedestrian pathway to connect the Town Center to Watkins Avenue.

The program's expenses will initially be covered by the existing police and public works budgets. The town plans to review long-term costs and staffing needs after implementation. ■

Email Staff Writer Arden Margulis at amargulis@almanacnews.com.

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Portola Valley utility pole replaced after vehicle collision

Minor injuries, power outage result

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Around 6 p.m. on July 15, the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office responded to a solo vehicle collision with a utility pole in Portola Valley. The incident took place on the 300 block of Willowbrook Drive leading the pole to collapse on top of the vehicle and temporarily blocking the road.

The surrounding neighborhoods experienced a power outage until around 3:30 a.m. the next morning, according to a resident on PV Forum, the town's private social media platform.

According to the Sheriff's Office, the driver became temporarily distracted while driving, causing their vehicle to collide with the pole. The

driver sustained minor injuries and the vehicle was towed from the area, said Gretchen Spiker, spokesperson for the Sheriff's Office.

Kristine Taylor, a resident on Willowbrook Drive, told The Almanac that the collapsed pole was replaced overnight. She added that it narrowly missed her fence and a newly installed fire hydrant on the road.

Discussions on PV Forum questioned how fast the driver was traveling to cause the pole to fall over on a 25 MPH road.

PG&E did not respond to a request for details on the incident. ■

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



Courtesy Kristine Taylor

A truck collided with a utility pole on Willowbrook Drive in Portola Valley on July 15.

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COMPASS

Menlo Park Library's themed adventures draw a crowd

Hundreds turn out for events designed to familiarize patrons with services

By Arden Margulis

If someone walked into the Menlo Park Library in the Civic Center on the afternoon of July 16, they wouldn't just see librarians and people reading books, but Wookiees, Jedi and stormtroopers on an adventure around the 20,000-square-foot facility.

The facility has hosted a library adventure several times, each with a theme and goal to inspire patrons and encourage them to use the library more often. The July 16 event's theme was "retro space."

"We love the library adventure. It's not our first time doing it — I think we've attended more than twice," Menlo Park parent Risava Panavija said.

"We brought in the library adventure series of programs endeavoring to get our community aware about the library in a fun way," Rose Waldman, Menlo Park library and community services supervisor, said.

"We're always wanting to introduce our community to the wonderful free services the library offers. Many people associate the library with books and DVDs, things they can check out for free, which is great. People also know that the library is a 'third space,'



Arden Margulis

Residents win prizes for completing the Menlo Park Library's library adventure on July 16.

one of the few places people can go which is not work or home," Waldman said. "But there's all sorts of stuff that people don't know about: our e-resources, the kinds of collections we have, the programs we bring in."

The adventure is a series of scavenger hunts and themed crafts hosted by the library. There are typically four scavenger hunts, called "missions" by the staff: the children's mission, the teen mission, the adult mission and, most difficult, the event horizon.

While the missions may be geared towards certain ages, everyone can participate. The missions have a series of riddles that are used to solve a pass-phrase adventurers need to tell library staff to win a prize. Prizes include stuffed animals, key chains, toys and even San Francisco Giants tickets.

Aside from the missions, the library also hosted a photo booth and costumed members of Endor Base, the Bay Area chapter of the Rebel Legion, a costuming "Star Wars" fan club.

If you're looking for facts, you're in the right place. These books just moved to give them more space! The clue that you need is hidden among that stars. When you see 523, you'll know you've landed on Mars.

A CLUE FROM THE CHILDREN'S MISSION DURING THE MENLO PARK LIBRARY'S LIBRARY ADVENTURE ON JULY 16.

"The event has been awesome. The kids are running around and they're so happy to be here. I think we're going to want to go to the library more now," Menlo Park parent Angela Daul said. "This is great at kind of making you more engaged with the library. The clues have been really hard for both kids and adults. We're working on the adult mission right now."

"Our kids are avid readers. I wish I knew about it sooner. I just ran into another parent who told me about it and we came right over. It's great to have a fun scavenger hunt that's different from other events," Menlo Park parent Chris Kundinger said.

The riddles lead people around the library and teach them about resources and events such as the Teen Book Group and books in other languages.

"The event is really fun and engaging. We got to familiarize ourselves with so many sections

of the library. I think the teen mission's puzzles were my favorite," said participant Qian Ma.

The event is popular with locals, averaging over 200 attendees per event; the July 16 event drew 239 attendees.

"It's a super fun summer event. I'm so glad (my kids can) do stuff like this. I only have one kid who can really participate, so it was a lot of carrying the others along but it's fun to see my kids participating in something that's from our own home neighborhood and feeling like they're getting some civic pride out of events like this," Menlo Park parent Hissan Bajwa said.

In addition to introducing some services, Waldman also hopes the event encourages people to ask for help.

"A big part of using libraries is knowing that the library staff is available to answer questions.

See LIBRARY, page 20



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Tech showcase highlights local breakthroughs

Event runs gamut from 3D printing to AI

By Chasity Hale

At Mountain View's 10th annual Technology Showcase last week, the plaza outside City Hall bustled with live exhibits and interactive displays from local companies and research institutions at the cutting edge of robotics, artificial intelligence, sustainable technology and more.

The free event hosted by the city and the Mountain View Chamber of Commerce kicked off July 16 with an evening panel discussion, followed by interactive exhibits and another panel the following day. Beginning at 11 a.m. on July 17, attendees could browse nearly 30 booths and chat with representatives from across the tech industry.

"We get a really varied attendance," said Peter Katz, the president and CEO of the Chamber. "It may be a local high school kid who just wants to learn more. It could be someone who used to work in aerospace who wants to see what's new and exciting. Or, it could be a small company that says, 'I want to connect with another company.' All of those things happen here."

There were a number of autonomous vehicle companies present, with exhibits from

the robotaxi company Waymo and the driverless truck startup Kodiak Robotics, among others. Showcasing a different side of autonomy were delivery robots like Polar Labs and Matternet, the latter of whom conducted a stage presentation.

At noon, a Matternet M2 drone flew across Mountain View, carrying a box of chocolates. Once it arrived at City Hall, the drone hovered in the air, using a tether to lower the box to the ground. Just as soon as they'd arrived, the chocolates were gone — gobbled up by eager spectators. There was also a scheduled presentation by Jinxbot 3D printing services and a live DJ set.

In addition to startups and well-established companies, there were exhibitors from nonprofit organizations and government agencies. At a booth shared by the cities Mountain View and Cupertino, in collaboration with the nonprofit Silicon Valley Clean Energy, people could learn about home electrification rebates and incentives. They could also play a virtual reality game called Cooper's Clean Air Quest, exploring ways to update outdated equipment and reduce one's carbon footprint with the help of the game's eponymous robot Cooper.



Chasity Hale

Mountain View held its 10th annual Technology Showcase on July 16 and 17, bringing a variety of tech companies to the plaza outside City Hall.

It wasn't just tech companies presenting at the event. Attendees could also learn about the offerings at the Mountain View Public Library.

"Libraries are here to stay," said librarian Ashley Lang. "Even though technology changes over time, [the library] is still a big, important presence."

With a library card, "you have access to a multitude of resources," including audio and e-book platforms like Hoopla and Libby, Lang said. She added that the library plays an important role in breaking down barriers to access, offering computers, free Wi-Fi and portable chargers to those who might need them.

NASA Ames Research Center

had a large booth with multiple tables, displaying different areas of research and engaging people of all ages about the agency's work, including those curious about internship opportunities.

At one table, they had representatives from their Space Biosciences Research Branch.

"They're trying to figure out how we can live in space," said Jonas Dino, a NASA public engagement specialist. The researchers work includes studying how to mitigate the impacts of things like microgravity and space radiation on the human body for future space travel, Dino said.

Next to the NASA bioscientists was another table with a

three-degrees of freedom platform on it, a part of NASA's Vertical Motion Simulator, which can simulate flight in an aircraft or spacecraft. People could also learn about the many spin-off technologies developed with the help of NASA's research like memory foam and scratch-resistant sunglass lenses. And for the youngest attendees, there were NASA's Celestial Buddies, stuffed toys resembling the sun and planets.

"We're more than just a space agency," Dino said. "We do a whole bunch of different things that a lot of people don't know about or don't think that NASA works on, but we do."

The Technology Showcase was bookended by two evening panel discussions — one on Wednesday about AI and the future of work, and one the following day about the aerospace industry and its impact locally and beyond.

"The whole purpose of the tech showcase is to shine a light on the tech that's happening right in Mountain View and a little bit to the fringes," Katz said. "Technology comes in all forms. We can't escape it. It's all part of our lives, and so the more that people can learn about it, and the more that they can hear directly from and interact with the companies that provide it, I think we all benefit from that." ■

The Mountain View Voice was a sponsor of the 2025 Technology Showcase.

Email Staff Writer Chasity Hale at chale@almanacnews.com.

New executive director joins Jasper Ridge Farm

Facility dedicated to improving lives in the community

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Jasper Ridge Farm in Portola Valley has appointed Brenda Melton as its new executive director. Melton brings over 25 years of experience in animal care and organizational leadership to the nonprofit team.

Jasper Ridge was founded in 2009 by Wendy Mattes. Its mission is to enrich the lives of community members by providing a space where children and adults can receive comfort and acceptance through interactions with animals.

The organization also offers free therapeutic animal-assisted programs for children with special needs, families dealing with homelessness, veterans and adults with disabilities.

Melton holds a master's degree in business administration from Keller Graduate School



Contributed photo

Brenda Melton

of Management and a bachelor's degree in zoology from the University of Wisconsin - Stevens Point.

Melton began her career in

animal care as a zookeeper and has experience caring for a wide range of animals, including exotic wildlife and barnyard animals. Most recently, she led a team of 50 animal care professionals at the California Academy of Sciences and was involved in the museum's grand re-opening in 2008.

"I'm a people-first leader who thrives on collaboration, creative problem-solving and building innovative programs that make a meaningful difference," said Melton in a press release. "Jasper Ridge Farm is a place where so many of my professional passions and personal values intersect."

For more information on Jasper Ridge Farm visit jasper-ridgefarm.org. ■

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

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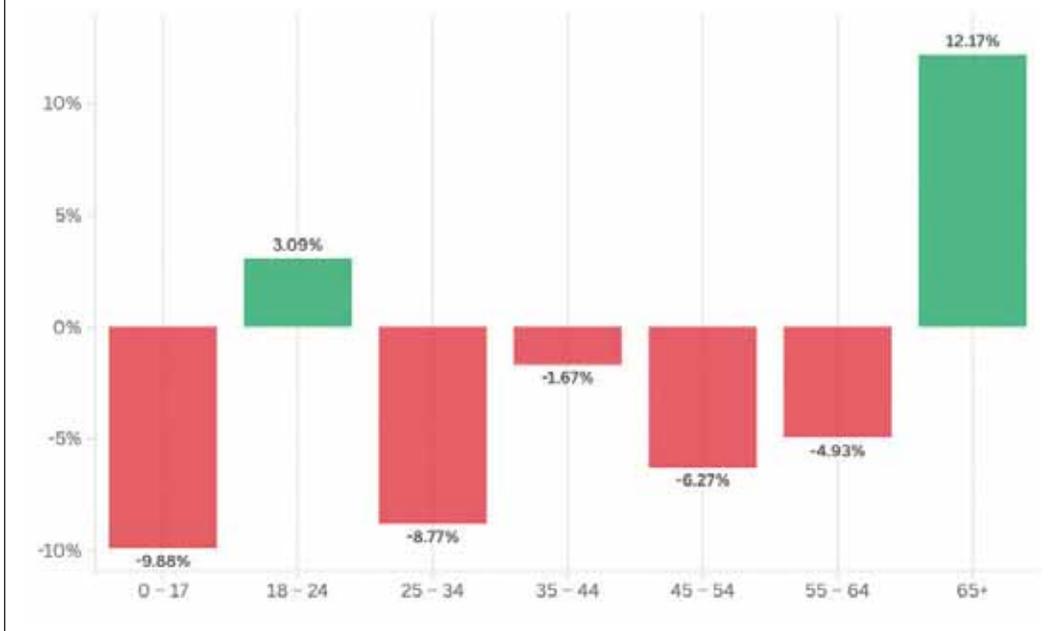
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Population change by age group in San Mateo county

Since 2020, residents 65 and older have seen the greatest growth



Source: U.S. Census Bureau. Graphic by Chasity Hale

AGING

continued from page 5

said Nari Rhee, the director of the Retirement Security Program at the University of California, Berkeley, Labor Center. “Older people are going to get hit from multiple directions.”

In April, the nonprofit California Health Foundation reported that cuts to Medi-Cal would reduce low-income seniors’ access to Medicare, the public insurance program for people 65 and over, as many older adults are enrolled in both programs and rely on Medi-Cal to cover their high Medicare premiums.

Medi-Cal cuts will also have serious implications for low-income seniors who rely on the program for services that Medicare doesn’t cover such as nursing facilities and In-Home Support Services.

The family caregiving workforce

Through the state’s In-Home Support Services program, Medi-Cal-eligible persons aged 65 and older and people with disabilities can apply to meet with a social worker, who will then review their application. The state coordinator can authorize a certain number of hours that that person can receive services such as cleaning, grooming and meal preparation, among other things. If approved, the recipient can then hire their own caregiver to perform these tasks. The policy institute reports that most In-Home Support Services workers are family members of the person they care for and half live with the recipients of their care.

As of May 2025, there were more than 36,000 IHSS recipients in Santa Clara County and over 8,000 in San Mateo County, more than half of whom were aged 65

and older, according to data from the California Department of Social Services.

Rhee said it’s difficult to know what the impacts of federal Medicaid cuts will be on the in-home program. “The state has to make some difficult decisions around how they budget for that,” she said.

Earlier this year, the governor proposed capping overtime hours for the workers — a proposal that was ultimately rejected by the state Legislature in June.

In addition to federal Medi-Cal cuts, new work and eligibility requirements designed to go into effect at the start of 2027 will pose a challenge for caregivers. While there is technically an exemption for family caregivers, Rhee said it places the onus on Medi-Cal-eligible individuals caring for their older family members “to prove whether or not they’re working the required number of hours and if not ... to actively apply for an exemption.”

Increased funding for immigration enforcement will also impact the home care workforce, 32% of whom are immigrants, according to a 2024 report by PHI, an elder and direct care policy research group.

“Our entire care system, including child care and elder care, relies on immigrant workers,” Rhee said. When asked if there are enough careworkers to meet the increased demand in the coming years, she said, “The short answer is no.”

The home care sector is already plagued by a shortage of workers and high turnover, with caregivers citing low-wages, poor benefits and a lack of support as the primary issues.

As of July 2025, IHSS providers in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties made \$20.04 and \$21.30 per hour, respectively, according to data from the California Department of Social Services.

Based on the MIT Living Wage Calculator, which accounts for geographic-specific costs, the current living wage in Santa Clara County is \$35.44 per hour and \$34.76 per hour in San Mateo County for single adults with no children.

Earlier this year, members of SEIU Local 2015, Region 5 — the union representing long-term care workers in California — started campaigning for wage increases in Santa Clara County. Last month, it rallied before the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, advocating for higher pay and more support for immigrant workers.

Currently providers negotiate their pay on a county-by-county level. However, there is a bill making its way through the Legislature that would allow them to collectively bargain with the state instead.

In the years since becoming an in-home services provider, Walker has become involved with SEIU Local 2015, Region 5, which encompasses the Bay Area. She is also a member of Santa Clara County’s IHSS Advisory Board.

Walker worries about the impact that Medicaid cuts will have on families. She says there’s a chance her family will have to move somewhere cheaper, where she might not have good access to her veterans affairs benefits. Her husband’s medicare premiums may go up. Perhaps they’ll have to sell their car.

Medicaid “is a lifeline for a lot of people,” Walker said, adding that lawmakers don’t realize “that they’re actually decimating a lot of the care industry.”

“They should be taking our tax dollars and reinvesting them back into the community,” she said. “And they’re not doing that.” ■

Email Staff Writer Chasity Hale at chale@almanacnews.com.

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

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PALO ALTO | 850Arroyo.com



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PALO ALTO | 3751ElCentro.com



27690 BRIONES COURT | \$3,988,000 | 4 Bd | 2.5 Bth
LOS ALTOS HILLS | 27690Briones.com



128 CORNELL ROAD | \$3,688,000 | 3 Bd | 2.5 Bth
MENLO PARK | 128Cornell.com



27500 LA VIDA REAL | \$39,988,000 | 5 Bd | 12 Bth
LOS ALTOS HILLS | 27500LaVida.com



86 RITTENHOUSE AVE | \$4,888,000 | 5 Bd | 3 Bth
ATHERTON | 86Rittenhouse.com



5 OAK FOREST COURT | \$5,488,000 | 4 Bd | 5.5 Bth
PORTOLA VALLEY | 5OakForest.com

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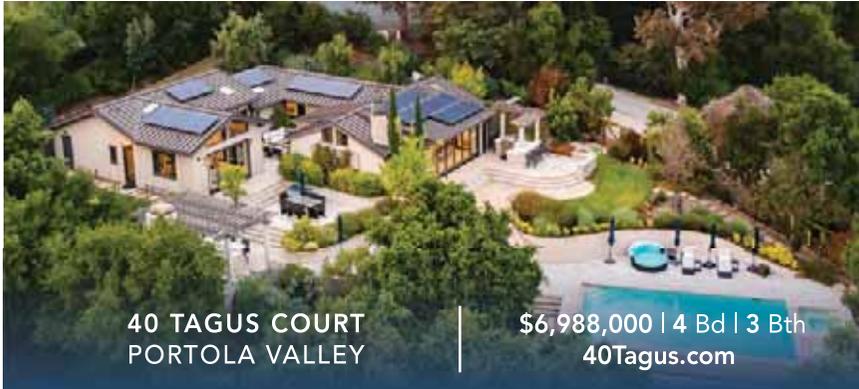




YOUR NEW HOME AWAITS

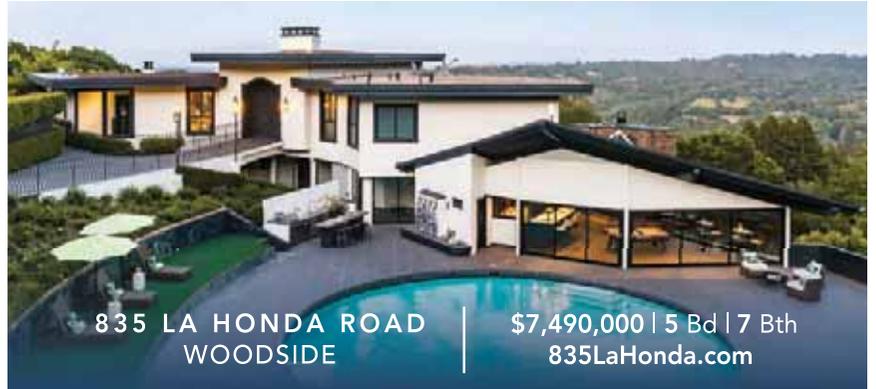


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\$6,988,000 | 4 Bd | 3 Bth
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835 LA HONDA ROAD
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\$7,490,000 | 5 Bd | 7 Bth
835LaHonda.com



695 N CALIFORNIA AVE
PALO ALTO

\$3,988,000 | 4 Bd | 2 Bth
695NCalifornia.com



8 REYNA PLACE
MENLO PARK

\$8,388,000 | 4 Bd | 7 Bth
8Reyna.com



1932 EMERSON STREET
PALO ALTO

\$9,988,000 | 6 Bd | 6 Bth
1932EmersonStreet.com



12355 STONEBROOK COURT
LOS ALTOS HILLS

\$9,988,000 | 6 Bd | 9 Bth
12355StonebrookCt.com



756, 758, 760 WAVERLEY ST
PALO ALTO

\$3,240,000 | Triplex
756-760Waverley.com



28500 MATADERO CREEK LN
LOS ALTOS HILLS

\$9,398,000 | 6 Bd | 9 Bth
28500MataderoCreek.com



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LIBRARY

continued from page 10

And so part of this quest, part of this program, is to encourage people to ask for help when they need it," Waldman said.

Creation of the event

"We wanted to come up with something that would let kids kind use the Dewey Decimal System (the system for numbering books in a library) and learn how to find things on the shelf. When we brought it to the group (of library staff), it morphed from there to make it an all ages event," children's librarian Desiree Wong, the mastermind of library adventure, said.

While brainstorming the original concept, Wong wanted to make it interactive and fun.

"We know other libraries have done passive scavenger hunts that get put out and patrons can do on their own time but we wanted it to be fully integrated," Wong said.

While Waldman was hesitant to say the Menlo Park Library came up with the concept, she said the library staff was not aware of other libraries doing the same thing.

"This really came out of conversations around, like, 'Wouldn't it be fun if we built a puzzle about the library?' We always have conversations about how to engage the community and thought it would be a fun thing to do," Waldman said.

While many library staff members were excited to help come up with the riddles and puzzles, it was still a lot of effort to put on. Before the first event, librarians did not know if people would come.

"I remember when we did the first event, my direct supervisor Nick Szegda, assistant director of library services, also got involved and the staff was having a really



Arden Margulis

Menlo Park residents read riddles and solve puzzles to win prizes at Menlo Park Library's library adventure.

fun time planning it," Waldman said. "Right before we opened it, (Szegda and I) were standing sort of at the entrance and we had no idea how it would go. We really hoped that we would get some people to come but were very aware that we may have just poured a tremendous amount of energy into creating a thing that no one would attend.

"I just remember him saying, 'Well, at least the staff will have had fun,'" Waldman said.

Since the first event, the library adventure has been a "hit."

The clues and puzzles are unique to each time it is hosted and based on the event's theme. Previous themes include fantasy, "The Hobbit" and "Peter Pan." The event was also hosted at the Belle Haven Library for the first time in January.

"The thing I notice about the library users is that they love to use the library but there are people who don't really know about library services. So we have services that get used by people who already know about them

and a sort of closed loop exists," Waldman said.

The Menlo Park Library has many free services available like audiobooks, educational speakers, online video streaming, exercise videos, databases, science journals, magazines, newspaper articles and online tutoring.

"We want to sort of break people out of their patterns and help teach them what else is there. But also, by creating this event that's, you know, 'go put on a costume and run around the library,' it makes the whole library experience more accessible," she added.

"We aren't a 'shush library,'" Waldman said.

"Libraries expand to fill the container they're given. Books are wonderful and access to books is so important, and the library is also a space where the community can gather and have fun, learn and be accepted. We want this to be an event that's silly and fun," Wong said. ■

Email Staff Writer Arden Margulis at amargulis@almanacnews.com.

Employment

MARKETING

Mayfield Fund LLC is accepting resumes for Director, Strategic Initiatives in Menlo Park, CA: Work with stakeholders to identify project needs such as resources, staff, or finances by reviewing project objectives and schedules. Annual Salary: \$275,000 - \$325,000/yr. Email resume to hadministrator@mayfield.com. Must reference Ref#GS-SI.

FINANCE

Snowflake Inc has mltp Senior Data Scientist, Product Workload Finance positions avail in Menlo Park, CA. Wrk w/ wide rng of fnance, engnrng, & prdct stkhldrs in prtntshp w/ prdct wrkload fnance team to model & frst prdct wrkloads. Tlcmgtg prmtd. Successful candidate's starting sal will be dtmnd based on permissible, non-discriminatory fctrs such as skills, exp, & geo lctn. This role is also elgbl for a cmptve bnfts pckge that incld: medical, dental, vision, life, & disability insrnce; 401(k) ret plan; FSA & HSA; at least 12 paid holidays; PTO; parental leave; ee asst program; & other co bnfts. \$188885 - \$204750/yr. To apply, send rsme & trnspts w/ job title & Ref#9112465 to resume@snowflake.com. EOE.

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TOWN MANAGER

continued from page 5

In a statement, Smith said she looks forward to collaborating with the council, staff and community to prioritize the town's environmental sustainability, town operations, safety and emergency preparedness, land use and housing.

The town expressed its appreciation for Interim Town Manager Mark Linder and his support of the town over the past seven months.

According to the press release, the town will host an introductory event for local residents to meet Smith in the near future. Details for the event will be shared with the community.

Smith will make \$250,000, earn an auto allowance of \$250 a month and a maximum of \$6,000 a year for professional growth expenses, according to the staff report attached to the Town Council's agenda. ■

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



850 ARROYO COURT PALO ALTO



CLASSIC CHARM, MODERN COMFORT ON MORE THAN ¼-ACRE

Tucked away on more than a quarter acre of land near the Los Altos border, this classic home pairs timeless curb appeal with thoughtfully refreshed interiors and a wonderfully versatile layout. Refinished hardwood floors, new carpet, and abundant natural light create a warm and inviting atmosphere across two spacious levels. The main living areas are ideal for both relaxing and entertaining, with large formal rooms, two cozy fireplaces, and a granite-appointed kitchen that flows into a casual breakfast area and walk-out family room. Five bedrooms offer flexibility for a variety of needs, including a comfortable primary suite and a privately situated guest suite perfect for visitors or extended family. Outside, a generous deck shaded by mature trees offers a quiet spot to unwind amid lush surroundings. All of this in a prime location just minutes from downtown Los Altos and The Village at San Antonio Center, with top-ranked Fletcher Middle and Gunn High School a short walk away.

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Listed by Michael Repka of the DeLeon Team

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Public Notices

VESPENE RECYCLING
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-300928
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:

1.) VESPENE RECYCLING, located at 624 HILTON STREET, REDWOOD CITY CA 94063.

Registered owner(s):
183672770 LLC

624 HILTON STREET
REDWOOD CITY CA 94063

State of Incorporation/Organization:
CALIFORNIA

This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.
Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 04/20/2025.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 24, 2025.

(ALM Jul 25, Aug 1, 8 and 15, 2025)

JR DESIGN BUILD
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-300837

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

1.) JR DESIGN BUILD, located at 355 PALOMAR COURT, SAN BRUNO, CA 94066.

Registered owner(s):
JR HOME REMODELING INC.

355 PALOMAR COURT
SAN BRUNO, CA 94066

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 June 09, 2025.

(ALM Jul 18, 25, Aug 1 and 8, 2025)

BASKIN-ROBBINS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-301088

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

1.) BASKIN-ROBBINS, located at 2107 Roosevelt Avenue, Redwood City, CA, 94061.

Registered owner(s):
MSCOOP LLC

1341 Flicker Way
Sunnyvale, CA, 94087

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

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

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 10, 2025.

(ALM Jul 25, Aug 1, 8 and 15, 2025)

SINGLE DOSE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-301101

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

1.) SINGLE DOSE, located at 115 Vallecito Ln, Pacifica, CA 94044. Mailing Address: 446 Old County Rd STE 100-387, Pacifica, CA 94044.

Registered owner(s):
SINGLE DOSE THERAPEUTICS, INC.

115 Vallecito Ln
Pacifica, CA 94044

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA
This business is conducted by: a Corporation.

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

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 11, 2025.

(ALM Jul 25, Aug 1, 8 and 15, 2025)

TIMELAPSE GTM
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-300979

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

1.) TIMELAPSE GTM, located at 820 Laurel Avenue, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

Registered owner(s):
TIMELAPSE GTM LLC

820 Laurel Avenue
Menlo Park, CA 94025

State of Incorporation/Organization:
California

This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.
Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on June 5, 2025.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 30, 2025.

(ALM Jul 18, 25, Aug 1 and 8, 2025)

SERVPRO OF DALY CITY, BROADMOOR
SERVPRO OF BRISBANE
SERVPRO OF MARINA DISTRICT
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-301115

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

1.) SERVPRO OF DALY CITY, BROADMOOR, 2.) SERVPRO OF BRISBANE, 3.) SERVPRO OF MARINA DISTRICT, located at 1433 North Carolan Ave, Burlingame, CA 94010.

Registered owner(s):
AWWAD ENTERPRISES INC

1433 North Carolan Ave
Burlingame, CA 94010

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 July 14, 2025.

(ALM Jul 25, Aug 1, 8 and 15, 2025)

KJM ESTATE MANAGEMENT
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-301104

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

1.) KJM ESTATE MANAGEMENT, located at 702 Oak Grove Ave., Menlo Park, CA 94025.

Mailing Address: 3652 E Lafayette Ave.
Gilbert, AZ 85298

Registered owner(s):
KIMBERLEY MCDOWELL

3652 E Lafayette Ave.
Gilbert, AZ 85298

This business is conducted by: an Individual.

Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 6/02/25.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 11, 2025.

(ALM Jul 25, Aug 1, 8 and 15, 2025)

RUNNING OUT OF HAY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-301098

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

1.) RUNNING OUT OF HAY, located at 552 Grand street, Redwood city, CA 94062.

Registered owner(s):
CLARE SUGARMAN

552 Grand street
Redwood city, CA 94062

This business is conducted by: an Individual.

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

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 11, 2025.

(ALM Jul 18, 25, Aug 1 and 8, 2025)

ROYAL NAILS SALON
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-301011

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

1.) ROYAL NAILS SALON, located at 681 Oak Grove Ave Suite D, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

Registered owner(s):
CHARLES ROY HOGG JR.

681 Oak Grove Ave Suite D
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 08/01/2024.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 03, 2025.

(ALM Jul 18, 25, Aug 1 and 8, 2025)

GNRAL SERVICE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-300799

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

1.) GNRAL SERVICE, located at 3603 Colegrove St APT 27, San Mateo, CA 94403.

Registered owner(s):
FRANCESCA GONZALES

3603 Colegrove St APT 27
San Mateo, CA 94403

This business is conducted by: an Individual.

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

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 04, 2025.

(ALM Jul 11, 18, 25 and Aug 1, 2025)

JUN SURGICAL MEDICAL CLINIC
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-300797

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

1.) JUN SURGICAL MEDICAL CLINIC, located at 3301 EL CAMINO REAL STE 101, ATHERTON, CA 94027.

Registered owner(s):
MIN JUN, INC.

3301 EL CAMINO REAL STE 101
ATHERTON, CA 94027

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA
This business is conducted by: a Corporation.

Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 07/01/2024.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 03, 2025.

(ALM Jul 4, 11, 18 and 25, 2025)

FONETIK STUDIOS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-300702

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

1.) FONETIK STUDIOS, located at 445 LANCASTER WAY, REDWOOD CITY, CA 94062.

Registered owner(s):
BRANDEN QUEZADA

445 LANCASTER WAY
REDWOOD CITY, CA 94062

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA
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 May 27, 2025.

(ALM Jul 4, 11, 18 and 25, 2025)

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF:

IRENE JONES
Case No.: 25PRO00892

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

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

The Petition for Probate requests that: ALEXANDER JONES be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority.

A HEARING on the petition will be held on August 08 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:
Alexander Jones

4140 Rockwood Court
Granite Bay, CA 95746

408-335-4673

(ALM Jul 18, 25 and Aug 1, 2025)

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

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include:

Alison Slone Hengehold, 79, of Menlo Park, who could often be found in the NICU at Lucile Packard Children's Hospital, cradling premature newborns, and for a decade, Alison served on the board of the Ecumenical Hunger Program in East Palo Alto, died on July 9.

Robert Earl McDonald, 89, of Palo Alto, who as a child loved electronics and used his skills for mischievous purposes and later in life founded a company called Spectral Precision, where he designed and manufactured laser spectrometers

and high-speed valves for physics labs all over the world, died on June 8.

James Kitch, 78, of Atherton, who went to Harvard University and later Stanford Law School and began his legal career clerking for Justice John Paul Stevens on the Seventh Circuit Court of Appeals in Chicago, and who loved simple pleasures such as working on puzzles and watching the Weather Channel, died on July 18.

To read full obituaries, leave remembrances and post photos, go to Lasting Memories at AlmanacNews.com/obituaries. ■

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Fremont Park concert sprinklers update

On July 18, The Almanac reported the Menlo Park Summer Concert on July 16 was canceled due to sprinklers malfunctioning and public works was investigating the issue.

Since then, Menlo Park spokesperson Kendra Calvert said the unscheduled activation on July 16 was caused by a longstanding issue with the irrigation controller that causes the sprinklers at the park to turn on in the afternoon instead of at 11 p.m., like they are scheduled to.

The public works department has been working with a consultant to create a request for proposals to upgrade all irrigation controllers in city parks. The work is scheduled for this winter and Fremont Park will be prioritized.

Until then, public works will manually turn on the sprinklers while maintaining the parks around 6 a.m. The sprinklers will not run Tuesday or Wednesdays before the summer concert to ensure the grass is dry.

The next summer concert is on July 23 featuring The Refugees, a Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers tribute band.

Mike is on the mic

San Mateo County residents have a new way to see behind the scenes of county government: San Mateo County Executive Mike Callagy's new podcast.

"Open Mike," hosted by the county's chief executive, will bring listeners behind the scenes of San Mateo County's mission to "ensure everyone has the opportunity to live safe, healthy and prosperous lives," according to a press release.

Its first episode featured Parks Director Nicholas Calderon discussing changes in the county's 100-year-old park system while in Edgewood Park, Redwood City.

The county teased the launch on YouTube shorts, with clips from Callagy and Calderon's discussion how modern parks have changed since he was growing up. The podcast will be available on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and YouTube.

Callagy isn't the first politician in California to launch a podcast. California Gov. Gavin Newsom launched his podcast "This is Gavin Newsom" four months ago.

— Arden Margulies

Historic walking tours in Woodside

Join the town of Woodside for free tours of the Woodside Town Center from 1-3 p.m. on Aug. 2 and a tour of Folger Estate Stable Historic District at Wunderlich Park at 10 a.m. on Aug 3. No reservations are required for the tour.

The tour of Woodside Town Center will be hosted by the Woodside History Committee and will start at the Woodside Community Museum. The 30-minute walk will explore the town's commercial district buildings including the Pioneer Saloon and Independence Hall.

Visit Wunderlich Park to learn about the Folger Estate Stable Historic District's stone walls, blacksmith barn, dairy house and more. The tour will also explore the history of the property, the development of the Folger Coffee Co. and the influence of horses to Woodside's history. The tour will begin at the Wunderlich Park parking lot at 4040 Woodside Road.

The walking tours are part of the San Mateo County Historical Association's Victorian Days, featuring walking tours across the Peninsula. For more information on walking tours visit history.smc.org/victorian-days-walking-tours.

— Jennifer Yoshikoshi

California Local News Fellow joins Embarcadero Media this fall

Bensen will tackle new inequity beat

By Clay Lambert

The California Local News Fellowship last week announced the pairing of 38 journalists with newsrooms around the state, and for the first time ever, Embarcadero Media Foundation is among the hosts.

Beginning in September, Stanford journalism graduate Hannah Bensen will join Embarcadero's Peninsula publications. Bensen is a former Embarcadero intern, having written about such disparate topics as land management and Stanford University's decision to back Harvard in its ongoing funding battle with the Trump administration.

Bensen will be the news organization's inequity beat reporter. The beat is a first for Embarcadero — born of the recognition that great wealth disparities exist along the Peninsula and that those chasms create societal and economic issues worth exploring. She will report on issues such as the high cost of housing, factors influencing employment, changing educational models and more. She begins the job on Sept. 8, 2025 and will be with Embarcadero through the summer of 2027.

Bensen is uniquely qualified for the position. She has a bachelor's degree in international politics and economics from Middlebury College in Vermont in addition to her master's degree in journalism

from Stanford. She has worked on policy and research related to international banks, climate and monetary policy issues at the Federal Reserve Bank in Washington, D.C. And this summer, she is back in the nation's capital where she is a data reporting intern at the Washington Post.

The new position augments the non-profit foundation's existing roster of journalists and is largely funded by the state of California through an initial \$25 million grant to the University of California, Berkeley. Just this month, the program announced that it had secured an additional \$15 million in funding to continue through 2028. Bensen will be part of the program's third cohort.

The Fellowship is a response to a growing crisis in the local news landscape. A study from the Medill School of Journalism at Northwestern University found that one in four news publications ceased operations between 2004 and 2019. Residents of many counties in California now have no or very little coverage of local news. ■

Email Editorial Director Clay Lambert at clambert@almanacnews.com.



Hannah Bensen



653 WILDWOOD LANE, PALO ALTO

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A 'science fiction' quest to 3D print human organs

Stanford bioengineer Mark Skylar-Scott is working to revolutionize organ transplantation by 3D printing human organs using a patient's own cells, eliminating the need for donors and immunosuppressants. His lab focuses on scaling up cell production and creating vascularized tissues that can survive and function like real organs. In three and a half years, they aim to implant a bioprinted organ

into a pig, with hopes of human trials in the next decade. Skylar-Scott emphasizes the vital role of universities in pushing ambitious, long-term innovation —advancing science that the private sector often deems too risky or far off. **SCAN TO READ THE SPOTLIGHT**



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MEET THE ALMANAC READERS' CHOICE 2025 WINNERS

Soaring to the top!



Get ready to soar with the 2025 Almanac Readers' Choice winners! These standout restaurants, retail shops, service providers and other local favorites earned top marks and high-flying praise from the community.

Readers have recognized these businesses by casting more than 6,000 votes for their favorite places to eat, shop, work out or spend time with family and friends.

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

Arts & Entertainment

BEST ART GALLERY/FRAME STORE

Portola Art Gallery

Portola Art Gallery features the work of twenty-two award-winning local artists, showcasing a diverse collection that includes paintings, ceramics, woodwork, art glass, and photography. The gallery is open Monday through Saturday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Allied Arts Guild, 75 Arbor Road, Menlo Park
(408) 761-6855 | portolaartgallery.com

BEST LIVE MUSIC

Alice's Restaurant

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

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

BEST PLACE FOR A DATE

Bistro Vida

Bustling Parisian-style bistro in downtown Menlo Park serving classic French cuisine for 25 years. Inspired by the Parisian bistro culture, Bistro Vida serves up French-influenced dishes with

a slight Mediterranean twist.

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

BEST PLACE TO MEET PEOPLE

Alice's Restaurant

See *Best Live Music*

Food & Drink

BEST BAKERY

Woodside Bakery

Woodside Bakery offers pastries, cakes, cookies and other baked goods that have kept customers coming back for more than three decades. The family-owned European bakery makes its baked goods from scratch every day — from delightfully buttery croissants and fresh fruit tarts to mile-high old-fashioned apple pies.

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

BEST BREAKFAST

Stacks

This lively American breakfast/lunch spot is popular on weekend mornings for big stacks of pancakes. Stacks offers an extensive menu featuring hearty scrambles, crepes, skilletts, omelets, savory breakfast sandwiches and more.

600 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park
(650) 579-1384 | stacksbreakfast.com

BEST DESSERT

Mademoiselle Colette

Mademoiselle Colette brings the art of French pastry to life. From its buttery, hand-rolled croissants to crisp baguettes and delicate macarons, every creation reflects a deep passion for quality and tradition.

816 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park
(650) 644-8469
mademoisellecolette.com

BEST HAMBURGER

Alice's Restaurant

See Best Live Music & Best Place to Meet People



BEST HAPPY HOUR

Alice's Restaurant

See Best Hamburger, Best Live Music & Best Place to Meet People

BEST ICE CREAM/FROZEN YOGURT

Wildberry Yogurt

Perfect for satisfying a sweet tooth in a relatively healthy manner, Wildberry Yogurt features self-serve frozen yogurt made with real fruit and a variety of toppings.

325 Sharon Park Drive, Menlo Park
(650) 233-8883 | wildberryyogurts.com

BEST INDEPENDENT COFFEE AND TEA HOUSE

Cafe Borrone

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

1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park
(650) 327-0830 | cafeborrone.com

BEST PIZZA

Amici's

Amicis has been serving up pizza — along with pasta, soup and salad — to Menlo Park patrons for the past decade.



Magali Gauthier

Mademoiselle Colette — Best Dessert

The thin-crust New York-style pies are cooked in traditional brick ovens next to an open flame.

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

BEST PLACE TO BUY MEAT

Bianchini's Market

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

also offers delivery in as little as one hour.

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

BEST SANDWICH

Bianchini's Market

See Best Place to Buy Meat



BEST TAKE-OUT

Chef Kwan's

The veteran take-out institution specializes in Sichuan & Mandarin dishes, including lunch deals.

630 Menlo Ave., Menlo Park
(650) 322-4631 | chefkwans.com

Restaurants

BEST AMERICAN RESTAURANT

Alice's Restaurant

See Best Hamburger, Best Live Music, Best Place to Meet People & Best Happy Hour

BEST ASIAN RESTAURANT

Chef Chu's

Almanac readers continue to cast their ballots for Chef Chu's as the place to go for great Chinese food. Many of the signature dishes feature fish and shellfish, but there's also lamb,

chicken and a vegetarian cold plate on the signature menu. There's also classic Beijing duck cooked in a cast-iron oven, and an extensive regular menu that ensures everyone will find their favorite traditional entrees.

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

BEST CASUAL DINING

Alice's Restaurant

See Best Hamburger, Best Live Music, Best Place to Meet People, Best Happy Hour & Best American Restaurant

BEST DINING WITH KIDS

Alice's Restaurant

See Best Hamburger, Best Live Music, Best Place to Meet People, Best Happy Hour, Best American Restaurant & Best Casual Dining

BEST FRENCH RESTAURANT

Bistro Vida

Bustling Parisian-style bistro in downtown Menlo Park serving classic French cuisine for 25 years. Inspired by the Parisian bistro culture, Bistro Vida serves up French-influenced dishes with a slight Mediterranean twist.

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

BEST ITALIAN RESTAURANT

Avanti Pizza Fresh Pasta

Avanti Pizza Fresh Pasta offers authentic Italian homemade specialties for your eating pleasure. They pride themselves in using only the freshest ingredients when making pizzas, pastas and salads. Special care is given to the preparation of every pizza and they are baked to perfection.

3536 Alameda De Las Pulgas, Suite 4, Menlo Park | (650) 322-1211
avantipizzafreshpasta.com

BEST JAPANESE RESTAURANT

Dashi Japanese Restaurant

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

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

BEST MEXICAN RESTAURANT

Amigos Grill

Amigos Grill is a family-owned Mexican restaurant in Portola Valley, known for its sleek cantina vibe, spacious patio, and late-night hours. The menu features flavorful favorites like ceviche, burritos and tacos, all served in a welcoming, modern setting.

3130 Alpine Road, Portola Valley
(650) 207-5317
amigosportola.com

See READERS' CHOICE, page 26



Courtesy Portola Art Gallery

Portola Art Gallery — Best Art Gallery/Frame Store

READERS' CHOICE

continued from page 25

BEST OUTDOOR DINING

Bistro Vida

See Best French Restaurant

BEST ROMANTIC RESTAURANT

Bistro Vida

See Best French Restaurant

Retail

BEST BICYCLE SHOP

Woodside Bike Shop

Woodside Bike Shop sells accessories and bikes for all ages, ability levels and budgets. It carries mountain bikes, BMX bikes, cruisers, road bikes, electric bikes and even unicycles. Full-service repairs and custom builds are also offered.

1800 El Camino Real, Suite C, Menlo Park | (650) 299-1071
woodsidebikeshop.com

BEST BOOKSTORE

Kepler's Books

With its broad collection of books, magazines and literary events, Kepler's Books & Magazines has been a beloved cornerstone in the community since it opened in the 1960s. In response to the pandemic, the independent bookstore's nonprofit arm, the Kepler's Literary Foundation, created Refresh the Page, a series of online conversations, classes and seminars for adults and youth that has become part of its offerings.

1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park
(650) 324-4321 | keplers.com

BEST BOUTIQUE

Shady Lane

For more than four decades, Shady Lane has been offering one-of-a-kind jewelry pieces, intricately woven



Courtesy Shady Lane

Shady Lane — Best Boutique

scarves, artisan glass sculptures, wood carvings, handcrafted soaps and an array of other items handcrafted by local and international artists and designers. The boutique is open for in-store shopping as well as online shopping and curbside pickup. The store also offers gift wrapping.

325 Sharon Park Drive, Menlo Park
(650) 321-1099
shadylanegallery.com

BEST FLOOR COVERINGS

The Oriental Carpet

The Oriental Carpet provides handmade Oriental, traditional and contemporary rugs, plus cleaning and repairs. Their expertise extends to custom rug design, with the ability to create bespoke pieces tailored to your specifications.

773 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park
(650) 327-6608 | theorientalcarpet.com

BEST GIFT SHOP

Ladera Garden & Gifts

Ladera Garden & Gifts is a one-stop shop for garden supplies, gifts and flower arrangements. Juan and Mercedes Navarro, who have operated the

full-service nursery for nearly 40 years, provide custom floral arrangements as well as home goods and nursery items.

2029 Ralston Ave., Belmont
(650) 232-7154
laderagardenandgifts.com

BEST GROCERY

Bianchini's Market

See Best Place to Buy Meat (Food & Drink)

BEST HARDWARE

Portola Valley ACE Hardware

Local in every way, the business has been locally owned since its inception, staffed by employees from Portola Valley and nearby communities, and grounded in a deep pride for its hometown. With a focus on adding value to the lives of local residents, it's often open after hours — often during power outages or storms — to ensure the community has access to what it needs.

112 Portola Road, Portola Valley
(650) 851-0116
portolavalleyhardware.com

BEST HOME DECOR AND FURNISHINGS

Anthem

Anthem offers an exclusive collection of home decor, tabletop, lighting, furniture, accessories, jewelry and gifts — a "collection of the finest products, designed to inspire and delight."

889 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park
(650) 440-7400 | anthemsf.online

BEST NURSERY

Ladera Garden & Gifts

See Best Gift Shop

BEST PLACE TO BUY JEWELRY

Gleim the Jeweler

Gleim the Jeweler has earned a reputation for excellence in craftsmanship and customer service. Gleim offers a curated selection of both classic and contemporary designs with collections

of precious gems, unique estate jewelry, timepieces, high-end jewelry lines and bespoke pieces.

350 Main St., Los Altos
(650) 949-1122
gleimjewelers.com



BEST PLACE TO BUY SHOES

Fleet Feet

Fleet Feet in Menlo Park helps customers find products that improve their fitness experience. Staff assesses foot type and gait cycle and has 3D scanners to measure feet, making footwear recommendations uniquely tailored to each customer.

859 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park
(650) 325-9432 | fleetfeet.com

BEST PRODUCE

Sigona's Farmers Market

Sigona's Farmers Market is a family-owned grocery store offering locally sourced, high-quality produce, including fruits, vegetables, nuts, and other gourmet food items. Sigona's is known for its commitment to supporting local farmers and providing customers with fresh, seasonal ingredients. In addition to produce, it also offers a selection of artisanal products, including cheeses, olive oils, and baked goods.

399 Stanford Shopping Center, Palo Alto
(650) 329-1340 | sigonas.com

BEST SPECIALTY STORE

Cheeky Monkey Toys

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

640 Santa Cruz Ave., Menlo Park
(650) 328-7975
cheekymonkeytoys.com

Services

BEST AUTO REPAIR

Portola Valley Garage

Portola Valley Garage's skilled technicians have been providing minor tune-ups and major overhauls since 1948. In addition to repair services, the garage offers 24-hour vehicle drop-off, online appointments and loaner cars.

4170 Alpine Road, Portola Valley
(650) 851-7442 | pvgarage.com

BEST BARBER

Menlo Park Barber Shop

The barbers at Menlo Park Barber Shop pride themselves on developing close relationships with clients, giving excellent cuts and "blending craft and tradition with a strong dose of humor."

2100 Avy Ave., Menlo Park
(650) 391-9008
menloparkbarbershop.com



Courtesy Cheeky Monkey Toys

Cheeky Monkey Toys — Best Specialty Store



Courtesy Studio K-Fit

Studio K-Fit — Best Fitness Classes and Best Gym

BEST DAY SPA

LaBelle Day Spa & Salon

For decades, LaBelle Day Spa & Salon has helped Silicon Valley clients to look and feel their best from head to toe. Moisturizers, serums and oils; treatments for problematic skin conditions, such as rosacea; scrubs, toners and eye care — everything for the face and body is available here with a one-on-one approach. LaBelle's custom-designed facials, created from ingredients from the salon's own Bella Schneider Beauty Skincare line, are a customer favorite.

Town & Country Village #33 & #95, Palo Alto | (650) 327-6964
labelledayspas.com

BEST DENTAL OFFICE

Grace Dental

At Grace Dental, the staff is dedicated to transforming smiles and improving lives. They are a leading Invisalign® Diamond Provider and are proud to be in the top 1% of Invisalign® dentists worldwide, bringing you unparalleled expertise and exceptional orthodontic care.

90 Middlefield Road, #1, Menlo Park (650) 323-0264
gracedentalpediatric.com

BEST DRY CLEANER

Ladera Cleaners

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

3130 Alpine Road, Portola Valley (650) 854-2291 | laderacleaners.net

BEST FITNESS CLASSES

Studio K-Fit

Studio K-Fit offers high-intensity, but low-impact workouts focused on strength, mobility and cardio through high-intensity interval training. Class sizes are small so that instructors can focus on each individual. The studio also offers lifestyle coaching and

personalized nutrition guidance. 3708 Florence St., Redwood City studiokfit@gmail.com | studiokfit.com

BEST FLORIST

Ladera Garden & Gifts

See Best Nursery (Retail)

BEST GYM

Studio K-Fit

See Best Fitness Classes

BEST HAIR SALON

Antonio Cremona Salon

Clients at Antonio Cremona Salon enjoy a relaxing and stylish environment where they feel pampered while receiving professional hair care services. The stylists prioritize personalized service to enhance the clients' natural beauty and confidence by offering hair services, including coloring, haircuts, styling and more.

104 Portola Road, Portola Valley (650) 851-5757
antoniocremonasalon.com

BEST HOME IMPROVEMENT/ CONTRACTOR - TIE

Harrell Design + Build

Whether you seek a full-service experience for home remodeling in Los Altos or a surrounding Bay Area community, you can rely on Harrell Design + Build to provide a home transformation that merges artistry with expertise. The award-winning team of designers and accomplished craftspeople are dedicated to breathing new life into your home.

2284 Old Middlefield Way, Mountain View | (650) 230-2900
harrelldesignbuild.com

Sterling Custom Upholstery

Sterling Custom Upholstery has been satisfying customers throughout the Bay Area with its high-quality, custom upholstery services for over 45 years. Staff prides themselves on providing customers with the highest quality craftsmanship and attention to detail. Whether you are looking to spruce

up an old sofa or are undertaking a complete interior design project, Sterling Custom Upholstery will help you achieve the results you are looking for.

1243 W. El Camino Real, Mountain View | (650) 961-8700
sterlingcustomupholstery.com

BEST HOTEL

Stanford Park Hotel

Stanford Park Hotel describes itself as an "oasis" that offers its guests "genuine tranquility." This luxury hotel features a library, pool and spa, freshly baked cookies in the main lobby and fireside spots for reading. Menlo Tavern, the property's on-site restaurant, is open for live music on the patio during the summer.

100 El Camino Real, Menlo Park (650) 322-1234
stanfordparkhotel.com

BEST MANICURE / PEDICURE

A Touch of Elegance Nail Care

Customers can expect quality service, a friendly staff and reasonable pricing at A Touch of Elegance Nail Care, a longtime favorite of Almanac readers. In addition to manicures and pedicures, A Touch of Elegance also offers facials and other services.

1150 Crane St., Menlo Park (650) 321-0679

BEST PHOTOGRAPHER

Steve Fogel Photography

Award-winning San Francisco Bay Area photographer offers the best in headshots, family portraits, and executive portraits. With over 200 satisfied clients, you are guaranteed to get images you'll love.

977 Upland Road, Redwood City (650) 761-5481
stevefogelphotography.com

BEST PLUMBER

Guy Plumbing & Heating

Guy Plumbing & Heating is a fourth-generation family-owned business that provides a wide range of services and operates a full-service showroom specializing in the sales and installation of Toto washlet bidet seats, as well as parts for Hansgrohe, Kohler and House of Rohl.

1265 El Camino Real, Menlo Park (650) 323-8415 | guyplumbing.com

BEST PRESCHOOL

Kirk House Preschool

Kirk House Preschool provides a welcoming school environment where children feel secure, accepted and loved. Through play and exploration, children learn about their world and have their individual, physical, emotional, social, and spiritual needs met.

Menlo Park Presbyterian Church, 1148 Johnson St., Menlo Park (650) 323-8667
kirkhousepreschool.org

BEST PRIVATE SCHOOL

Sacred Heart Schools

Founded by the Society of the Sacred Heart, SHS is a Catholic, independent, co-ed day school for students in preschool through grade 12.

150 Valparaiso Ave., Atherton (650) 322-1866 | shschools.org

BEST YOGA

YogaSource

YogaSource was built on the belief that "the practice of yoga should be both demanding and gratifying." It boasts a wide curriculum of yoga classes, including Vinyasa, Power, Yin, Restorative, Hot 26, Pilates and much more.

158 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto (650) 328-9642 | yogasource.com ■



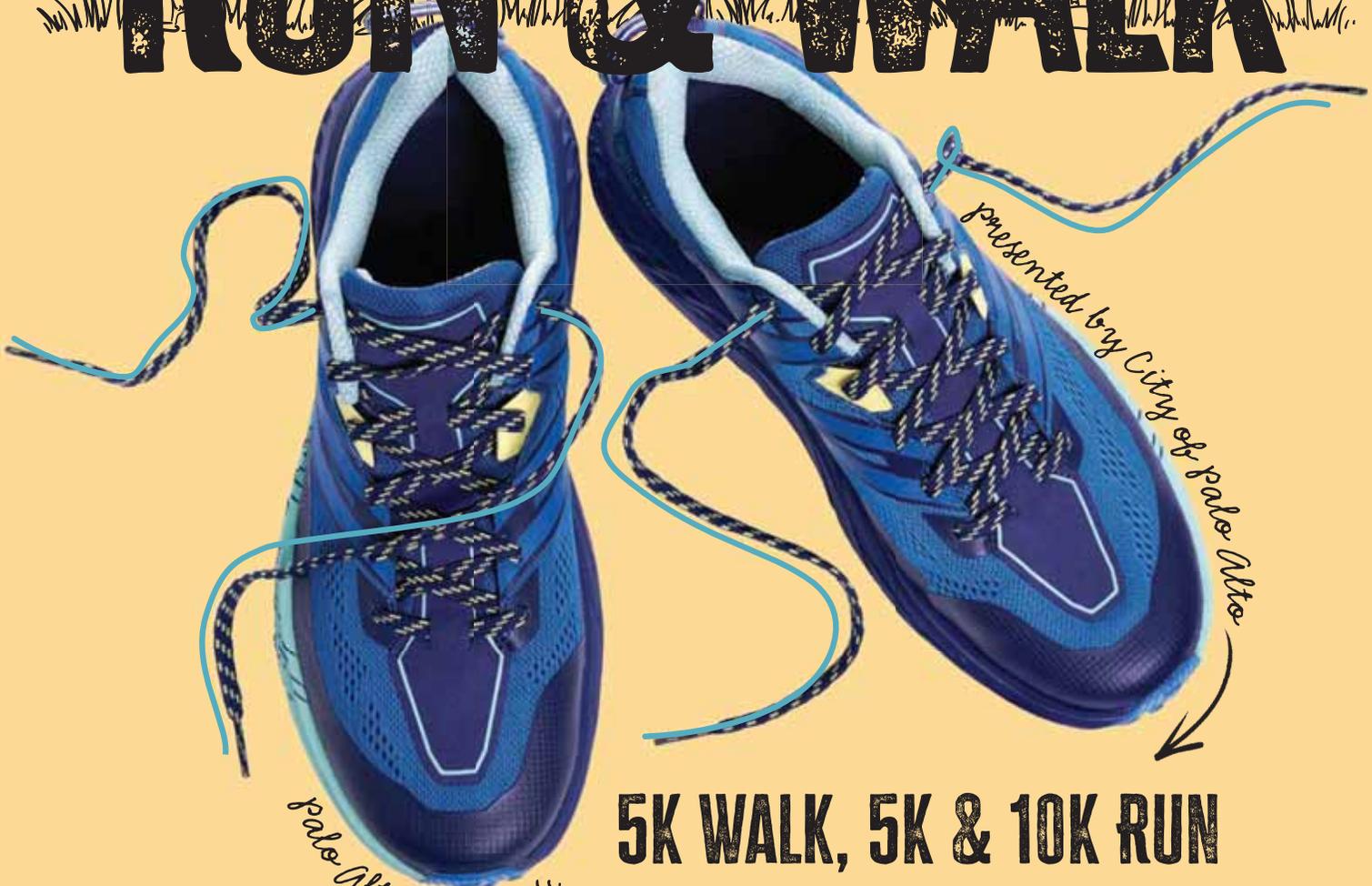
Courtesy LaBelle Day Spa & Salon

LaBelle Day Spa & Salon — Best Day Spa

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Wondering beyond 'Wonderland'



Award-winning writer Mark Saltzman brings a cappella 'Alice' musical to TheatreWorks' New Works Festival

By Karla Kane

In "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland," the titular character famously meets the Queen of Hearts. But some have speculated that in real life, Alice might have given her heart to a prince.

"'Alice in Wonderland' was a real person, even though 'Wonderland' may not have been real," said writer Mark Saltzman, whose musical "Alice, Formerly of Wonderland" is part of TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's New Works Festival as a staged reading.

It all started on a boat ride one golden summer day, when young Alice Liddell listened to Charles Dodgson spin a story about a curious little girl — also named Alice — who falls down a rabbit hole and meets a host of extraordinary creatures. The published version of that tale, "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland" by Lewis Carroll (Dodgson's pen name), went on to become one of the most beloved classics in all of children's literature, leaving Liddell associated with its protagonist forevermore.

"What does that do to a young woman?" Saltzman wondered about Liddell's experience as an inadvertent celebrity. "You walk in a room and everyone's pointing; they know who you are and you've done nothing but sat in a rowboat one day and had a story told to you."

Liddell's father was the dean of Christ Church, part of the University of Oxford. In 1872, the intellectual Prince Leopold — youngest son of Queen Victoria — came to study there. He became acquainted with the dean's daughter, and it's been rumored that they may have even embarked on a secret romance. In "Alice, Formerly of Wonderland," that possibility is explored on stage.

"They did have a relationship — how deep, how far it went, this is my speculation on what that might have looked like," Saltzman said. "It's partly what I think had happened, partly what I wished would have happened."

Liddell, literary-muse status notwithstanding, would likely

not have been considered a suitable consort for a prince, so their budding romance, if it happened, would have been kept quiet.

"This is just the kind of thing the monarchy would try to repress," Saltzman noted. There are clues, however, such as a record of a boat outing by the pair.

"On one hand, there's a sort of almost Disney fairytale romance — it's a young woman falling in love with the prince," Saltzman said of the story. On the other hand, it's not smooth sailing for a commoner dallying with an eligible royal. Saltzman was inspired to write the show when the former actress Meghan Markle (now the Duchess of Sussex) first made headlines for her romance with Prince Harry (Queen Victoria's great-great-grandson).

"When Harry and Meghan had their romance and people had to fill the airwaves 24/7, some newspaper mentioned the history of the royal family and celebrities. Somebody had mentioned Prince Leopold: 'Well, the real Alice of 'Alice in Wonderland' was his girlfriend,'" Saltzman recalled hearing. A longtime "Alice" fan, he was fascinated by the connection and soon was diving into the topic.

"How did they connect? What do these two people have in common? What were the forces that were keeping them apart?" he pondered.

In "Alice, Formerly of Wonderland," a six-person cast brings Liddell and Prince Leopold's world to life, including through a cappella songs.

"Musicals are close to my heart," Saltzman said. While he was researching the show, he was especially delighted to find out that the prince had joined one of the university glee clubs. He decided to build that collegiate glee club sound and Oxford atmosphere into the show, with vocal arrangements by Jack Lipson.

"Lewis Carroll, or the universe, or something handed that to me — there's a glee club! It was very fortuitous that that was an historical fact," he said.

Another beloved "Wonderland" character made its way into his play — the haughty, hookah-smoking caterpillar. Saltzman thought that Liddell might, in her head, seek his imagined advice.

"The caterpillar seemed the most Oxford in attitude, that 'Who are you?' attitude," he said.

Saltzman has plenty of experience working with interesting characters. He's had a long, acclaimed career, not only writing for the stage but for film and television as well. He won seven Emmy Awards for his work on "Sesame Street" in the 1980s and '90s, an experience he called an honor, and one he always carries with him.

"'Sesame Street' influenced everything that I ever wrote afterwards — it's the hardest writing I ever did," he said fondly, explaining that the scripts needed to be educational, sensitive and humorous, appealing to both young children and adults. He credits the show with helping teach him elements of successful sketch comedy and songwriting, and is grateful he got to work with the late "Muppets" creator Jim Henson.

"That was an extremely powerful kind of mentor to have," he said.

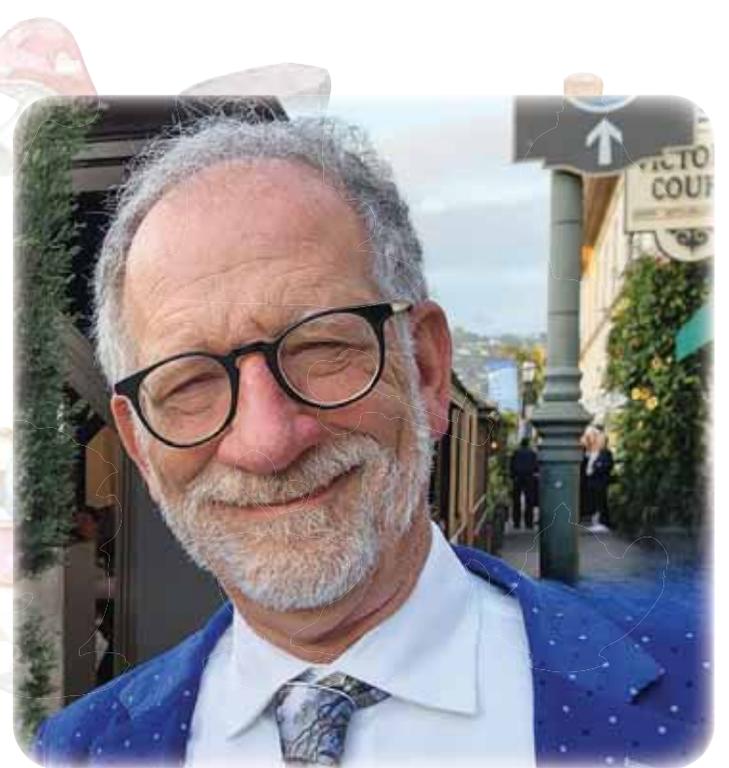
Saltzman's "Sesame Street" work continues to have relevance, in sometimes surprising ways. In the early 1990s, he was the writer of the show's 25th anniversary special.

"The plotline was that Sesame Street was going to be torn down by the evil developer 'Ronald Grump,' played by Joe Pesci. Who knew how prescient we were?" Saltzman said with a laugh.

He loves that his "Sesame Street" songs continue to bring joy to children, including his personal favorite, "Caribbean Amphibian" (sung by Kermit the Frog, naturally).

Anytime that tune resurfaces, he said, "I'm smiling all day."

TheatreWorks Artistic Director Giovanna Sardelli first saw an early incarnation of "Alice, Formerly of Wonderland" years



Courtesy Mark Saltzman

Mark Saltzman's "Alice, Formerly of Wonderland" is a cappella musical.

ago and, charmed by what she called "a beautiful coming-of-age-story," has been following it ever since. She thought she'd missed out on bringing it to the New Works Festival when it had a premiere in Santa Barbara last year, but it's now in a new form, as Saltzman has streamlined the show from two acts to a "movie-length" one in order to improve the pacing (he's also developing a screenplay for a film version, led by producer Tom Lynch).

"Often what happens is, especially with a new musical, you really learn what you want to change, and what you need to change, after you get that first show," Sardelli said.

This will be Saltzman's first time working with TheatreWorks and he is looking forward to seeing how local festival attendees respond to the show — especially any young folks in the audience. Performances of "Alice, Formerly of Wonderland" run Aug. 9 and 13 at 7:30 p.m. and Aug. 16 at 3 p.m., and Sardelli herself is directing the staged reading.

Saltzman isn't the only award winner included in this year's festival, which offers audiences the chance to see projects in various phases of creation.

First up are two special events: The Tony Award- and Pulitzer Prize-winning Robert Schenkkan, in collaboration with Peacedale Global Arts and Portuguese theater company Mala Voadora and its artistic director Jorge Andrade, is presenting "Old Cock," a political satire involving Portugal's fabled Rooster of Barcelos (July 25, 26 and 29 at 7:30 p.m.; July 27 at 7 p.m.), and "Motion/Capture," a Frankenstein-inspired tale about an actor losing himself in a digital production (July 28 at 7 p.m.).

Irene Sankoff and David Hein, the Olivier Award-winning couple behind "Come From Away," which TheatreWorks will present next year, are workshoping a new musical: "Vienna" (Aug. 16 at 7:30 p.m. and Aug. 17 at 3 p.m.), about a group of characters in the same place at three different moments in time.

"They haven't finished writing that piece, so it's in the earliest stages of development," Sardelli said, noting the vulnerability involved when artists share works in progress. "I was so thrilled when they thought of us and our community as a safe place to make art."

The festival also includes a new musical by The Kilbanes (the team of Kate Kilbane and Dan Moses) and Patricia Cotter: "The Bridge," about Emily and Washington Roebling, their partnership and the building of the Brooklyn Bridge (Aug. 10 at 3 p.m., Aug. 15 at 7:30 p.m. and Aug. 17 at 7 p.m.); "malcreados," by Christopher Oscar Peña, about estranged brothers who come back together when their mother passes away (Aug. 12 at 7:30 p.m. and Aug. 16 at noon); and the workplace comedy "The Employee Dharma Handbook" by Bay Area playwright (and TheatreWorks-commissioned artist) Geetha Reddy, about tensions and cultural biases in an aerospace company (Aug. 14 at 7:30 p.m. and Aug. 17 at noon). Plus, there will be an Aug. 8 reception and presentation of excerpts of plays by TheatreWorks' Susan Fairbrook Core Writers Group (reception at 6 p.m., presentation at 7:30 p.m.).

Sardelli said she's proud of TheatreWorks' ongoing commitment to nurturing new works, and this year's international representation.

"I think this festival is special for its reach," she said. "I cannot wait to see how this new festival feels." ■

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

TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's New Works Festival, July 25-Aug. 17, Lucie Stern Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto; see online for tickets and complete schedule; theatreworks.org/new-works/nwf/.

Music@Menlo concert hails often overlooked ensemble

‘Winds of Change’ program highlights the wind quintet

By Heather Zimmerman

Compared to string or brass groups, one could say that a wind ensemble is made up of nonconformists and that its variety of instruments just might be its superpower.

Music@Menlo highlights the unique qualities of the wind ensemble with its “Winds of Change” concert taking place July 26. The performance is part of the summer chamber music festival’s 2025 theme highlighting ensembles, from duos to quintets and beyond.

Flutist Tara Helen O’Connor and oboist James Austin Smith, who are among the musicians performing on the program, discussed the upcoming concert in an interview with this publication.

For a chamber group, a wind ensemble is unusual in featuring instruments of widely varying design.

“Unlike string instruments, which share a form, but come in different sizes, if you take a wind quintet, for example, which is what people will be hearing next (at this concert), you have five completely different instruments, completely different ways of making sound. ... Our challenge is to figure out how to blend with each other when

we want to do that and when the music asks for it, and then also know when to be our sort of true best selves as our instruments, whether the composer wants an incredible flute solo, or whatever it might be,” Smith said.

When played together, these diverse instruments can also unite in a whole new sound, O’Connor noted.

“What the winds offer that is really unique, actually, from brass and strings, is how different we sound, how colorful we are, how brilliant the sound can be, and also how blended. It can sound like an organ; sometimes it can sound like an aviary. It has the full range of expression and color and that is a beautiful thing,” O’Connor said. “This is something that with the five of us, we can create a much more interesting and diverse sound.”

The “Winds of Change” program features five compositions that highlight these unique aspects of the wind ensemble. That said, the program doesn’t exclusively devote itself to winds — there’s also piano and viola in the mix, though winds are the focus.

“The program title, ‘Winds of Change,’ really reflects the kinds of things that were being invented for our ensemble, or the

combinations that we’re playing with. They’re rethought in a very different way, bringing new brilliance and color to the repertoire, and also just fabulous to listen to, and groundbreaking as well,” O’Connor said.

One piece on the program even allows the instruments to “sing,” in a way: Arias for Woodwind Quintet (arr. Schottstädt and Manz) features instrumental reworkings of two opera arias.

“We will be playing a set of Mozart arias arranged for wind quintet by Sebastian Manz, who is also playing on the program. That is such a cool opportunity. You know, we teach our students that ‘you need to sing through your instrument.’ And we get this opportunity now to sing these arias through our instruments. It is so, so fun. We have a beautiful aria from ‘The Marriage of Figaro,’ and then we’re going to do the ‘Queen of the Night,’ which is going to be so fun to pretend that we are superstar soprano,” Smith said.

The program also offers a chance to hear Quintet in E-flat major for Piano and Winds, op. 16, a Beethoven piece that’s heavily influenced by Mozart’s sprightliness.

“We tend to think of Beethoven

as, like, the Fifth Symphony — really intense — and actually, this is an early work of Beethoven’s, and it’s so joyful, and, it’s sort of regal, and tuneful,” Smith said. “I think our instruments invite composers to think — think melodically, think in song, think in voice. And so you really see inspiration in the Beethoven and also in the Thuille, that inspiration to write kind of melodies that we excel at, I think, as wind players.”

Austrian composer Ludwig Thuille’s Sextet in B-flat major for Piano and Winds, op. 6 closes out the “Winds of Change” on a soaring, impressive note.

“The Thuille is a really wonderful piece. What is really cool about this piece is that the winds were kind of neglected — I mean, Mozart and Beethoven had written for piano winds, leaving the flute out. (Of course, we don’t really want to talk about that — as a flutist I’m jealous,)” O’Connor joked.

“So Thuille seized the opportunity and wrote this incredible piece for piano and all of the winds with horn. That’s going to be a delight to play. It feels very symphonic to me, it’s huge,” she said.

The “Winds of Change” program also includes Concert Piece no. 1 in F minor for Clarinet,

Bassoon, and Piano, op. 113 by Felix Mendelssohn and Charles Martin Loeffler’s Rhapsody no. 1 for Oboe, Viola, and Piano, L’Étang.

In addition to O’Connor and Smith, the lineup features Manz on clarinet; bassoonist Jake Thonis, Kevin Rivard on horn, James Thompson on viola and pianists Michael Stephen Brown, Sahun Sam Hong and Hyecheon Park.

Audiences can also catch O’Connor in several other Music@Menlo performances: “Let’s Add Voices,” featuring ensembles with vocals on Aug. 3, and a “Gilbert Kalish at 90: A Celebration,” on Aug. 6. ■

Read a longer version of this story at almanacnews.com/arts-culture.

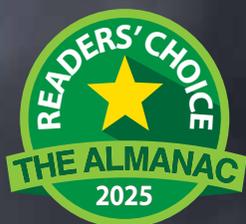
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July 26, 7 p.m., at Spieker Center for the Arts, Menlo School, 50 Valparaiso Ave., Atherton. The performance will also be livestreamed. \$25-\$97 in person/\$25 livestream. musicatmenlo.org.

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Worth a Look

Elena Gabrielle

Australian-born comic Elena Gabrielle brings her latest stand-up show, "Disturb the Vibe," to Redwood City. Gabrielle brings musicality (she was trained in musical theater), an engaging, raunchy storytelling style and a satirical take on modern relationships to her comedy, according to her website and YouTube channel, and has performed sold-out shows across the globe. Her local stop is part of her current international tour.



Courtesy Elena Gabrielle

Comedian Elena Gabrielle performs July 27 at RWC Hub.

July 27, 8 p.m., The Hub RWC, 2650 Broadway, Redwood City; \$25; ti.to/elenagabriellecomedy.

Adam Klipple and the Smooth Operators

Experience a Friday night of musical splendor accompanied by Turkish food and drink as pianist Adam Klipple and the Smooth Operators take to the stage for two shows of jazz renditions of '80s pop songs. Nestled in the heart of Palo Alto, Meyhouse — a restaurant that transforms into an intimate jazz club — hosts regular live music and cultural events. Klipple has recorded and performed onstage with musical institutions like Lauryn Hill and Smokey Robinson, among others, according to his website.

July 25, doors at 5 and 8 p.m., Meyhouse Jazz Palo Alto Stage, 640 Emerson St., Palo Alto; \$50; meyhousejazz.com.

Alice and Cher

Alice and Cher is a Bay Area creative duo offering music, visuals and immersive experiences, according to the project's Instagram. The pair will perform at Little Green as part of the plant store/artisan boutique/coffee shop/event space's ongoing concert series. The concerts are free and supported by audience donations, BYOB is encouraged and well-behaved pets are welcome.

July 25, 8 p.m., Little Green, 1101 Main St., Redwood City; free (donations encouraged). tinyurl.com/AliceandCherLittleGreen.

Kids' Graphic Novel Party

Kepler's Books is hosting a Saturday full of arts, crafts and trivia! Bring your kids to peruse featured graphic novels and get their creative juices flowing in an activity-filled afternoon. Participants will design their own name tags, enter into friendly competition for fun prizes and even create their own comics. This event is the second installation of Kepler's Graphic Novel Saturdays, which featured a visit from Jennifer L. Holm and Matthew Holm — authors of the Sunny Series — earlier this month.

July 26, 11 a.m. to 1 p.m., Kepler's Books, 1010 El Camino Real, Menlo Park; free; keplers.org/upcoming-events-internal/graphic-novels.

Lizz Wright

Singer Lizz Wright is known for her velvety alto vocals as well as her emotional, evocative performances. The Georgia-raised Wright has a sound rooted in call-and-response traditions and blends jazz, gospel, soul and folk, according to the Stanford Jazz Festival. This year marks Wright's debut at the festival, but her career spans two decades and her first studio record, "Shadow," released on her own Blues & Greens Records label, came out last year. She'll be joined by Alexis Lombre on keys, Chris Bruce and Marvin Sewell on guitar, Ben Zwerin on bass and Marlon Patton on drums.

July 26, 7:30 p.m., Dinkelspiel Auditorium, 471 Lagunita Drive, Stanford; \$12-\$62; stanfordjazz.org/levent/lizz-wright.

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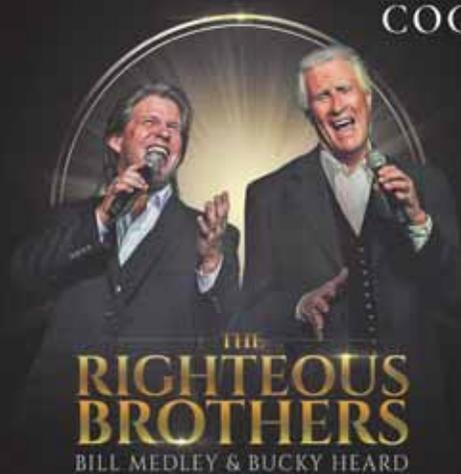
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Michael Stephen
Brown, *piano*
July 25, 7 PM

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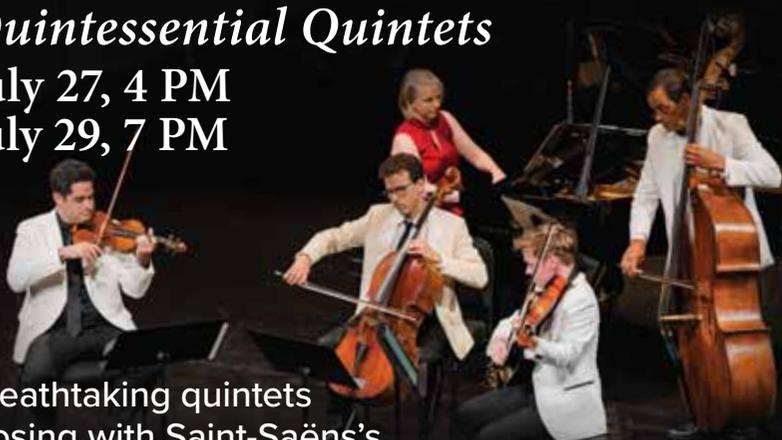
Winds of Change
July 26, 7 PM

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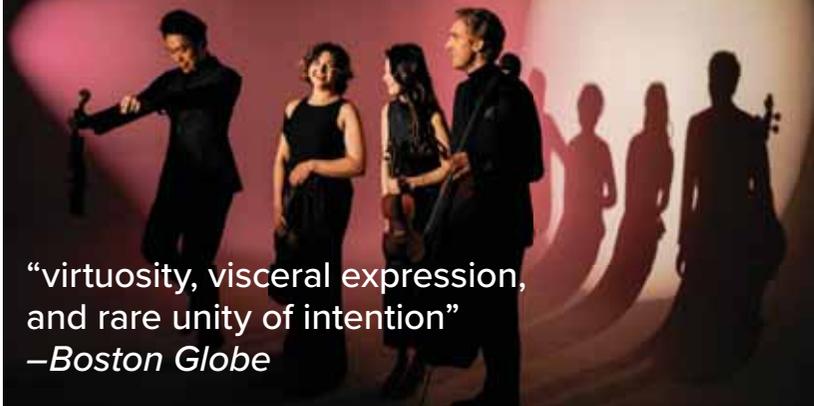
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Food & Drink



Sushirrito co-founder launches Colander Kitchens, a restaurant primed to offer at least a dozen original concepts

By Adrienne Mitchel

Sushirrito's co-founder is crafting a lot more than sushi burritos at his newest restaurant — he's producing fresh pastas, milling wheat berries for French Riviera-inspired pizzas and making tortillas for seafood tacos.

These dishes represent three of at least 12 different concepts Ty Mahler is planning for one 90-seat restaurant space, dubbed Colander Kitchens. Located in the former Three Craft Kitchen & Bar space in Draper University in San Mateo, Colander Kitchens currently offers espresso beverages, pasta, simple French salads and Sushirrito's sushi burritos. Mahler hopes to roll out at least another 10 concepts by the end of the year.

"Over the years, I just came up with all these different brands that I never got to do with Sushirrito," he said. "The idea is to finally take all these ideas that I had, and then pull them off inside of one kitchen collectively."

Customers can order from any of Mahler's concepts online or at one of two kiosks near the entrance of Colander Kitchens. Each concept offers four to eight distinct menu items.

There are three seating areas within Colander Kitchens. The first is the bar, which is not open yet and is pending a full liquor license. The bar features seven taps for beer and wine and will serve "curated drinks," Mahler said. While details have not been finalized, he's also considering creating a separate tiki drinks menu.

"It's not going to be normal beer and wine — here's a Manhattan or here's a martini," he said.

The main seating area at the front of the restaurant features ample natural light streaming from the near floor-to-ceiling windows facing out to East 3rd Avenue. The room is loungey, featuring a

'Over the years, I just came up with all these different brands that I never got to do with Sushirrito. The idea is to finally take all these ideas ... and then pull them off inside of one kitchen collectively.'

TY MAHLER, OWNER OF COLANDER KITCHENS

mix of wooden tables and chairs as well as a large brown leather chair and a plush green velvet chair with wooden side tables. Black panels accent the exposed brick wall, and potted plants hang from the ceiling.

The focal point of the room is the pastel mint green 1969 Italian Lambro outfitted with a 1958 La Marzocco Leva machine. Colander Kitchens offers a succinct coffee menu of espresso, latte macchiato, espresso macchiato and cappuccino. All coffee drinks are made with Caffè Vergnano beans, which are 80% Robusta and 20% Arabica. And if you want your coffee to go, Mahler suggests going elsewhere.

"(In Italy), they don't do coffee to go," he said. "You have it there or you don't. And I love that."

See **COLANDER**, page 34

Colander Kitchens, 50 E. 3rd Ave., San Mateo; 415-997-0024, Instagram: @colanderkitchens. Open Monday to Friday from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m.



Top: Colander Kitchens offers 10 French-style salads (\$9.99). Courtesy Colander Kitchens.

Right: Owner Ty Mahler poses for a portrait in the window of Colander Kitchens in San Mateo. Photo by Anna Hoch-Kenney.

COLANDER

continued from page 33

Go beyond the main dining area to find an open kitchen concept in the back. Mahler plans to add more seating to this area, and he's considering making the back more loungey and the main dining area in the front more dining-focused.

The kitchen is subdivided into stations, each delegated for a specific concept. Mahler's Pasta Everyday concept allows guests to choose from eight housemade pasta shapes and pair it with their choice of in-house sauce — wagyu beef and pork, spicy pork tomato, cheese, basil and pine nut, sauteed mushroom or pink (\$9.99).

The French Style Salads concept offers 10 salads (\$9.99), including nicoise, chèvre, poichichade, betterave, Lyonnaise and more.

In addition to Pasta Everyday and French Style Salads, Sushirrito is also available at Colander Kitchens. Mahler may even experiment with new Sushirrito flavors not available at other locations.

"It's funny how many people come in every day

Culinary Institute in Vermont at 16.

"I knew this was it. This was all I wanted to do," he said. "I was the youngest person to go to this culinary school."

At 18 years old, he was selected to study culinary in France, where he worked at Michelin one-starred restaurant l'Essential.

"It really was like reality TV — things throwing everywhere, knives flying, punching, cursing, kicking," Mahler said. "But I was 18, so I loved it."

At 20 years old, Mahler moved to Louisiana to work for Emeril's, chef Emeril Lagasse's flagship restaurant. After working in such large-scale production, he moved back to France and worked as executive chef at Le Ralais de Lac Noir for nine months before he no longer felt welcome in France due to tension stemming from the Iraq War.

"One day all of my reservations canceled because I was American," he wrote in an email. "It was a time when people were dumping French wine in America and calling them 'freedom fries' and I guess it really pissed off a lot of French people."

Back in the U.S., he became chef-partner of Roy's Hawaiian Fusion in San Francisco, where he was tasked with changing the menu every day. His experience with large and variable menus at Roy's makes Mahler confident in his ability to create diverse offerings at Colander Kitchens.

Two years after leaving Roy's, Mahler launched Sushirrito with co-founder Peter Yen. The fast-casual fusion restaurant now has brick-and-mortar restaurants in San Francisco and Palo Alto, as well as licensing deals with San Francisco International Airport and Local Kitchens, which has Peninsula locations in San Bruno, Cupertino, Campbell and Los Gatos.

"I think when I was expanding Sushirrito, I never felt in place, ever," he said. "I never felt like I was a part of any one area, but I always found myself coming here (San Mateo) anyway, and going to the Japanese gardens, or going to the park."

When the Millbrae resident saw the empty space within Tim Draper University, he knew it was the perfect size for his next restaurant project, named after an app he developed to help restaurant owners retain staff, improve operational efficiency and scale businesses.

"I can do some sort of in between where I can take down a bigger space...but I get to do whatever I want in it and just be as creative as I can be, and just get back to making food again," he said.

Mahler does not plan on using third-party delivery services at Colander Kitchens, which he calls "the destroyer of restaurants." But Mahler understands the need for takeout, so he's developing every recipe with dine-in and to-go orders in mind. He plans to eventually expand hours to include dinner service and weekends.

Ultimately, Mahler hopes to push himself to make each concept at Colander Kitchens expandable, but he doesn't have any intention of expanding them beyond the San Mateo location himself.

"If I can incubate the space here and completely perfect the concept and someone else wants it, great," he said. "It'd be like having a bunch of children and seeing how they grow up in different nature-nurture environments." ■

Email Food Editor Adrienne Mitchel at amitchel@almanacnews.com.

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'I get to do whatever I want (at Colander Kitchens) and just be as creative as I can be, and just get back to making food again.'

TY MAHLER, OWNER OF COLANDER KITCHENS

and are like, 'Why are you serving Sushirrito?'" Mahler said. "I'm like, 'Well, I'm one of the co-founders.' And then that's 50-50 met with, 'Oh my gosh!' or more skepticism...I'm hoping there's a tipping point where it all makes sense, and that's just on me to make the food good enough for people to come back."

Mahler may even revive Mochiko Mochi Pizza at Colander Kitchens. The mochi pizza concept debuted in 2023 at the former Sushirrito Burlingame brick and mortar before expanding to the Palo Alto Sushirrito location. Mochiko Mochi Pizza in Burlingame has since permanently closed, and the Palo Alto Sushirrito has stopped selling mochi pizza.

But before he brings back Mochiko Mochi Pizza, Mahler plans to debut a south of France pizza concept inspired by a trip to Nice with his wife. This style of pizza is simple and features a thin crust.

"It was 2 in the morning and we got a pizza, and I don't know why, it just blew my mind, sitting on a pier with a bottle of rosé with my wife and eating this pizza," he said.

Mahler's Brazilian fried chicken concept is inspired by his time living in New York City. Every Sunday, he'd go to Little Brazil, eat feijoada, a black bean stew, and take a nap. Feijoada is typically eaten with farofa, toasted cassava flour, to add texture and absorb the broth. So instead of coating the chicken with regular flour, he's also incorporating farofa into the crust.

Mahler also plans to roll out concepts featuring British sandwiches (think coronation chicken and sweet-and-sour Piccalilli relish), hand-diced steak burgers with lobster as variations on surf-and-turf burgers, seafood tacos with housemade tortillas, raw sliced fish and sashimi boxes, ramen and Hawaiian pupu bowls.

Mahler was born in Mississippi and grew up in Indiana on Hamburger Helper meals, he said. His first job was cleaning toilets at a country club at 12 years old, but he had always wanted to work in the kitchen. He started his journey in the country club's kitchen as a dishwasher, eventually becoming a line cook. He graduated high school at 15 and went to the New England

From top down: A 1969 Italian Lambro outfitted with a 1958 La Marzocco Leva machine at Colander Kitchens. One of the many concepts available at Colander Kitchens includes Sushirrito. Owner Ty Mahler crafts an espresso beverage. Mahler's Pasta Everyday concept offers eight housemade pasta shapes, including radiatori, and six housemade sauces, including sauteed mushroom. Photo by Anna Hoch-Kenney.



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