

The Almanac

NONPROFIT LOCAL NEWS FOR THE MIDPENINSULA

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Locals call for better design of Four Corners intersection

Caltrans plan met with mixed emotions

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Cars and motorcycles zoom by, revving their engines as they pass through the intersection of Skyline Boulevard and La Honda Road. The highways' roadsides are lined with overflow parking from Alice's Restaurant and dozens of bikers are gathered in the Skywood Trading Post parking lot.

This is a regular weekend at Woodside's Four Corners.

The highway intersection has grown in popularity for joy rides and scenic drives toward the coast. On weekends, Four Corners draws heavy traffic from out-of-towners who are not familiar with conditions and road designs that some say are inappropriate for the volume of traffic. Local residents say it's typical to hear honking horns and sirens in the area.

In August, a cyclist died after colliding with a pickup truck in the intersection. Woodside resident and Circulation Committee

member Walker Wells said the cyclist's blood stained the pavement weeks after the incident. This is one of many fatalities that have occurred near the intersection of Highways 84 and 35.

"It's called the Skyline Scenic Corridor, and it's meant to preserve what you see and the beauty of the area. But people don't feel safe up there, and people are dying on the weekends. It's just chaos," said Wells.

During a Woodside town hall on Oct. 29, the California Department of Transportation presented a \$500,000 construction project to install a four-way stop intended to improve safety in the 40 mph intersection.

There are currently two stop signs and two crosswalks in the area, one of which allows pedestrians to cross from the Skywood Trading Post parking lot to Alice's Restaurant and another that "leads to nowhere," a triangle of land that divides the roads.

See **FOUR CORNERS**, page 14



Jennifer Yoshikoshi

A bicycle roadside memorial near Four Corners in Woodside was created in memory of a bicyclist who died in a vehicle collision in August.

Menlo Park commissions study on parking lot initiative

Some council members think report would help educate residents

By Arden Margulis

The Menlo Park City Council on Nov. 4 voted to order a study on the potential impacts of a citizen-sponsored initiative that would prohibit the city from repurposing its downtown parking lots for housing without voter approval.

The move delays any immediate decision on whether to adopt the measure outright or send it to the ballot.

Under California Elections Code §9215, the council has three options: adopt the initiative as written, place it before voters or request a report

evaluating its implications. Councilmembers opted for the third.

The proposed "Downtown Parking Plazas Ordinance" would amend the city's municipal code to bar Menlo Park from changing the use of its eight downtown parking plazas unless voters approve it in an election.

City officials, however, have been planning to use several parking lots as potential housing sites. Menlo Park's state-certified 2022–2031 Housing Element includes a program to build at least 345 affordable housing units on a combination of downtown parking lots to

meet the city's state-mandated housing targets. Some business owners and property owners rallied against the plan citing concerns over parking access and how it will shape downtown.

While councilmembers initially wanted a wide-ranging report, City Manager Justin Murphy requested they scale down the focus of the report and consider requesting a further report later on as state law requires the report be completed within 30 days of the petition being certified.

The report will assess the measure's fiscal impact, its consistency with Menlo Park's General Plan and Housing

Element, and its implications for land use, housing availability and the city's ability to meet state-mandated housing goals. It will also examine possible impacts on infrastructure funding, business activity, and the community's ability to attract and retain employers, as well as traffic and transportation effects. At least some aspects of the report will assume voters do not approve the city's housing plan for the parking lots.

The report is estimated to cost up to \$164,951. The consultant M-Group, which prepared a similar analysis for 2022's Measure V, will conduct the study. The study is due by Dec. 4.

At its Dec. 4 meeting, the city council will have to choose whether to adopt the initiative or place it on the ballot. If the city places it on the general election ballot in November 2026, it will not have an additional cost beyond the cost of the city council election. However, if the city council calls a special election, it could cost between \$315,000 and \$378,000.

The city council voted 4-1 to request the report, with Mayor Drew Combs dissenting.

Councilmember Jeff Schmidt saw the report as a way to disseminate information to the public.

See **PARKING LOT**, page 16

INSIDE

ARTSCENE 20 | FOOD & DRINK 22

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Glide through a harmonious floorplan featuring high-end finishes, expansive gathering spaces, a chef's kitchen with top-brand appliances, and a walk-out family room, while a temperature-controlled wine cellar, an office, and multiple fireplaces add comfort and functionality. The primary suite encompasses the entire upper level, while three additional bedrooms provide comfort and privacy for family and guests. Outside, an expansive spa deck offers the perfect setting to take in the surroundings, complemented by a new lawn and a screened-in porch for outdoor entertainment and relaxation. Additional features include radiant heated floors and a three-car garage, with access to top-rated schools (buyer to verify).

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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY



Seeger Gray

Norm Mushkot uses a wheelbarrow he borrowed from Manzanita Tool Share while preparing his backyard before putting in sod at his house in Belmont on Oct. 22.

New program lets residents borrow tools for free

Shared lending library makes projects possible

By Miranda de Moraes

Sanders, sewing machines, hammers, hedge trimmers, rakes and e-bikes are among the gadgets and gizmos San Mateo County residents can rent for free through a new neighborhood nonprofit, Essential Tools.

Manzanita Works — an umbrella organization that collaborates with local faith and

labor leaders to “help working families with their daily lives” —soft-launched Manzanita Tool Share 18 months ago, and renamed it Essential Tools earlier this month.

The gas-free tool share program is built to equip residents, essential workers and community groups with free apparatuses for home repairs, arts and crafts, landscaping, bike fixes, culinary arts and

woodworking. The products are listed in an online inventory like a virtual store, running the gamut from drop cloths for painting to crowbars for carpentry to pole saws for gardening, and more.

In the Bay Area, the CEO of Essential Tools, Mila Zelkha, said that “AI, robotics and automation” dominate the

See **TOOLS**, page 15

Ravenswood Promise drives test score improvement

Slow progress since pandemic seen in third through eighth grades

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Ravenswood City School District’s test scores are slowly improving as the district progresses in its Ravenswood Promise initiative to reimagine and transform its schools.

By 2029, the district is aiming to have at least 30% of its students reach proficiency in English language arts and math. Last school year, just 7% of Ravenswood students hit that benchmark in math and 12% achieved it in English.

That’s based on test scores the California Department of Education released last month. The California Assessment of Student Performance and Progress tests third through eighth grade students in English and math.

During the 2024-25 school year, 12.08% of Ravenswood students scored proficient or advanced in English, an increase of 3.48 percentage points from the year before. In math, 7.13% of students scored proficient or advanced, an improvement of 1.03 percentage points from the previous year.

Despite the increases, Ravenswood’s scores in both English and math remain below pre-pandemic levels. In the

2018-2019 school year, 18.17% of Ravenswood students met or exceeded state standards in English and 11.91% hit that level in math.

Ravenswood’s test scores do not include the performance of students at its two charter schools, KIPP Valiant Community Prep and Aspire East Palo Alto.

Last year’s spike in English proficiency was the first time Ravenswood has seen performance in the subject improve since the pandemic. Superintendent Gina Sudaria attributed that boost to the district’s recent focus on delivering foundational literacy skills to elementary school students. Schools are also ensuring that reading interventions are provided to all students who are behind.

In order to drive academic achievement, Ravenswood is closely monitoring student performance through assessment systems such as iReady and Dynamic Indicators of Basic Early Literacy Skills, also known as DIBELS.

Ravenswood’s test scores have historically been significantly below state and county averages, as well as neighboring

See **TEST SCORES**, page 17

Amid a reduction in SNAP benefits, here’s where to find help

Food providers say they are seeing greater need

By Hannah Bensen

With food assistance benefits cut in half amid an ongoing federal government shutdown, the 35,000 San Mateo County residents who rely on federal food aid may be worried about going without food this month. Food pantries in San Mateo County are seeking volunteers and contributions to address the hunger needs of residents.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture, which administers

the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, announced on Monday that SNAP recipients would receive 50% of their benefits. The decision was a reversal of earlier guidance shared by the USDA in mid-October, when it announced it would entirely freeze funding for SNAP beginning Nov. 1. On Friday, two federal judges ruled this pause was unlawful, compelling the USDA to use money from a department contingency fund to partially deliver benefits.

The funding cuts to SNAP,

known in California as CalFresh and sometimes called food stamps, has led to an increased reliance on food banks in the area. Stephanie Figeira, director of nutrition services at Peninsula Volunteers Incorporated, said demand for its food assistance programs have increased in the last two months.

“There’s been more and more people needing more and more support,” Figeira said. “We’ve been distributing 140 grocery bags a week consistently through October.”

On Oct. 22, the county appropriated \$900,000 to support local food banks during the heightened period of need. The county also issued a call to action, urging residents and businesses to volunteer and make food or monetary donations to organizations that address food insecurity.

“The government shutdown is taking food away from our neighbors in need,” said San Mateo County Supervisor Jackie Speier. “Food insecurity is an existential crisis here in San

Mateo County, even though we are one of the richest counties in the country. I implore each of us to help by donating money or time to make a difference while the need is urgent.”

The city of Menlo Park has a list of community resources on its website, which includes organizations that provide food assistance in the surrounding area. Below is an abbreviated list.

See **BENEFITS**, page 18

Silicon Valley tech giants announce major job cuts

Amazon, Broadcom and SAP plan layoffs affecting hundreds of employees

By Gennady Sheyner

Software giants Broadcom and SAP plan to lay off more than 300 employees from their campuses at Stanford Research Park in Palo Alto, according to notices that the two companies filed with the state last month.

Amazon, meanwhile, plans to slash 176 jobs from its various Palo Alto locations as part of a nationwide campaign to reduce its workforce. And Meta plans to eliminate more 318 positions from various locations in Menlo Park, including 261 from its main campus at 1 Meta Way.

The employee terminations resulting from this action are expected to commence Dec. 22, according to a letter from Janelle Gale, a vice president at Meta.

SAP, the global enterprise-software firm which has a campus at 3410 Hillview Ave., informed the state Employment Development Department on Oct. 6 that 82

employees will be laid off at its Palo Alto location. The list of positions includes project consultants, quality specialists and development experts, according to SAP's documentation.

Megan Smith, head human resources at SAP, wrote to the state Employment Development Department that "changing business needs requires the company to implement a permanent mass layoff of a portion of the employees at this facility." None of the employees have union representation, she wrote.

The announcement was followed days later by a layoff notice from Broadcom, a company that specializes in semiconductors and enterprise software. The company notified the state agency that it plans to lay off 247 employees from its location at 3401 Hillview Ave., across the street from SAP.

Those layoffs are expected to take effect at the end of this year, according to a notice that

the company filed with the EDD. "This will not result in closure of the entire facility, but will only impact certain employees selected for layoff," Jill Turner, vice president for human resources wrote to the EDD on Oct. 17.

More than half of the Broadcom layoffs are engineers, according to the notice. The list of eliminated positions includes 113 end-user sales engineers, 23 end-user field app engineers and 21 software engineers in research-and-development. The list also includes 25 client services consultants and 26 inside sales representatives.

According to Turner, the planned action is "expected to be permanent."

Amazon, meanwhile, is planning to lay off about 500 employees from locations throughout Silicon Valley. This includes 391 positions in Sunnyvale and 76 in Santa Clara. Amazon is also laying off 176 employees from five offices in Palo Alto, which

includes 75 employees at 101 Lytton Ave. and 69 employees at 611 Cowper St.

Nationwide, the company plans to eliminate about 14,000 corporate jobs, according to the Washington Post.

The company's CEO Andy Jassy has been candid about his plans to reduce workforce, a trend driven by artificial intelligence. In a memo that he released publicly earlier this year, Jassy said that the company will need "fewer people doing some of the jobs that are being done today, and more people doing other types of jobs."

"It's hard to know exactly where this nets out over time, but in the next few years, we expect that this will reduce our total corporate workforce as we get efficiency gains from using AI extensively across the company," Jassy wrote in the June memo. ■

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Harrison family says jail staff mistake led to son's death

Staff allegedly incorrectly gave Harrison methadone

By Arden Margulis

The family of Kyle Harrison, a 25-year-old man who died inside the Maple Street Correctional Facility in March, plans to sue the county, claiming jail staff incorrectly gave Harrison methadone and did not check on him, which led to his ultimate death.

According to a 70-page investigative report by the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office, Harrison was found unresponsive on his top bunk at the Maple Street Correctional Center around 4:49 p.m. on March 15. A deputy trainee, who was the only officer on duty in the housing unit, responded to an intercom call from other inmates, found Harrison unresponsive, and called a "Code Blue." Two doses of Narcan were administered, but they had no effect, according to the report.

The county coroner determined Harrison died from the toxic effects of methadone, amitriptyline and gabapentin, ruling the death accidental. Harrison had valid prescriptions for amitriptyline for post-concussive syndrome and gabapentin for restless leg syndrome. However, he did not have a prescription for methadone, an opioid commonly used to treat addiction or severe pain.

"People don't just take methadone to get high," said attorney Jamie Goldstein, who is

representing Harrison's family. Goldstein claims that given the level of methadone in his system at his time of death, he likely received a therapeutic dose the previous evening.

The District Attorney's investigation and the Sheriff's Office investigation did not address how Harrison obtained methadone but noted it was a difficult drug for someone to share since it was a liquid and was required to be administered in front of jail staff.

An anonymous witness interviewed by prosecutors said Harrison had previously purchased Suboxone, a drug that treats opioid addiction, and "whatever other medication he could get" while incarcerated in 2024, allegedly stockpiling drugs "in case he was sentenced to prison and decided to commit suicide."

Harrison was sentenced to prison a month before his death. However, investigators concluded the manner of death was accidental, not intentional.

At the time of his death, Harrison's unit was staffed by a single deputy-in-training, who was still attending the academy and had only been alone in a unit once before.

Body-worn camera footage reviewed by investigators shows that Harrison did not show up for his scheduled morning medication call around 10:30 a.m. and while the deputy-in-training was going to ask if he planned

to take his medication, he got distracted when his food arrived.

Harrison was last seen alive by jail staff at 6 a.m. during a daily check of inmates. It is the only count that requires jail staff to verify if an inmate is alive. Harrison was seen on security cameras using the restroom shortly after but remained in his bed the rest of the day.

Goldstein claims that if jail staff checked on Harrison at 10:30 a.m., they would have seen something was wrong and been able to get medical attention.

"I think that the people they have in the jail are not being properly vetted, hired, as well as trained and supervised. The reason for saying that is not only just the news that comes out and the problems that have come out related to the jail and understaffing. It's also the fact that Harrison was given medication that he was never prescribed and never should have been given," Goldstein said. "So I'm not sure who was doing that yet, or how that happened, but that tells me someone wasn't properly trained, because you can't get that wrong."

Harrison's death was the sixth in-custody death during the tenure of former Sheriff Christina Corpus.

"People wind up incarcerated and people wind up in jail for various reasons. Kyle, like others, wound up there because he made a bad decision, and he

was paying for that decision, but by no means was he given a death sentence," Goldstein said. "Ultimately, the failures on behalf of the County and their employees resulting in his death were avoidable and should have never been an issue to start with if someone were just doing their job and paying attention."

Harrison was jailed after a street racing crash killed a San Carlos couple. While Harrison did not collide with the family's vehicle, the juvenile he was racing did. Harrison was sentenced to eight years in prison.

Before filing a lawsuit, Harrison's family was required to file a claim with the county. The county denied that claim, which asked for more than \$10 million, in October.

"(Harrison's) presence in the family was immense. This is a family that spent holidays together, would talk together all the time. They were a close knit family, and these are parents that are devastated, rightfully so," Goldstein said. "What happened to Kyle and the circumstances for him being in jail, the whole situation is just all around tragic. It's tragic for the other family. My heart goes out to them."

Goldstein said she expects the family's lawsuit will be filed in November. ■

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Encinal bike rodeo teaches fundamentals

Event highlights underlying issues with city road infrastructure

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

On Oct. 29, fourth grade students at Encinal Elementary School in Atherton got to practice their biking skills on their campus blacktop during a bike rodeo hosted by the school's Safe Routes to Schools volunteers.

This was the first time that Encinal hosted its own such event organized by Safe Routes to Schools parent leaders Adrian Silva and Juan Pinzon. Twelve parent volunteers showed up on that morning to help students learn the fundamentals of safe biking.

As concerns over biking safety continue to grow, parents are pushing for better road infrastructure from local officials, but Encinal Elementary faces a unique challenge — its adjacent roads are split by the cities of Menlo Park and Atherton, adding an extra layer of bureaucracy and collaboration necessary between city officials.

"Teaching kids bike safety is great, but we have to redesign our streets so that the kids can ride safely because even if these kids are excellent riders and follow all the rules, it's what's on the pavement, it's how cars drive and it's the culture of the community that dictates the majority of safety," said Silva.

As the local biking community struggles to push for improvements to road infrastructure for better cyclist and pedestrian visibility, parents at the Menlo Park City School District are doing their part by educating their kids about how to safely navigate the roads.

The bike rodeo featured stations that simulated common biking situations in Menlo Park: coming out of a driveway,

stopping at a four-way intersection, navigating obstacles in the bike paths, practicing stops, checking for oncoming traffic and using hand signals.

Bike education and road safety begins from kindergarten, where students start to learn about how to safely cross roads. In third grade, the students are visited by Safe Moves, an organization that teaches basic traffic safety to elementary school children. In fifth grade, students prepare for the transition to middle school and can participate in a practice bike ride to Hillview Middle School from their home neighborhoods.

Encinal's Safe Routes to Schools program was established two years ago, according to Pinzon, who has noticed that more students and families are riding to school since the program started.

"By doing these bike rodeos and classes, kids now have some fundamental (skills)," he said. "Before, this practice didn't exist."

Pinzon shared that Encinal is one the last schools to develop a bike safety program within the district while other campuses such as Laurel Elementary have been teaching students for years.

Encinal's location is not only unique because of its location on the border of two cities, but also because it's along Middlefield Road, a heavily trafficked roadway and the site of an accident that killed Dylan Taylor, a local educator who collided with a garbage truck while in the bike lane.

Unlike Encinal, Laurel and Oak Knoll campuses lie in residential Menlo Park neighborhoods with slower and wider streets with sidewalks, Pinzon



Photos by Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Above: Fourth graders at Encinal Elementary School in Atherton practice their biking skills during a Safe Routes to Schools bike rodeo on Oct. 29. Below: A student practices looking both ways for oncoming traffic.

said. Encinal's attendance boundaries are also greater than Laurel's and stretch as far as North Fair Oaks.

According to data from the county's Safe Routes to School Travel Tally, Encinal has the highest percentage of families commuting to school by family vehicle with 67% in the 2023-24 school year compared to Upper Laurel's 39% and Oak Knoll's 55% in the 2021-22 school year.

Silva explained that it's difficult to communicate the need for better bike and pedestrian infrastructure to city council members because of the clashing cultures between cyclists and drivers.

"Streets are shared resources and when you give all the space to a car, you are reducing the space for pedestrians and cyclists," said Silva. "When you share something, sometimes you have to let somebody else take a turn and it's a trade off but some community members don't see biking as a serious way to get around."

He added that when cities start to agree about adding speed bumps or bike lanes, resident pushback can make council



members feel hesitant about implementing them. "The voices that the city council members hear are not from the kids or parents," but rather the louder voices of local residents who may not have children or are not part of the biking community, Silva explained.

While there are prevalent issues around bike safety, MPCSD is hopeful that citywide change will occur. Recently, the district conducted a walk audit with students to identify issues and potential solutions around traffic near the school. According to Safe Routes leaders, the district will be meeting

with city planning officials to discuss these findings and provide recommendations for both Menlo Park and Atherton's city councils to align on.

"A lot of these kids, they don't get to be as independent because parents are very concerned about cars," said Silva. "Kids should be able to bike to school. Kids should be able to walk to a friend's house, but if adults, if we have failed to provide them sidewalks and bike lanes, it's on us to change it." ■

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Sequoia Union hires new leader of business services

Marking to head business, finance, operations

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

The Sequoia Union High School District has hired in a new assistant superintendent of administrative services to replace incumbent Christine Gong, who is retiring. Janea Marking will start her new position on Dec. 2.

Marking brings 20 years of experience working in public school districts across California and in Washington.

Before joining SUHSD, she previously served as chief business and operations officer for the Sacramento City Unified School District. Marking also held leadership roles with the San Diego County Office of Education, Santa Ana Unified School District, South Bay Union



Janea Marking

School District and Highline Public Schools in Burien, Wash.

At SUHSD, Marking will be responsible for the district's business, finance and operational departments.

"My experience in public education has led me to believe that thoughtful and transparent resource management creates the foundation for every student to thrive," said Marking in a statement. "These are the values that will guide my work

at Sequoia Union High School District."

Marking holds a bachelor's in philosophy, ethics and public policy from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and a master's in political science from Indiana University. She also holds a School Business Management Certificate from the University of Southern California.

"It is so clear to me that the team here cares deeply about

doing right for kids, and I'm proud to be a part of that. So thank you so very much for this opportunity. I can't wait to get started," said Marking during the Oct. 29 board meeting.

"Her proven record of collaboration, strategic financial stewardship, and commitment to supporting student learning through strong, operational systems made her an outstanding fit for our district," said Superintendent Crystal Leach. ■

New state law allows 75-foot housing near Caltrain station

Affects area in downtown Menlo Park, Atherton

By Arden Margulis

A new state law will require Menlo Park and parts of Atherton to allow much taller housing developments near the Menlo Park Caltrain station — up to 75 feet within a quarter-mile and 95 feet immediately adjacent to the station.

Senate Bill 79, signed by Gov. Gavin Newsom in October, mandates that cities allow high-density, transit-oriented housing near certain major transit stops, including Caltrain stations. The measure is part of a broader state push to address California's housing shortage by promoting dense housing near public transit.

Under SB 79, Menlo Park must permit housing projects up to 75 feet tall within a quarter-mile of any pedestrian access point to the Caltrain station and up to 95 feet tall within 200 feet of any access point. The law overrides local height and density caps in current zoning rules. The city also must permit developments with a maximum density of 120 housing units per acre and cannot impose standards that



Magali Gauthier

A new state law would allow taller housing projects in proximity to Menlo Park's Caltrain Station.

prevent a project from having up to 3.5 times the size of the lot in housing.

Since its population is slightly under 35,000 (estimated at 33,000 as of 2024), Menlo Park will not be required to allow 65-foot-tall buildings within a half-mile of the station.

However, if its population exceeds 35,000 by its next housing element cycle, it will be subject to

those additional requirements near the Menlo Park Caltrain station and in parts of the city within a half-mile of the Palo Alto Caltrain station.

State law allows cities to avoid the new requirements by creating an alternative transit-oriented development plan to relocate the density elsewhere, as long as the total number of units and floor area allowed remain the

same as the state's plan.

While the Atherton Caltrain station has been closed for years and does not count as a transit stop, some parts of Atherton may fall within a quarter-mile of the Menlo Park station. Estimates by this news organization suggest that only a handful of properties may be subject to the requirements. The law measures distance from any

portion of a property to the train station, meaning some Atherton parcels near Nativity School and one house on Victoria Drive may be eligible.

Atherton is currently determining which parcels are affected.

"Staff has been reviewing the impact(s) of SB 79," City Manager George Rodericks said. "We do not have a formalized map of the affected parcels as we are still working with GIS to determine exactly which parcels are affected. There is some discussion as to where the line actually starts for measurement from the Caltrain station in Menlo Park."

The town is aware of the option to create an alternative plan and expects to present options to the Atherton City Council in the future, Rodericks said.

But Atherton and Menlo Park do not have much time to develop an alternative plan. The plans must be approved by the state by July 1, 2026, but the state can take up to 90 days to review them. ■

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

Itty-bitty robots shrink treat blood clots

Stanford mechanical engineer Renee Zhao is pioneering tiny, flexible robots capable of traveling through the body's vascular system to treat medical conditions such as blood clots and brain aneurysms. Her lab combines curiosity-driven exploration with the principles of mechanics and physics to create entirely new technologies, including an origami-inspired robot that moves by spinning. Zhao emphasizes that innovation often arises from open-ended research rather than targeted goals, and credits academia's freedom to explore as key to discovery. Her work demonstrates how fundamental mechanics can inspire breakthroughs across medicine, robotics, and even large-scale systems like underwater vehicles. **SCAN TO READ THE SPOTLIGHT**



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NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING BY THE WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT BOARD OF DIRECTORS

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a Public Hearing will be held for the Woodside Fire Protection District Board of Directors to consider enacting the following proposed ordinance:

AN ORDINANCE OF THE WOODSIDE FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICT ADOPTING THE 2025 CALIFORNIA FIRE CODE AND THE 2025 CALIFORNIA WILDLAND-URBAN INTERFACE CODE, INCLUDING SPECIFIED APPENDICES, AND AS MODIFIED BY LOCAL AMENDMENTS, ADOPTING A FINDING THAT THE ORDINANCE IS EXEMPT FROM REVIEW UNDER THE CALIFORNIA ENVIRONMENTAL QUALITY ACT, AND REPEALING ORDINANCE NO. 13

The proposed ordinance is also identified as Ordinance 14-2025.

All interested persons are invited to attend the Public Hearing and be heard on this matter. The Public Hearing will take place on November 18, 2025, at 7:00 PM at 808 Portola Road, Portola Valley, CA 94028. This meeting will be conducted in a hybrid format, and the public may also attend this meeting virtually. Details on participating by Zoom or other virtual format will be available on the published November 18, 2025 agenda for the Board of Directors meeting.

SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSED ORDINANCE: Ordinance No. 14-2025 is the Woodside Fire Protection District's mechanism for adopting the new 2025 Edition of the California Fire Code and the 2025 California Wildland-Urban Interface Code. As mandated by state law, this triennial update incorporates current state fire safety standards and includes essential local amendments. These amendments are critical to ensure that fire prevention and building standards are tailored to the unique, high-risk **climatic, geological, and topographical** conditions of the District, specifically addressing hazards within our District. Ordinance No. 14-2025 is designed to maintain the highest level of public safety and environmental protection. Under state law, after the first reading of the title of the proposed ordinance, which occurred on October 28, 2025, the District is required to hold a public hearing before the proposed ordinance is adopted (Government Code § 50022.3). After the hearing, the Board of Directors may amend, adopt, or reject the proposed ordinance.

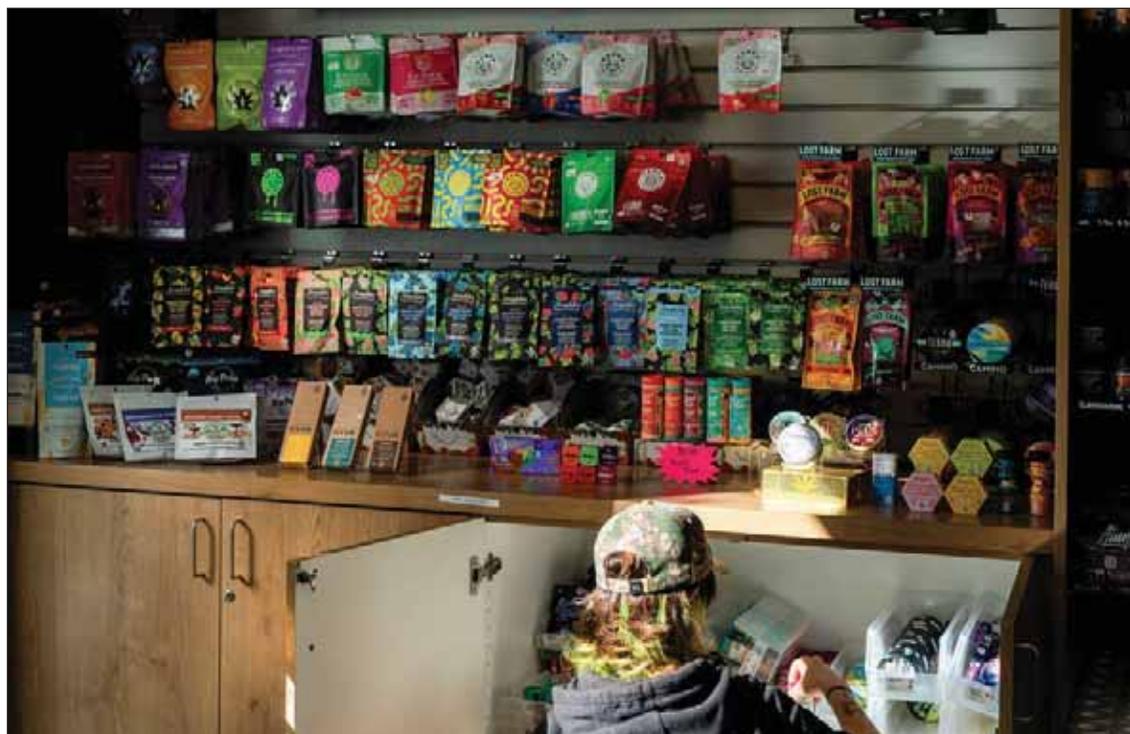
CEQA DETERMINATION: The Board of Directors will consider adopting a finding that the proposed ordinance is exempt from review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA).

All interested parties are encouraged and invited to submit written comments regarding the proposed environmental findings and/or merits of the proposed ordinance prior to the hearing or participate in the public hearing. Reasonable accommodations will be made to individuals with disabilities. To submit comments electronically, please forward them to Kimberly Giuliacci, Fire Marshal at kgiuliacci@woodsidefire.gov. To submit comments via U.S. Mail, please forward them to the Woodside Fire Protection District, Attn: Fire Marshal to arrive no later than 5:00 p.m. one day prior to the meeting at the following address: 808 Portola Road, #C, Portola Valley, CA 94028.

Please note that any challenge of the proposed action in court may be limited to addressing only those issues raised at the public hearing described in this notice, or in written correspondence submitted to the Fire Marshal at, or prior to, the public hearing.

The proposed Ordinance 14-2025 is available for review online at <http://www.woodsidefire.org/prevention> and will be available in the agenda packet posted for the November 18, 2025, meeting. A certified copy of the proposed Ordinance 14-2025 is also available upon request by contacting the District Office, at (650) 851-1594, 808 Portola Rd. #C, Portola Valley, CA 94028. Copies of the 2025 edition of the California Fire Code and the 2025 edition of the California Wildland Urban Interface Code, and all associated appendices and referenced codes and materials are on file at the District Office, 808 Portola Road, # C, Portola Valley, CA 94028 and are available for public inspection.

Run Dates: October 31 and November 7, 2025



Seegeer Gray

An employee looks through cannabis products at Embarc Dispensary in Redwood City on Oct. 28.

Cannabis sales bring in about \$1 million for Redwood City annually

Steady tax receipts come amid a downturn in cannabis industry

By Hannah Bensen

In the two years since five cannabis businesses opened in Redwood City, the shops have generated nearly \$1 million a year in local tax revenue — roughly in line with the city's early projections.

That performance is notable in an industry where statewide sales have declined, falling from a peak of \$1.5 billion in the second quarter of 2021 to about \$1.2 billion four years later, according to data from the state Department of Tax and Fee Administration.

Redwood City's cannabis cluster is also unique on the Peninsula, as the city's five storefronts make up the only brick-and-mortar cannabis retailers between San Bruno in San Mateo County and San Jose, though many nearby cities allow delivery.

Business climate and city relations

Facing high state and local taxes, steep start-up costs and competition with the illicit market that undercuts prices, some cannabis businesses in cities like Los Angeles and San Francisco have struggled to remain financially viable.

In Redwood City, management from two separate cannabis businesses expressed a mixed picture of how business is going and the outlook of the industry, yet both said they have a strong working relationship with the city. City officials also said the businesses have met expectations.

"Our businesses are really good operators," said Amanda Anthony, the city's economic development manager. "We specifically had very high standards for who we wanted our operators to be."

In 2020, the Redwood City Council authorized the city manager to issue up to six cannabis business permits. The businesses were expected to bring additional revenue for Redwood City, which is facing a budget deficit of \$6 million in the 2029-2030 fiscal year and around \$13 million annually in the years after.

In 2021, 28 businesses applied for the city's cannabis permits, according to the city's website. The applications, which had a fee of \$22,604 to compensate city staff and consultants for their time, required applicants to describe plans for their business strategy, safety, security and equity.

After the approval process, two stores, Embarc and Juva, opened in early 2023, followed by Airfield Supply Company and MMD later that year. Flor opened in August 2024. A sixth operator, Element 7, had its permit revoked after it failed to open within two years, even after receiving a several-month extension, Anthony said. The city does not expect to issue a license for a sixth permit to replace it citing the length of the competitive selection process and the struggling state of the industry, according to Anthony.

Support for retail cannabis had been solid from the beginning.

In 2020, 61% of respondents to a city survey indicated their support for allowing cannabis retailers to open shops in the city, according to a staff report. Still, during public comment on the issue and after cannabis stores initially opened, some community members raised concerns about safety. But Redwood City Police Chief Kristina Bell said the department has not observed any increase in drug related crime or overall criminal activity near the cannabis businesses since permits were issued in 2020.

"Our data and observations indicate that these businesses have operated responsibly without generating any notable increase in police calls, complaints or incidents compared to other commercial areas in the city," Bell said in an email.

Despite some initial trepidation, Embarc CEO and co-founder Lauren Carpenter said the business has been largely well-received. Embarc is a California-based cannabis dispensary with 17 stores around the state, and Carpenter said sales at the Redwood City store have met expectations. She also said the business works closely with city officials to ensure it complies with the city and the state's cannabis regulations.

"Generally speaking, in Redwood City, we enjoy a strong working relationship with local government there," Carpenter said. "I think the city has been a

See **CANNABIS**, page 18

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Half of world's 10 richest billionaires call the Midpeninsula home

Forbes list highlights Bay Area's concentration of global tech wealth

By Linda Taaffe

The Midpeninsula may no longer claim the nation's most expensive ZIP code after Atherton's eight-year reign ended when Fisher Island, Florida, took the top spot earlier this year — but the region is home to one of the highest concentrations of billionaires in the world.

Five of the world's 10 richest individuals reside on the Peninsula, according to Forbes' Top 10 Richest People in the World list released Nov. 1. Collectively, they hold a combined fortune of about \$1.1 trillion.

Leading the group is Oracle founder Larry Ellison, who maintains a home in Woodside and is ranked No. 2 globally with an estimated net worth of \$320 billion, behind only Elon Musk. Google cofounder Larry

Page of Palo Alto ranks No. 4 at \$232 billion, followed by Meta CEO Mark Zuckerberg, also of Palo Alto, at No. 5 with \$223 billion. Google cofounder Sergey Brin and Nvidia CEO Jensen Huang, both Los Altos Hills residents, round out the local contingent at No. 6 and No. 8, with net worths of \$215 billion and \$176 billion, respectively.

Unlike the broader Forbes 2025 Billionaires List, which provides an annual snapshot of the net worth of the more than 3,000 billionaires around the world, the Top 10 list tracks billionaire wealth in real time using stock prices and exchange rates, meaning these figures — and the people at the top of the list — can fluctuate daily.

Billionaire hub

Beyond its share of the top 10, the Bay Area now

surpasses New York City as the world's leading billionaire hub, according to the 2025 World's Wealthiest Cities Report released by investment advisory firm Henley & Partners and global data firm New World Wealth.

The Bay Area counts 82 billionaires, compared with 66 in New York, marking a 20% increase in just one year. The surge reflects both the region's tech dominance and the rebound in technology stock valuations, according to the report.

Other Peninsula billionaires appearing on Forbes' broader 2025 Billionaires List include Eric Schmidt, Jan Koum, George Roberts, and Douglas Leone of Atherton; John Doerr and Charles Schwab of Woodside; Laurene Powell Jobs of Palo Alto; Sheryl Sandberg of Menlo Park; and Vinod Khosla of

Portola Valley.

"The concentration of the tech industry and recent strong performance of tech stocks have created significant wealth in the Bay Area," said Hannah Jones, senior economic research analyst at Realtor.com. "The Bay is dense with high-growth tech firms, which both grows and attracts billionaires."

Millionaire growth

The Bay Area ranks No. 2 globally for its millionaire population, with 342,400 residents worth seven figures or more. It places second worldwide in the number of centimillionaires — those worth \$100 million or more — at 756, according to the Wealthiest Cities report.

Over the past decade, the region's millionaire population has surged 98%, a rate the report describes as "exceptional."

Alongside its business opportunities, the Bay Area's appeal for the ultrawealthy also stems from its access to nature, space and milder weather compared with East Coast financial hubs, researchers at New World Wealth told Realtor.com.

In September, the median home price in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties reached \$1.6 million, according to Redfin, compared with the national median of about \$435,000. ■

Editor's note: Forbes' 2025 Billionaires List identifies Vinod Khosla as a Portola Valley resident. However, according to data from the Santa Clara County Assessor's Office, his residence is located in Palo Alto.

*Email Print & Lifestyle Editor
Linda Taaffe at ltaaffe@almanacnews.com.*

Weekend of art and conversation highlights local veterans

By Heather Zimmerman

An art show and a talk with well-known area veterans serve as focal points for a weekend of events that aim to bring together the community to better understand and support local veterans.

The Atherton Arts Foundation and Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America are teaming up to present three days of art, conversation and activities, Nov. 14-16, at Holbrook-Palmer Park. The art show, which takes place Nov. 15-16, will highlight the diverse talents of local veterans.

The weekend kicks off Nov. 14 with a benefit evening featuring "Beyond the Uniform," a discussion with three prominent local veterans: author Tobias Wolff, Tom House, director of Salesforce's military program, and Dr. Dean Winslow of Stanford University.

The talk, which will honor Winslow, also offers early access to the art show. Winslow is

a veteran whose long and decorated military career included multiple deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan and coordinating military public health work in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina. He is now a professor of medicine and pediatrics at Stanford University.

"This area has a very, very rich history of veterans. It has a very strong military history, and there are phenomenal veterans doing amazing things in medicine and technological innovation and community and public service," said Dr. Kyleanne Hunter, CEO

of Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America and a veteran who grew up in Atherton.

"As someone who is native here and now has the reins of a large organization, I want to make sure we organically build a space for the community to understand who we are and who veterans are," she said.

Hunter was deployed in both Iraq and Afghanistan, and previously served as lead of the Women, Peace, and Security Initiative in the RAND National Security Research Division and a senior political scientist at RAND.

The weekend's events raise funds for the Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America. The organization serves the newest generation of veterans, advocating for national policies that support veterans, as well as advocating on a more local level with employers and community groups.

Hunter and Winslow both pointed out that while many veterans' organizations tend to be centered on the East Coast, veterans have different needs depending on where they live. For West Coast veterans, "there's much more of a focus on employment, engaging with employers, on how innovation can work to improve the lives of veterans, and understanding that continued service takes different forms," Hunter said.

"I think that this particular part of the country has been a little bit off the radar of veterans organizations. There are a lot of really smart people, and a lot of very patriotic people who would like to be involved, even those that have



Courtesy Dr. Dean Winslow

Dr. Dean Winslow was deployed multiple times as a flight surgeon in both Iraq and Afghanistan. He is now a professor of medicine and pediatrics at Stanford.

not necessarily served themselves — many of the the industry leaders right here in Silicon Valley," Winslow said.

Forging connections with the community, such as this weekend of arts-related events, can help create understanding, starting with the Nov. 14 "Beyond the Uniform" talk with Wolff, House and Winslow. Hunter will moderate the discussion.

"Tobias has this storied career in memoir and storytelling, and one of the things that we're really hoping to bring the community into in this conversation is the importance of veterans' voices and veteran storytelling in Silicon Valley employment," Hunter said.

Wolff is the author of numerous books, including the memoir "This Boys Life" and the novels "The Barracks Thief" and "Old School," and a longtime faculty member at Stanford. Winslow said he counts Wolff as a friend

after taking one of his writing classes a decade ago at the Stanford's School of Medicine.

"He's a very thoughtful person and he is himself a combat veteran. He served as a Special Forces officer, Green Beret during the Vietnam War, and then went to Oxford University after he came home. Of course his career as both a novelist and a short story writer is pretty well known to a lot of Americans," Winslow said. "Care of veterans is one of the things that's important to him as well."

The art show gives veterans a unique way to tell their stories. Organizers put out a call for local veteran artists, inviting them to submit works for the show. Among the works by about 15 artists, visitors will see a wide range of media, including oil, watercolor and acrylic paintings, pottery, crocheted dolls and woodworking.

"We have people who are painting landscapes based on where they've deployed. We have some great sculptures of animals that a local Marine's kids made to send to him while he was deployed as a way to stay in touch," Hunter said. "We've got art that honors different eras of the military, but it really is all across the map, because what we wanted to ensure was that people were able to create art that's reflective of who they are. ... Some people are moved to paint trees. Other people are moved to paint animals, and some want to paint the scenes of who they were, or military vehicles. We wanted to give people that space to really be

Beyond the Uniform speaker event with Tobias Wolff and Tom House, honoring Dean Winslow, takes place Nov. 14, 6 p.m. tickets are \$250; Veterans Art Show is held Nov. 15-16, 10 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; sip and paint with Mark Stapleton takes place Nov. 15, 5 p.m., and tea and art with Caroline Mustard takes place Nov. 16, 2:30 p.m. Classes are \$100 each or \$175 for both. All events take place at Holbrook-Palmer Park, 150 Watkins Ave., Atherton. For more information, visit iava.org.

themselves."

The art show kicks off on Nov. 15 at 10 a.m. with a "vet-together" meet the artists event with coffee and donuts. Each day of the art show will feature hands-on art activities for kids. The Atherton Arts Foundation is offering two art classes over the weekend, as well, with a sip and paint class with artist Mark Stapleton on Nov. 15 and a tea and art botanical printing class with artist Caroline Mustard on Nov. 16. Both are fundraisers for Iraq & Afghanistan Veterans of America. "I think it's going to be really nice for folks in our amazing community to get to meet some veterans and to appreciate some of the challenges that the contemporary generation of veterans has served in Iraq and Afghanistan now face and how they potentially can help make the world a better place," Winslow said. ■

*Email Arts & Entertainment
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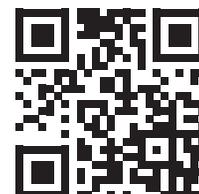
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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Menlo School presents “HUMBUG! A Menlo Carol”

Menlo Upper School Drama will be presenting its fall production, “HUMBUG! A Menlo Carol,” a musical adaptation of Charles Dickens’ “A Christmas Carol.” The performance will premiere at 7:30 p.m. on Nov. 13 at the Spieker Performing Arts Center. Showings will run through Nov. 16.

“HUMBUG!” reimagines the classic story with “music, humor and a Menlo twist.” The story features festive songs and witty dialogue that highlights compassion, generosity and community.

“‘HUMBUG!’ is more than just a retelling of ‘A Christmas Carol,’” says director and drama teacher Mark Schneider. “It’s a joyful reminder of the power of second chances. Our students have poured their hearts into this production, and I can’t wait for audiences to feel the holiday spirit come alive on our stage.”

For tickets and more information, visit menloschool.org/tickets.

Sequoia High School receives alumni donation

The Sequoia High School Alumni Association announced it had awarded a total of \$3,596 to teachers at Sequoia High School under its Cherokee Grants program. This year, 11 teachers were awarded to help fund and contribute to classroom materials and experienced including a lab computer for the robotics club, preserved frogs for biology and field trips for Emerging Multilingual-Language Learners.

The Cherokee Grants program is named in honor of Cherokee scholar and educator, Sequoyah, which the Sequoia tree is named after. The grants are intended to fund the purchase of instructional equipment, materials and services that are not included in Sequoia High School’s budget. Thousands of dollars have been awarded since the grant program was established in 1987.

The Sequoia High School Alumni Association is accepting donations to keep the program alive. Donations can be made online at sequoiaalumni.org or by sending checks payable to Sequoia High School Alumni Association, P.O. Box 2534, Redwood City.

Hillview Middle School premieres “Ghost Light”

Hillview Middle School presents its original play, “Ghost Light,” written and directed by the school’s Drama Director Bill Hairston. Performances with Hillview performers will take place from Nov. 6 through 15 and with elementary school performers from Nov. 17 through 20.

The play follows a group of high schoolers who are trapped in a spooky, old theater with just one flickering light and many ghost stories. “Ghost Light mixes laughs, scares, and a dash of stage superstition in this spirited backstage murder mystery,” according to the Menlo Park City School District.

All shows will be performed at Hillview Middle School, 1100 Elder Ave., Menlo Park. Tickets can be purchased on tinyurl.com/HillviewGhostLight.

— Jennifer Yoshikoshi



Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Cars and motorcycles zoom through the intersection of Highways 84 and 35 in Woodside, an area known as Four Corners, on a busy Sunday afternoon.

FOUR CORNERS

continued from page 1

Caltrans Acting Chief Safety Officer Inder Preet Singh shared that the jurisdiction is currently at 50% of its design phase with goals to start construction next fall.

In addition to a four-way stop, Caltrans’ design includes installing stop ahead signs in all directions of the intersection as well as turn restriction signs in the northeast area to restrict tight angle turns. Near the crosswalk, multiple yield to pedestrian signs are planned for being placed.

According to Wells, existing road signs that were worn out were being neglected by Caltrans. For years, the flashing beacons on stop signs were out of order and one of the stop signs had been knocked down. It wasn’t until Wells had contacted Caltrans that the beacons were repaired, he said.

The design plans to remove the crosswalk to nowhere and to restripe the northern crosswalk and install a rapid flashing beacon that will warn drivers of crossing pedestrians. The plan also shows stop signs installed within the entryways of Alice’s parking lot to facilitate safer entry onto the highway.

Although Caltrans plans on restriping and bringing more attention to this one crosswalk, residents suggested that another crosswalk be built in between the Alice’s parking lot and a traffic island that is used for additional parking — an area that pedestrians jaywalk to and from their vehicles.

Singh explained however that adding any crosswalks that do

not already exist are costly and require a lot of improvements. Caltrans will also be required to provide proper curbside landings to comply with policies under the Americans with Disability Act which is “intense work,” he added.

Many local residents supported the idea of a four-way stop, but those who opposed cited concerns for increased backup on the highway, creating more traffic on other rural roads such as Old La Honda and Kings Mountain Road.

“I think the stop signs are a great short term fix, but it does nothing to correct the problem of the huge traffic backups on (SR-84) on the weekend,” said Jerry Leugers, Atherton Planning Commissioner, during the town hall.

Woodside resident Tamara Gables added that drivers are already “rolling and blowing those stop signs at speeds,” and unless there is going to be 24/7 enforcement she doesn’t view the four-way stops as a move in the right direction.

“When you have a lot of signs, it’s kind of a sign that the design isn’t working,” said lifelong Woodside resident Steve Lubin, who also called for the need for a new crosswalk and a slower speed limit.

While residents were grateful that Caltrans was taking the time to address the issues within Four Corners, locals pushed for Caltrans to do more investigations and analysis on the area.

Woodside residents Christin New shared her support for the plan but described it as a “retrospective plan applied yesterday to today’s problems.”

With the current speed limit of

40 mph, vehicles can be spotted traveling through the intersection at speeds beyond that. Alice’s Restaurant Co-owner Andy Kerr said he believes it should be 25 mph or less and proposed the installation of speed bumps.

“Many of these guys are driving cars that are souped up. It’s become a racetrack,” said Kerr. “They come from San Leandro, Oakland, San Jose. They come up in the middle of the night. So it’s not just the intersection speed, any number of things that get people to slow down, will change.”

On Sunday, Nov. 2., the San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office issued 28 citations during its joint operation with the State Bureau of Automotive Repair. In addition to citations, deputies shared safety information with drivers and referred vehicles to the Bureau of Automotive Repair for inspections to ensure vehicles complied with roadway safety standards, according to the Sheriff’s Office.

“The Sheriff’s Office is committed to routine traffic safety efforts in this area and will continue partnering with local and state agencies, when possible, to address community concerns,” said spokesperson Gretchen Spiker in a statement.

Wells has started a petition calling for Caltrans, California Highway Patrol and the Sheriff’s Office to take action on the hazards of Four Corners. As of Nov. 5, it had collected 61 signatures. For more information visit fourcornerswoodside.com. ■

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TOOLS

continued from page 5

conversation about the future of work. Essential Tools is a “wonderful venture that is analog and human centric,” she believes.

The seed of the operation germinated in 2020, when a coalition of Manzanita Works stakeholders met weekly to brainstorm ways to address the nonprofit’s core topics: health, housing, transit, food, family and future. In relation to the last category, restaurant workers expressed excitement about the dawn of pandemic-era parklets but lamented the lack of pressure washers to keep the streets clean, Zelkha said.

Because she believes that “unless you’re truly independently wealthy, everyone is one life event or situation from instability and living paycheck to paycheck,” Zelkha acknowledges that, for many, the cost of acquiring tools like pressure washers can be steep and prohibitive.

Moreover, these tools may be needed only occasionally and can be a pain to store and maintain. Zelkha hopes her organization can streamline the tool acquisition and use process, to lower the barrier to entry for new hobbies, technical jobs and critical maintenance.

The CEO has looked at Berkeley Public Library’s decades-old Lending Library, which started in 1979 and offers members thousands of tools for free, as a model for her operation.

Some Manzanita Works members applied in 2021 for a grant from the San Mateo County Sustainability Department to launch Essential Tools, which would reduce community consumption by promoting tool sharing. The organization ultimately accepted \$50,000 from the county to kick the wheels of Essential Tools into motion.

The organization’s first organic lending took place on April 5, when a San Mateo County resident borrowed a palm sander. As a mobile service, Essential Tools can meet lenders at the corner of Bay Road and 10th Avenue in Redwood City or at 26870 Moody Rd. in Los Altos and does not demonstrate how to use the tools, but does ensure the upkeep and condition of the equipment it rents.

Currently, the organization has 42 members, hailing from 11 different cities in San Mateo County, with Redwood City being the largest. Essential Tools looks forward to continuing to grow its membership.

The tool lending organization has also supported local

groups in “hardening,” or wildfire mitigation, by donating landscaping items to both the county’s Disaster Preparedness Day and the Be Wildfire Safe & Ready events. It’s provided coastal clean-up groups with litter pickers and tarps for cuttings, too.

All Essential Tools purchases are local from Redwood City businesses, namely Hayward Lumber, Outdoor Supply Hardware and Hassett Hardware, which offer discounts to Essential Tools members.

One renter from San Carlos, Lori Mills, said that as a single parent, she doesn’t have much room at the place she’s renting to store items.

“If I buy something, then I immediately use it and give it away because I don’t have space,” she said. “This was exciting for me because I thought ‘Oh! I can get jobs done that I want.’”

She’s used all sorts of Essential Tools products for all kinds of

one-time odd jobs, like removing a sticker from her vehicle with a heating gun. In mid-October, she borrowed a sander to smooth out a wine box she found, planning to add little legs and use it as a “catch-all when I come through the door.”

Mills is among the dozens exploring the opportunities for projects that Essential Tools has to offer.

As a nascent organization, Essential Tools is still very much “open to suggestions” for improvement and expansion, Zelkha said, appreciating how it’s already helped foster a “sense of belonging” in the community.

Residents are invited to scope Essential Tools’ inventory for items to rent or get involved by visiting manzanita.works/essential-tools. ■

*Email Staff Writer
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mdemoraes@almanacnews.com.*

Dr. Richard R. Rutter

October 8, 1932 - September 20, 2025

Dr. Richard “Dick” Rummel Rutter passed away peacefully on September 20, 2025, in Emerald Hills, CA at the age of 92. He was preceded in death by his parents, Cloud and Marian (Rummel) Rutter. He is survived by his wife, Joanne (McHenry) Rutter, his brother Don (Marcy) Rutter, his daughter Karen (Mark) Weber, his son Jim (Cindi) Rutter, five grandchildren (Mackenzie, Allison, Jeffrey, Ava, and Logan) and one great-grandson, Roman.



A long-time resident of Menlo Park and Emerald Hills, he practiced the specialty of orthodontics for 25 years on Welch Road in Palo Alto. Born on October 8, 1932 in San Francisco, he was graduated from San Mateo High School [‘50] and Stanford University [‘54] where he played water polo and was a member of Alpha Tau Omega (ATO). He received his dental degree from the College of Physicians & Surgeons (now UOP) in 1958 and earned his graduate certificate in Orthodontics from Columbia University in 1961. Dr. Rutter was the founding department chairman for the graduate program in Orthodontics at the University of the Pacific’s Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry. For 52 years, he was a much-loved and slightly-feared faculty member and professor, retiring in 2009 at age 77.

He married Joanne McHenry on September 12, 1959 at Stanford Memorial Church, a blessed union that lasted for 66 years.

Dr. Rutter was a man of many passions, interests, and talents. He was a longtime member of the Palo Alto Kiwanis Club, the International Wizard of Oz Club, and the Knights of the Gnomon, the Redwood City scion of the Sherlock Holmes society, The Baker Street Irregulars. He enjoyed Stanford sports above all, attending more than 1,200 football, basketball and baseball games over more than eight decades. He enjoyed reading, collecting, letterpress printing, swimming, and travel.

Dr. Rutter courageously endured Progressive Supranuclear Palsy (PSP) for the last several years of his life, but he maintained his sense of humor and social interactions.

A “Celebration of Life” will be held on Friday, November 14, 2025, at 1:30 PM at Menlo Church, 950 Santa Cruz Ave. Menlo Park with a reception to follow.

PAID OBITUARY

**TOWN OF WOODSIDE
2955 WOODSIDE ROAD
WOODSIDE, CA 94062**

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEARBY GIVEN THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF WOODSIDE will hold a hybrid public hearing allowing for the option to attend by teleconference/video conference or in person in Independence Hall, 2955 Woodside Road, Woodside, CA on **Wednesday, November 19, 2025, at 6:00 PM**, to consider:

2. 10 Still Creek Road ASRB2025-0017; XMAX2025-0010; XSET2025-0001

David Mittelman Planner: Sarah Filipe, Associate Planner

Review and approval, conditional approval, or denial of a project proposal including Formal Design Review, a Maximum Residence Size Exception, and a Setback Exception to construct a new main residence with an attached garage, Junior Accessory Dwelling Unit (JADU), and one attached Accessory Dwelling Unit (ADU); one detached ADU; and, associated site improvements on a vacant lot.

The project is Categorically Exempt from the provisions of the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) pursuant to Section 15303(a), which includes a single-family residence; and Section 15303(e), which includes accessory structures.

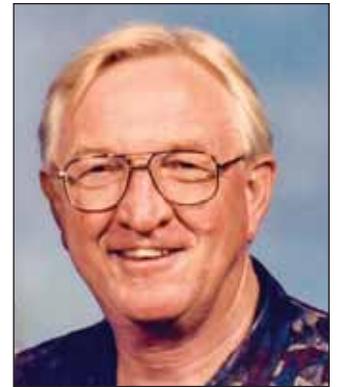
The application materials are available for public review by contacting Sarah Filipe at sfilipe@woodsideca.gov.

All interested parties are invited to submit written comments to jpaping@woodsideca.gov and/or attend in person or virtually at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86068472736> and give testimony.

Grant Knute Hagestad

July 20, 1937 - October 25, 2025

Grant “Gary” Knute Hagestad, 88, of Portola Valley, California and Carson City, Nevada, passed away peacefully on October 25, 2025, surrounded by family and friends.



Born July 20, 1937, in San Mateo, CA, to Hamilton and Ruth Hagestad, Gary grew up in Placerville and spent his youth surveying the Sierra Mountains with his father. He graduated with honors from Sonoma High School and earned a B.S. in Civil Engineering, an M.S. in Civil Engineering and Construction Management and an M.B.A. from Stanford University.

In 1976, Grant co-founded Estate Homes in Campbell, later expanding to Dublin, Fairfield, and Vacaville. As president and CEO, he oversaw construction of more than 1,500 homes across the Bay Area and Solano County.

Grant cherished time with his family—teaching his children, Erik and Jeanne, to ride bikes and horses, coaching soccer, hiking with grandchildren, and taking family trips from Wyoming to Hawaii. With his wife Betty, he loved traveling across the U.S. and abroad, golfing and scuba diving, and cheering for the 49ers and Stanford football.

Grant’s deep and abiding faith proved to be a constant source of peace and strength throughout his life. It sustained him through challenges and brought him comfort and courage during his battle with cancer, reminding all who loved him of his steadfast trust in God’s care and grace.

He is preceded in death by his parents, Hamilton and Ruth Hagestad; first wife, Patricia Graham Smith; and son, Erik Hagestad. He is survived by his wife, Betty Nelson Gravidahl; sister, Laura Stallone; daughters, Jeanne Hagestad, Colleen (Dudley Gardner) Carscallen, and Lori (Jean-François) Poujol; grandchildren, Adam, Glenn, and Shannon Carscallen, Tristan, Savannah, and Sebastien Poujol; and eight great-grandchildren.

A memorial service will be held Friday, November 14, at 11:00 a.m. at St. Timothy’s Lutheran Church, 5100 Camden Ave, San Jose, CA 95124.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to St. Timothy’s Lutheran Church. Link: <https://www.stlcsj.org>.

PAID OBITUARY

Employment

TECHNOLOGY

Snowflake Inc has mltp Senior Salesforce Developer positions avail in Menlo Park, CA. Build lightng platfrm & crss-platfrm intgrtn slutions bsd on indstry bst prtctcs. Tlcmtg 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. \$206315-232000/yr. To apply, send rsme & trnscrpts w/ job title & Ref#6835192 to resume@snowflake.com. EOE.

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Public Notices

LYON LEARNING CENTER FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-301853

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

1.) LYON LEARNING CENTER, located at 1785 Laurel Street, San Carlos, CA 94070. Mailing Address: 260 Autumn Street La Honda, CA 94020

Registered owner(s):
CLARISE CHERI LYON
260 Autumn Street
La Honda, CA 94020

This business is conducted by: an Individual. Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 9/7/2011.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on October 06, 2025.
(ALM Oct 24, 31, Nov 7 and 14, 2025)

BALANCED BEAM WELLNESS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-301936

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

1.) BALANCED BEAM WELLNESS, located at 316 Lux Ave, South San Francisco, CA 94080. Mailing Address: PO BOX 8 South San Francisco, CA 94083.

Registered owner(s):
BALANCED BEAN WELLNESS LLC
PO BOX 8

South San Francisco, CA 94083
State of Incorporation/Organization: CA

This business is conducted by: 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 October 17, 2025.
(ALM Oct 17, 24, 31 and Nov 7, 2025)

CURRENT SOLUTIONS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-301910

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

1.) CURRENT SOLUTIONS, located at 887 Heather Dr, San Carlos, CA, 94070.

Registered owner(s):
HOLLY LAWRENCE
887 Heather Drive
San Carlos, CA 94070

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 October 14, 2025.
(ALM Oct 24, 31, Nov 7 and 14, 2025)

1TCC FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-301894

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

1.) 1TCC, located at 1300 El Camino Real, Ste 100x4, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

Registered owner(s):
TRADE CAPITAL CORPORATION
1300 El Camino Real, Ste 100x4
Menlo Park, CA 94025

State of Incorporation/Organization:

Delaware This business is conducted by: a Corporation.

Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 10/27/2022.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on October 10, 2025.
(ALM Oct 31, Nov 7, 14 and 21, 2025)

INNER GARDENS HEALTH FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-301758

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

1.) INNER GARDENS HEALTH, located at 1017 El Camino Real #279, Redwood City, CA 94063.

Registered owner(s):
BE-LEADERS LLC
1017 El Camino Real #279
Redwood City, CA 94063

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 September 26, 2025.
(ALM Oct 17, 24, 31 and Nov 7, 2025)

OC CONSTRUCTION FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-301880

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

1.) OC CONSTRUCTION, located at 1618 Sullivan Ave #324, Daly City, CA 94015.

Registered owner(s):
CARLOS OLGUIN ARIAGA
1618 Sullivan Ave #324
Daly City, CA 94015

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 October 08, 2025.
(ALM Oct 31, Nov 7, 14 and 21, 2025)

INNER CHARMS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-301938

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

1.) INNER CHARMS, located at 2721 Victoria Mnr, San Carlos, CA 94070.

Registered owner(s):
GORDON WONG
2721 Victoria Mnr
San Carlos, CA 94070

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 October 17, 2025.
(ALM Oct 24, 31, Nov 7 and 14, 2025)

DISCELI CONSTRUCTION GROUP DISCELI BUILDERS GROUP FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-301749

The following person (persons) is (are) doing

business as:

1.) DISCELI CONSTRUCTION GROUP, 2.) DISCELI BUILDERS GROUP, located at 1224 Pompan Street, San Jose, CA 95122. Mailing Address: 3875 BOHANNON DRIVE #4031 MENLO PARK, CA 94026

Registered owner(s):
ERVIN JEOVANNY DISCUA TURCIOS
3875 BOHANNON DRIVE #4031
MENLO PARK, CA 94026

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 September 25, 2025.
(ALM Oct 17, 24, 31 and Nov 7, 2025)

3R INVESTMENTS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-302028

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

1.) 3R INVESTMENTS, located at 150 San Luis Avenue, San Bruno CA 94066.

Registered owner(s):
WILLIAM FRANK RUGGIERO
150 San Luis Avenue
San Bruno, CA 94066

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 October 28, 2025.
(ALM Nov 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2025)

DGD LANDSCAPING FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-302000

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

1.) DGD LANDSCAPING, located at 1404 Regent St APT #7, Redwood City, CA 94061.

Registered owner(s):
DEMETRIO GARCIA DUBON
1404 Regent St APT #7
Redwood City, CA 94061

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 October 24, 2025.
(ALM Nov 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2025)

JEWELIANA STUDIO FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO.: M-301942

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

1.) JEWELIANA STUDIO, located at 303 Twin Dolpin Drive, 6TH FLOOR, Redwood City, CA 94065. Mailing Address: 1826 Bayview Ave, Belmont, CA 94002

Registered owner(s):
CHIA JUNG HSU
303 Twin Dolpin Drive, 6TH FLOOR
Redwood City, CA 94065

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 October 20, 2025.
(ALM Oct 31, Nov 7, 14 and 21, 2025)

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

Bat with rabies found at Portola Valley Town Center

County advises anyone who may have come in contact with bat to contact medical provider

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

A bat found near Little People's Park playground at the Portola Valley Town Center on Oct. 24 has tested positive for rabies, according to San Mateo County Health. There have been no

known reports of people or other animals exposed to the fatal disease.

Health officials ask anyone who had physical contact with the bat to immediately contact their medical provider to determine whether the exposure requires treatment. Those who were not in contact with the bat are not at risk.

Rabies is a disease that is caused by a virus in the saliva of infected animals and is fatal but preventable. Once symptoms appear, there is no treatment, according to the county.

For the past 11 years, there have been an average of two bats per year that have tested for rabies in the county. A second bat with rabies was found in Half Moon Bay on Oct. 24. Before that the last case was in 2023.

"Encounters with rabid animals in San Mateo County are very rare, but we take every case seriously," said Dr. Kismet Baldwin-Santana, San Mateo County health officer, in a press release. "Never touch a bat or other wild animal, even if it looks sick or injured, and keep your pets' rabies vaccinations up to date."

Rabies can spread to humans and other animals if they are bitten by a rabid animal or if the

saliva or brain tissue from the infected animal makes contact with broken skin, eyes, nose or mouth. It cannot be transmitted by being near a rabid animal, petting it, or through contact with the urine or stool of the animals.

According to the California Department of Public Health, rabies is found in about 200 animals every year. Since 1980, the disease has been reported in 17 people in California. Across the country, about 100,000 people per year are vaccinated against rabies after potential exposure.

When the county finds that an animal has tested positive, disease investigators determine whether anyone has been potentially exposed. If those individuals cannot be determined, the county posts a notice to the public.

The county advises anyone who spots a bat that appears to be sick, injured or dead to report to the Peninsula Humane Society at 650-340-7022.

For more information on rabies, visit the California Department of Public Health and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. ■

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PARKING LOT

continued from page 1

"I think that residents are only hearing part of the story, because this really isn't a discussion about downtown, this is also not really a discussion about affordable housing. We've made a commitment to the state. The previous council made that commitment, as has every city across the state. We have to honor that, otherwise the implications are a penalty like builders' remedy," Schmidt said.

"I just don't see how the report is going to provide any real

value, or how it's going to change minds. I think we saw this with Measure V: people will see it as biased and discredit those aspects of the report that they don't like, and if it says something they do like they'll say 'look this is validation from my position,'" Combs said. "For \$160,000 that's a lot to bring us right back to the position that we would be in. And so for me, asking for the report is just kicking the can down the road, and it's a really expensive can. It's \$160,000 can."

Combs favored calling the special election and letting voters get information through the typical ballot measure process.

"It's not completely contrary to what you're saying, but I think we have multiple opportunities to bring people on this journey with us, and I wouldn't want to limit that," Schmidt responded to Combs.

"I think we also have to accept that some people don't want to go on any journey with us," Combs responded. ■

*Email Staff Writer Arden Margulis at
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LEHUA GREENMAN



"As we set today aside to honor and thank our veterans, let us be mindful that we should do this every day of the year and not just one."

650.245.1845 COMPASS

TEST SCORES

continued from page 5

school districts. Last school year, 58.38% of San Mateo County students scored proficient or advanced in English and 51.32% scored proficient or advanced in math.

However, Ravenswood has a student body that differs substantially from nearby districts. The vast majority of Ravenswood's students, 92%, are considered socio-economically disadvantaged by the state and over half are in the process of learning English.

But under Sudaria's leadership and with the establishment of the Ravenswood Promise, the district has recognized that its instructional strategies have not been effective and change is needed.

"We know in the past we have produced some students who were illiterate and that no longer is going to be happening here in Ravenswood," Sudaria said.

The improved scores last school year "reflect the (district's) strategic work and clear focus," she explained. Coming out of the pandemic, it was clear to the district that its instructional strategies were "not moving the needle."

"Many students have been successful in our system, but not the majority," Sudaria said. "Our Ravenswood Promise is to ensure that every single child reaches their potential, and there is no reason why we cannot have them be proficient."

The Ravenswood Promise is a community action plan that was launched in 2023 to improve the educational experience within the district by increasing connection with families and prioritizing attendance, language and literacy, and teacher retention.

So far this school year, the district has reached an average attendance rate of 92.8%, according to its attendance dashboard. Ravenswood's goal is to reach 96% in the next two to three years.

Although test scores are below pre-pandemic levels, Sudaria highlighted the improvements that Ravenswood has seen, especially for minority students.

Last school year, 22.91% of Black students scored proficient or advanced in English, a nearly three-fold improvement compared to 8.51% in the year before. Substantial improvements were seen in math, with 18.75% of Black students scoring proficient or advanced,

compared to 8.69% in the 2023-24 school year.

While the increases were large, Black students make up a relatively small portion of Ravenswood's student body. Fewer than 50 Black students took the standardized tests last school year. Though the state reports test results for any group with more than 10 students, the data for smaller groups is much more volatile over time.

Latino students make up over 80% of Ravenswood's population. These students also saw improvement last year, with 10.95% scoring proficient or advanced in English, compared to 7.68% the previous year. In math, Latino students' performance saw less change, increasing slightly from 5.34% scoring proficient or advanced in the 2023-24 school year to 5.86% last year.

Improvements behind the scenes

In order for the district to work toward its goal of improving academic achievement across all grade levels, educators are making changes to their teaching methods and honing in on how to create effective lesson plans, Sudaria said.

Ravenswood is getting

"everyone on board" to successfully implement new curriculum and to use evidence-based methods for teaching foundational literacy skills, she added. Professional development days are also serving as opportunities for educators to learn from each other, workshop effective delivery of instruction and to provide feedback for improvement.

"Change is really challenging, especially when you are doing your very best," Sudaria said. "(Teachers) are pulling the layers back and exposing what is going well and exposing what potentially can be improved upon. That's hard work emotionally."

To be able to support the students, the district has to support its teachers, Sudaria said.

The district is ensuring that educators feel positive about working for the district, that they are receiving feedback that is helping them grow professionally and that they are being seen and supported by their colleagues and supervisors, she added.

By retaining teachers, Ravenswood is able to provide consistency and clear expectations for students and families as they progress through grade levels. When there is

less teacher turnover, children can stay hopeful about seeing familiar faces and recognize who their teachers will be as they move up.

The district is also prioritizing building foundational literacy skills in early grade levels from transitional kindergarten through second grade. By ensuring that students are proficient or close to proficient early on, it allows third through sixth grade educators to build upon that, according to Sudaria.

"I am proud that we know every child's reading performance and not just measured by the CAASPP and iReady," she said

Teachers and principals are "laser focused on the data," allowing them to track individual student progress and needs, to redirect them toward success.

"I wish we can say we'll match Menlo Park (City School District) next year, but in reality, we really need to see the growth, and that's why this year, our goal is to decrease the distance from (state) standard by 15-plus points, and then we're going to see the ripple effect," she said. ■

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The local's guide to the Bay Area food scene.

Peninsula Foodist 

Read about hot spots, restaurant trends and the lifestyles of those who love everything about food.

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Adrienne
Editor, Peninsula Foodist

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CANNABIS

continued from page 10

partner in wanting to see these businesses be successful and the city's been communicative."

Hudson Moore, the general manager of Airfield Supply Company, also said the relationship with the city has been "very positive," though he said sales had not performed as well as they had hoped amid an overall market downturn.

Complicating the picture is the financial situation of Juva Life Inc., the parent company of Juva. The company is in receivership — a legal mechanism in which a third party takes control of a business to avoid bankruptcy. The receivership does not affect the operations of the storefront, which remains open and is "doing fine in Redwood City," Anthony said. A visit to the shop on a Wednesday afternoon appeared to support that description, with several customers waiting in line to make purchases. Juva could not be reached for comment by press time.

Tax revenue meets projections

The five Redwood City businesses are subject to Redwood City's local 4% cannabis tax, which goes directly into the city's general fund and can be used for city services. In addition, the state levies a 15% cannabis business tax — a rate that was set to increase to 19% until Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a bill in September delaying the tax hike until 2028.

In fiscal year 2024-2025, the five cannabis businesses generated \$970,513 in tax revenue, on par with the \$1.06 million that the city had forecast in its budget for that year and with the \$960,000 projection a city consultant made in 2020. Revenue is expected to remain roughly level — at \$1,059,500 — for the current fiscal year, 2025-2026, and revenue is projected to grow by a "modest 3% per year,"

said Finance Director Beth Goldberg.

Even so, the revenue generated by the local cannabis tax accounts for a small portion of the city's budget. In June, the Redwood City Council approved a \$201 million spending plan for the 2025-2026 fiscal year and anticipates \$206.9 million in revenue.

"On a microscopic level, if cannabis businesses perform better than projected, that certainly would help," said Goldberg, discussing the city's budget and projected deficit. "But it's a very small piece of our total revenue picture. Cannabis performance, in and of itself, is not going to swing it hugely one way or another."

Redwood City 4% cannabis tax is on the lower end of city cannabis taxes. San Francisco's local cannabis retail tax ranges from 2.5% to 5%, depending on business revenue. Belmont, which recently approved permits for two cannabis dispensaries, will tax businesses at 6%. Los Angeles, San Diego and San Jose have the highest local cannabis tax in the state, at 10%. Cannabis retailers in Redwood City generated \$7.2 million in gross sales in the second quarter of this year, almost half of San Mateo County's \$16.6 million in sales.

Carpenter said she sees that Redwood City's 4% local tax reflects an effort to balance public benefit without overburdening operators. Still, Carpenter and Moore said that high taxes and tariffs are among the many headwinds the industry faces.

Carpenter said she sees that Redwood City's 4% local tax reflects an effort to balance public benefit without overburdening operators. Still, Carpenter and Moore said that high taxes and tariffs are among the many headwinds the industry faces.

"It's impacted the industry's ability to function at a cheaper level...and so then the cost of products end up going up," Moore said. "Any cost savings we can get, we try to pass on to

our customers, knowing that they are taxed higher than any other industry. Beer, liquor, wine, tobacco doesn't tax anywhere near as high as cannabis does."

Beau Whitney, chief economist of a cannabis data analysis and consulting firm called Whitney Economics, said operating a cannabis business is risky with typically thin profit margins. Because cannabis is considered illegal by the federal government, businesses often lack access to traditional forms of financing such as bank loans, meaning that businesses must raise money from friends and family or find alternative funding sources through mechanisms such as equity financing.

Oversupply and evolving public perception

Another challenge for cannabis businesses in California is a patchwork regulatory system that gives cities and counties broad authority to regulate them and decide whether cannabis deliveries are allowed and where storefronts are located. The result, Whitney said, is a phenomenon that some stakeholders call "prohibition through legalization."

"What that means is they may say, 'Yes, we're open for business,' but they set up these zoning laws that are so restrictive that no cannabis operator could operate in those jurisdictions," said Whitney.

With many cities along the Peninsula banning retail sales, some advocates have referred to the Peninsula as a "cannabis desert." In San Mateo County, Pacifica, Daly City, San Bruno, Belmont and Redwood City allow storefront retail sales and many cities allow cannabis deliveries. Belmont approved two dispensary permits in April, though neither has opened as of October, Belmont's City Manager Kathy Kleinbaum confirmed.

The cannabis industry is also facing a significant oversupply problem. Whitney's analysis

indicates that demand for cannabis across the United States is roughly 50 million pounds, while cannabis supply from legal and illegal growers is roughly 150 million pounds. The imbalance has driven prices down, posing profitability challenges for businesses trying to compete in the legal market.

Additionally, both Carpenter and Moore noted that cannabis continues to face stigma from some community members. Their customers run the gamut from older adults and athletes seeking pain relief, to insomniacs looking for sleep aids, to those who simply want to experience the relaxation or euphoria of being high.

"I think a typical misunderstanding is that we are not professional," said Moore, who noted there are thousands of products in the store. "Our staff have to know how to help you through your journey. If you have Parkinson's or if you have

diabetes or high blood pressure, we have to know what we're giving you for that. And so education is everything."

Despite the hurdles that their businesses face, Carpenter said that Redwood City is an example of a community that has successfully integrated cannabis into its economy.

"There's a case study here of a community that has not faced adverse public health and safety impacts, that has seen meaningful revenue generation, that has seen thoughtful and responsible integration of its cannabis businesses into its broader business community," Carpenter said. "This is a community that's found balance, and in that balance has found success." ■

Hannah Bensen is a recipient of the California Local News Fellowship who is a member of the Embarcadero Media Foundation Staff through 2027. She can be reached at hbensen@almanacnews.com.

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include:

Richard Rutter, 92, of Emerald Hills, who had lived in Menlo Park, who practiced orthodontics in Palo Alto, who was the founding department chairman for the graduate program in orthodontics at the University of the Pacific's Arthur A. Dugoni School of Dentistry, and who attended more than 1,200 Stanford University football, basketball and baseball games, died on Sept. 20, 2025.

Geraldine Kinyon, 80, of Palo Alto, who worked as a Santa Clara County social worker before becoming a professional photographer, who had four children and served as a second mother to many others and who was deeply involved in the community through school projects, children's theater and fundraising, died on Oct. 26, 2025.

Kraig Branner, 63, of San Jose, who graduated from Palo Alto High School and San Jose State University, who worked as an engineer and tested products for the defense and aerospace industries and who was known for mentoring technicians, engineers, supervisors and other colleagues and for being able to explain complex engineering applications, died on Oct. 16, 2025.

Helen Babb, 89, of Portola Valley, who was born Místek, Czechoslovakia, near today's Czech-Polish border, who escaped the Nazi occupation in 1939, who lived in Manila, Philippines and Colorado Springs before coming to California, who raised three children and settled in Atherton, who became a dedicated visual artist and an active member of the Woodside-Atherton Garden Club, died on Oct. 18, 2025.

Grant Knute Hagestad, 88, of Portola Valley and Carson, Nev., who earned degrees in civil engineering, construction management and business at Stanford University, who co-founded Estate Homes, a company that constructed more than 1,500 homes, who loved to ride bikes and horses, traveling abroad and cheering for the 49ers and Stanford University football, died on Oct. 25, 2025.

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

BENEFITS

continued from page 5

Where to find food assistance in Menlo Park

Second Harvest of Silicon Valley: Second Harvest is a regional food bank serving Santa Clara and San Mateo counties. The nonprofit hosts food distribution events, featuring both hot meals and groceries.

- Hours and locations: Use the online map to find nearby sites
- Website: shfb.org
- Phone: (800) 984-3663

Peninsula Volunteers, Incorporated: PVI delivers meal-on-wheels to seniors in the area. Every Wednesday, it has a free weekly grocery pick-up for families in need. The organization also serves affordable hot lunches for \$5 and

has a salad bar for \$6 at the Little House Café, open Mondays through Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m.

- Hours: Depend on program. See website
- Address: 800 Middle Ave, Menlo Park
- Website: 1pvi.org/nutrition-services
- Phone: 650-326-0665

St. Anthony's Padua Dining Room: Serve hot meals and distributes groceries six days a week.

- Hours: 11:00 a.m. to 1 p.m.
- Address: 3500 Middlefield Road, Menlo Park
- Website: paduadiningroom.com
- Contact: 650-365-9665 or paduadiningroom@gmail.com ■

Hannah Bensen is a recipient of the California Local News Fellowship who is a member of the Embarcadero Media Foundation Staff through 2027. She can be reached at hbensen@almanacnews.com.

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PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCES IN ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Throwing off the limits

Pushing Boundaries' takes ceramics
in new directions at the Palo Alto Art Center

By Mette
Huberman

An exhibit at the Palo Alto Art Center, "Pushing Boundaries: Ceramic Artists and Identity," lives up to its name at many levels. It pushed the boundaries of the curator, Demetri Broxton, who is not a ceramicist but an expert on artists reflecting on identity in their art. It pushed the boundaries of the artists, some of whom had never worked in clay before and others who combined clay with other media in new and interesting ways; and it pushes the boundaries of viewers who are invited to reflect on various innovative ways of exploring identity.

The exhibit features 31 artworks by 19 artists who reflect on their identities, such as their national heritages, their racial and ethnic backgrounds and their sexual orientation. The exhibit also features art installations by multidisciplinary artist Ashwini Bhat, including a large mandala that was created in collaboration with the public at Montalvo Art Center.

The exhibit is the second installment of the Palo Alto Art Center's "Centering: Clay and the Community," a series of three exhibits with a yearlong focus on ceramic art. The first exhibit, held this summer, explored functional ceramics in our daily lives around food and shared meals. The third and final show, which will open in winter 2026, will focus on ceramic artworks related to environmental and cultural sustainability. A

yearlong site-specific installation by Bhat, "Being, Longing ...," will be shown concurrently with the three exhibits, addressing themes that cut across all the exhibits.

The current "Pushing Boundaries" exhibit is curated by Broxton, a Bay Area artist, independent curator, educator and art administrator. He is of Creole and Filipino heritage and creates textile artworks using beads and sequins related to his family background and heritage.

Broxton invited a diverse group of artists to participate from both the Bay Area and Los Angeles who reflect on identity in their artwork, and he deliberately included both older, known artists, as well as younger, up-and-coming artists.

"The exhibition is not only called "Pushing Boundaries" because of the way that the artists are using the medium to tell their stories, but even how the medium is incorporated into their work. I really wanted to, from the curatorial standpoint, push those boundaries," Broxton said.

Some artists explicitly reflect on their national identities in their artwork. One of the centerpieces in the exhibit is Anabel Juarez' "Recuerdos (Memories)" which consists of two open, multi-tiered metal carts with wheels and covered with a roof. The carts are full of colorful ceramic objects

representing her memories of growing up in Mexico and moving back and forth across the border. Some of the objects include a butterfly, a teddy bear, a Madonna, kitchen utensils and California poppies.

The carts are inspired both by the pushcarts of street vendors who work along the U.S.-Mexico border, as well as the multiple meanings of "home" for an immigrant. In Broxton's view, Juarez' piece, "represents the entire idea of literally pushing the boundaries." He notes that, "what is home is permeable through that physical barrier and going through this kind of metaphorical border, as well."

Another artwork reflecting national heritage is Kristiana Chan's piece, "The Flesh in My Teeth," which looks like a fishing net but is made of sterling silver chains attached to acrylic tubes. Hanging from the silver chains are cast porcelain anchovies, as well as dried anchovies covered in crystallized sea salt, invoking the livelihood of Chinese immigrants and the smell of fish.

"It's not only this beautiful object, but when you start to get into what the artist is thinking of in terms of the Chinese diasporic experience and recounting some of the symbols that were prevalent (as) both symbols of cultural pride of people immigrating and bringing their culture with them to the Bay Area," Broxton said.

"But then how that also leads into, from a Western standpoint, this 'repulsive' idea of men (living



Left: Rose B. Simpson's "Copilot 1" is a ceramic piece anchored by steel and decorated with natural and precious materials. Courtesy Addison Doty. Far Left: "Blue Monday's Babe Born on a Wednesday" by Matt Lambert features a ceramic animal that's highly decorated with flowers, beads, sequins and other objects. Photo by Mette Huberman.

("Sailing Face"), a woman's face is resting on the lower part of a palm tree trunk while her hair is wrapped around the upper part of the trunk. In the other piece ("Heart of Palm"), a woman is standing under a bent palm tree trunk, dressed in a black dress with multiple colorful accents. Broxton notes that the palm tree is native to Southeast Asia, so similar to Yousif "(the trees) are also immigrants that become very much aligned with certain places in our imagination, our thoughts of home."

Another group of artworks reflect on racial and ethnic identity. One example is Rose B. Simpson's ceramic sculpture, "Copilot 1," which is anchored by steel and decorated with natural and precious materials. Simpson is an Indigenous artist from Santa Clara Pueblo, New Mexico, who integrates Pueblo pottery with contemporary art forms as a way to honor her ancestry. Broxton explains that, "the very material of this piece, embodies her cultural heritage." He also emphasizes that "the place where it is situated (in the exhibit), she becomes this guardian kind of figure that is overlooking the entire gallery."

Cathy Lu's piece, "Yellow Tears," also offers a reflection on race. Two large, ceramic eyes, modeled on Lu's own eyes, with large black eye lashes and painted brown peach pits as irises stare at the viewer from the wall. Four tubes of water run from each corner of the eyes, with "tears" falling into a plastic container of yellow water on the floor, symbolizing the racial identification of her and other Asian Americans as "yellow." Broxton notes that, "it makes us really confront racialized language, like thinking about how we call people by their color or we judge them by the color of their skin."

Some pieces also reflect on sexual identity. Andres Payan Estrada's "Visiones Nocturnas

in) fishing villages (with) hanging fish and how that was kind of weaponized against Chinese immigrants."

Broxton noted that some Westerners highlighting such cultural differences helped lay the foundations for the Chinese Exclusion Act, when Chinese immigrants and laborers were banned from the United States between 1882 and 1943.

However, "Chan transforms anchovies into vessels of pride and persistence," according to the label written by Broxton.

Two other pieces that reflect on national identity are Maryam Yousif's glazed stoneware reliefs, "Sailing Face" and "Heart of Palm." Born in Iraq, Yousif draws from her Middle Eastern heritage by showing a woman entangled with a palm tree. In one piece

See **THROWING**, page 21

Bay Area-raised playwright takes audiences on the road with 'A Driving Beat'

TheatreWorks stages world premiere of Jordan Ramirez Puckett's play about a mother-son cross-country trip

By Heather Zimmerman

A road trip isn't just a way to get from one place to another. In playwright Jordan Ramirez Puckett's "A Driving Beat," now playing at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley, a five-day drive between Ohio and San Diego becomes an illuminating journey for adoptive mom Diane (Lee Ann Payne), who is white, and her son Mateo (Jon Viktor Corpuz), who is brown, as they set out to find his birth mother. The duo encounters other characters along the way, who are all portrayed by Livia Gomes Demarchi.

TheatreWorks is staging the world premiere production of the show, which opened Nov. 1 in Mountain View. It's a "rolling" premiere, as a version of this production was first seen at Flint Repertory Theatre this spring. Jeffrey Lo directs TheatreWorks' production.

Audiences may remember "A Driving Beat" from the company's 2024 New Works Festival, where the show was seen in development last year.

"A Driving Beat" incorporates beatboxing and spoken-word poetry as Mateo imagines various scenarios meeting his mother and creates rhythmic poems over the static on the car radio as he and Diane drive through some farflung areas. Bay Area musician Carlos Aguirre developed the beats for the show.

A Chicana writer who now lives in New York City, Puckett grew up in San Jose. They are

a graduate of the Lila Acheson Wallace American Playwrights Program at Juilliard School and a fellow of WP Theater's Lab. Their works, which also include "Transitional Love Stories," "Huelga," "En Las Sombras" and "To Saints and Stars," have been produced at companies such as Goodman Theatre, Playwrights Realm, Flint Repertory Theatre, San Diego Repertory Theatre and San Francisco Playhouse. "A Driving Beat" was on the short list for the 2022 Yale Drama Series Prize.

We spoke with Puckett ahead of the play's opening. This interview has been edited for length and clarity. Read a longer version of this interview at almanacnews.com/arts-culture.

The Almanac: You grew up in the Bay Area. What would you say that has brought to your work?

Puckett: Definitely, I'm influenced by the different communities here. The Bay Area is such a wonderful, diverse place. I'm really interested in the different ways that people are able to move through the world according to their identities. That's a lot of what "A Driving Beat" is about. I think that that's something that I saw firsthand, both in the Bay Area and then also in a mixed-race household.

I think a lot of people in the Bay Area have sort of a unique relationship to the tech industry and the push and pull of economic growth that has brought, and also the displacement of people that has brought. So something I'm also really interested in is the

intersection between technology and art and how it plays out. I think that's less present in "A Driving Beat," but it's definitely something I explore in my other works.

The Almanac: What inspired you to write "A Driving Beat"?

Puckett: I got my MFA at Ohio University, and so I did a road trip from the Bay Area to Ohio, and we did sort of the southern route. I did the reverse of the road trip that they do in the play, where they go from Ohio to San Diego. I saw a lot of things on that road trip. A lot of the experiences that I had went directly into the play.

Like I said, I'm interested in the ways in which people are able to move through the world according to their identities, and both the stories that we tell about people that we see — we make quick assumptions based on how we perceive people — but I'm also interested in the stories that we tell ourselves about ourselves, and how that impacts the way we're able to move through the world. I think there's no better way to do that than through a road trip. (For) these two very different people, their experiences differ going across the country.

The Almanac: How did spoken word become part of the show?

Puckett: I knew I needed to show the passage of time in some way because I wanted it to be a tight 90-minute show. But it takes place over five days. So how are we going to show the passage of time? And I remember that on the road trip, there would be large swaths where we would try



Courtesy Jordan Ramirez Puckett

Playwright Jordan Ramirez Puckett was inspired to write "A Driving Beat" from their own cross-country road trip.

and find something on the radio, and it was just static. So I thought, "wouldn't it be interesting if this character formed a beat with the static and had these internal monologues that went on top of the beat." So it started off as a very practical way to show the passage of time, and then has turned into what I think is a really beautiful expression into the mind of our protagonist, Mateo.

The Almanac: What do you hope people take away from seeing the show?

Puckett: My biggest thing with all of my plays, but I think with this one in particular, is I would love for people to walk out of this play and go, "Oh, I really want to call that person in my life who has meant a lot to me, or that person in my life who helped raise me, who maybe I haven't like talked to in a minute. And I just want to call them and say, 'I love you. I'm thinking of you. I just saw a show that made me think of you.'"

The Almanac: What's your favorite road trip memory?

Puckett: I'm just gonna go first thought, best thought, because I feel like I could think on this for hours. I have this vivid memory: My grandparents lived in Redding, California, so we used to do the drive up to Redding all the time. I have this really vivid memory of being in the car and eating In-N-Out and forcing my aunt to listen to "Phantom of the Opera" and singing "Phantom of the Opera" at the top of my lungs while she was driving. So I'm gonna go with that. ■

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

"A Driving Beat" runs through Nov. 23 at The Mountain View Center for Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View; \$49-\$79; theatreworks.org.

THROWING

continued from page 20

(Nocturnal Visions)" displays a ceramic-covered disco ball hanging from the ceiling and rotating low over the ground. Spotlights illuminate the ball and printed chiffon hanging behind the ball, which in turn reflect light on the floor and wall. In Broxton's view, the disco ball represents a nightclub, "a place where people go to find joy, to find connection with one another, especially within a queer space." However, "it is also, in this current historical moment, we think about massacres that have happened within queer nightclubs. So, it really balances this line between celebration and then also this violent memory," he said.

Another artwork reflecting sexual identity is Matt Lambert's "Blue Monday's Babe Born on a Wednesday." It is a sculpture in animal form made of blue-glazed

ceramic, covered with ceramic flowers and leaves taken from an old chandelier, as well as shiny beads and sequins. Broxton notes that, "working with these jewelry items, these sparkly things have direct connection to the body because we generally adorn ourselves with those things, so there is this intimacy."

Featured alongside the "Pushing Boundaries" exhibit are the yearlong site-specific installations by Ashwini Bhat, "Being, Longing..." which consist of three artworks. Bhat is a multidisciplinary artist from Southern India who explores the intersections between body and nature, self and other. At a community event at Montalvo Art Center in July 2025, she cocreated a mandala called "Collective Earth," inviting the public to participate in the South Asian practice of foot wedging clay, in which you step on clay to remove air bubbles and flatten it.

She then fired and decorated the mandala in black, orange, green, and blue colors, and included an outline of her own body in the center of the mandala. A video of the creation of the mandala at Montalvo Art Center is shown next to the artwork.

A second artwork by Bhat consists of another video that shows her foot wedging a piece of clay on her own (a work called "Earth Under Our Feet"). This piece of unfired clay became the screen on which the video is projected and thus is much rougher than the fired and glazed mandala.

Broxton observed that when "someone migrates to a place, you not only bring your own culture with you, but you become part of that culture and that culture in turn changes because of you being part of it." ■

Email contributing writer Mette Huberman at mette.huberman@gmail.com.



Mette Huberman

Maryam Yousif's glazed stoneware reliefs, "Sailing Face" and "Heart of Palm" use the palm tree as a metaphor for immigrants' experiences.

"Pushing Boundaries: Ceramic Artists and Identity" is on view through Dec. 7 at the Palo Alto Art Center, 1313 Newell Road, Palo Alto; tinyurl.com/PushingBoundariesPAArtCenter.

Visit almanacnews.com/arts-culture to find weekend events and read about Foothill Theatre Arts staging a century-old play that foresaw issues with artificial intelligence.

Food & Drink



Seeger Gray

Xandra Gonzalez, left, and Jenn Cruz eat with their dogs at 7 Mile House in Brisbane on Nov. 2. Gonzalez and Cruz said they came to 7 Mile House because they heard it was a dog-friendly restaurant.



Seeger Gray

People eat and watch a San Francisco 49ers game at 7 Mile House in Brisbane on Nov. 2.

Doggie dining

These Peninsula eateries offer options for pups

By Karla Kane

The Peninsula loves its pets. With pleasant weather here for much of the year, it's not unusual to see dogs out and about with their people, even faithfully waiting (or maybe begging) under the table during mealtimes at restaurants with outdoor dining.

Usually, the best a pup could hope for might be a few dropped morsels, or perhaps a doggie bag to take home. But some local eateries have taken it to the next level, offering special dog menus so that canines can enjoy

chowing down on a meal just for them alongside their human companions.

7 Mile House, Brisbane

At 7 Mile House in Brisbane, "When you come in and we see your dog, we greet the dog first and then the people," owner Vanessa Garcia said with a laugh. 7 Mile House has a large menu, including some Filipino specialties, and a long history dating back to the 19th century. But it's in the past decade that it's established itself as a haven for dog lovers.

The idea was sparked when the city paved the area in front

of the eatery in 2016, allowing a patio to be added. (7 Mile has since added even more outdoor dining space.) Garcia is a dog lover and had the idea to not only welcome dogs, but also make the experience extra special.

“We’ve been really committed to that, even way before everyone went dog-crazy,” she said, noting an uptick in dog adoptions since the pandemic. “We truly are a dog-friendly and dog-loving restaurant, and we have been for the past nine years.”

Dog diners can choose from menu options including grilled Angus beef, grilled chicken, lumpia bits, grilled New York steak, smoked pig ear, a “dog cigar” (cigar-shaped jerky treats), Ben & Jerry’s dog ice cream and peanut butter biscuits (all ranging from \$5-\$12). All dog customers are offered a “VID” punch card and their fifth meal is free. Free peanut butter biscuits are also offered during “Yappy Hour” from 3-6 p.m. each day the restaurant is open.

Garcia curated the doggie menu based on foods she’d seen her own dogs enjoy in the past, mindful of keeping offerings healthy. 7 Mile will soon add new beverages for dogs packaged to look like beer and wine (and has offered a different brand of “dog beer” in the past).

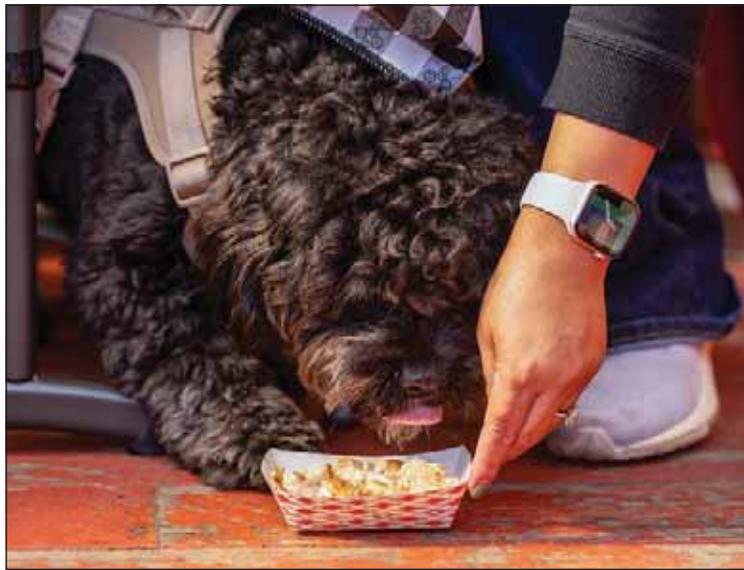
Another offering that’s been a hit with dog lovers is 7 Mile’s doggie birthday parties (or “pawties”). In addition to water bowls, treats and VID cards for each dog guest, the restaurant provides a festive banner, centerpiece and pawprint tablecloth. The party package is free with a \$200 minimum, and Garcia said their biggest bash so far had around 40 human and 10 canine guests.

“It’s been great seeing families and their dogs coming over. You can really see that they treat their dogs like their children and we love seeing that, and we love being able to have a space for those families to come to,” she said.

7 Mile House, 2800 Bayshore Blvd., Brisbane; 415-467-2343, Instagram: @7milehouse. Open Wednesday to Monday from 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. (bar open until 10 p.m. Friday and Saturday).

Millbrae Pancake House, Millbrae

Family-owned Millbrae Pancake House has been going strong for 66 years, opening back in 1959 and known for its pancakes and waffles. In 2021, the venerable breakfast spot started offering a doggie menu. That’s when the restaurant reopened after a pandemic closure, adding outdoor dining



Seeger Gray

Dublin resident Jenn Cruz places a tray of grilled chicken in front of her 11-month-old dog Moonie at 7 Mile House in Brisbane on Nov. 2.

for the first time.

“Once we had garden and patio seating ... the dogs would come!” owner Erin Burke wrote in an email.

Current offerings include the doggie burger (a plain hamburger patty, \$5), the doggie scramble (scrambled eggs well done, \$5), and the doggie combo (a hamburger patty and scrambled eggs, \$8.75).

The dog options were added to the online menu during the pandemic, but Burke said they’re not yet part of the in-restaurant main menu.

“Dogs seem to like the hamburger patty and eggs in their own to-go box. We also have water bowls for them,” Burke said.

Millbrae Pancake House, 1301 El Camino Real, Millbrae; 650-589-2080, Instagram: @millbraepancakehouse. Open daily from 7 a.m. to 2 p.m.



Courtesy Marissa Chinn and Tuan Pham

Lazy Dog’s Bay Area locations offer meat, rice and veggie bowls for canine visitors.



Courtesy 7 Mile House

A pup party guest enjoys some dog ice cream at 7 Mile House.

makes sense that its eateries would be dog-friendly.

“Our founder wanted to create a place where you could come as you are, bring your pup along, and enjoy a great meal together,” Schroeder said in an email.

Lazy Dog’s culinary team created the menu items to provide a healthy and appealing option for dogs. But it’s not just about the food, Schroeder said — it’s also about helping human and canine customers connect and relax. And over the years, Lazy Dog has partnered with local rescues and dog-centric nonprofits to host community fundraisers.

“Supporting causes that help

animals is something we truly care about, and it’s become a meaningful part of who we are,” Schroeder said. “We’re proud to be a place where everyone — two- or four-legged — feels welcome.”

Lazy Dog Restaurant & Bar, 2208 Bridgepointe Parkway, San Mateo; 19359 Stevens Creek Blvd., Cupertino; Instagram: @lazydogrestaurants. Open Monday to Friday from 11 a.m. to midnight, Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. to midnight. ■

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



Courtesy Lazy Dog

Lazy Dog, with locations in Cupertino and San Mateo, aims to offer delicious food for both humans and dogs.

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