

The Almanac

NONPROFIT LOCAL NEWS FOR THE MIDPENINSULA

NOVEMBER 14, 2025 | VOL. 61 NO. 11



WWW.ALMANACNEWS.COM

Menlo Park fire district reveals \$120 million plan for station

Campus would include training site, headquarters

By Arden Margulis

The Menlo Park Fire Protection District is advancing plans to turn its main fire station and training grounds into a \$120 million campus slated to be the city's largest public safety developments in decades.

The proposal calls for demolishing the aging Station 1 at 300 Middlefield Road in Menlo Park and building a new two-story firehouse, training tower and 14,700-square-foot administrative building designed to serve as the district's headquarters and community meeting space. The fire district provides emergency services across 30 square miles in Menlo Park, Atherton, East Palo Alto and areas of unincorporated San Mateo County.

The fire district presented mock-ups of the designs to interested community members on Nov. 10 and will hold

a study session with the Menlo Park Planning Commission on Nov. 17.

The new fire station would be two stories and include 14 dorm rooms, a kitchen, a common area for firefighters, offices and four apparatus bays. It will also have workout rooms, showers and locker rooms for firefighters. While the new station replaces the current 11,000-square-foot fire station, the district does not anticipate changing staffing levels. It is currently staffed by five people per rotation. The new station will be able to accommodate up to 13 firefighters and one battalion chief.

The district says the original 11,000-square-foot station, which was built in 1955 and seismically retrofitted in the 1990s, is deteriorating and requires replacement to bring it up to

See **FIRE STATION**, page 12



Rendering courtesy Menlo Park Fire Protection District

This is a rendering of what the new Menlo Park Fire Protection District Station 1 could look like from Middlefield Road. The fire truck on the far right would be part of the mini-museum.

County presents long-awaited Las Lomas audit findings

Reflection comes after questions about superintendent's charges

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Over 500 credit card transactions totaling to more than \$200,000 were reviewed in Las Lomas Elementary School District's extraordinary audit after public records found that district officials had used public funds for extravagant trips and thousands of dollars on meals. Auditors said a lack of district policy governing such expenses, and the lack of receipts for charges, made it difficult to determine whether all the expenses were justified.

In April, the San Mateo County Office of Education commissioned the Fiscal Crisis and Management Assistance Team, an independent state

agency, to review whether the district's credit card use and employee leave were in compliance with Education Code and board policy. The audit was to determine if fraud, misappropriation of funds and other illegal practices occurred.

The county received FCMAT's report on Oct. 30 and it was presented by county Deputy Superintendent of Business Services Kevin Bultema during a LLES school board meeting on Nov. 5.

According to Bultema, the team found insufficient evidence to determine that there was "willful intent to commit wrongdoing or to conceal or misrepresent actions in order to misuse the district's leave policies or procedures."

Additionally, there was not enough evidence to show fraud or misappropriation of funds had occurred under the direction of former Superintendent Beth Polito.

"Numerous deviations often indicate significant internal control deficiencies and weaknesses," writes the report.

Auditors interviewed employees for more information on transactions that had insufficient evidence and lacked supporting documentation to prove its educational purpose.

Bultema reported that FCMAT's findings indicated an unusual use of credit cards was a result of a lack of detailed board policies, administrative regulations and consistent guidelines on how credit card purchases

should be authorized. Auditors also found that there are "deficiencies in policies related to employee leave," including a complete lack of board policy related to sick leave.

Results of the audit

The audit looked over the transactions of six employees over a 33-month period, including Polito.

As part of the review, FCMAT evaluated each of the 504 sampled transactions and determined whether they passed or failed the agency's five testing criteria. These include evidence that the expenditure log was signed by the employee, a supervisor, described for educational purposes or of reasonable matter, and filed with the statement

and logged in a timely manner.

According to the report, 76% of the transactions failed to meet at least one criteria. If a transaction fails to meet any of the five testing criteria, it can mean that the auditor is not able to make a determination about the validity of the transaction due to missing information and documentation.

Transactions that were recognized as potential gifts of public funds included \$5,775 used for retirement parties, flowers, gift cards, custom birthday cakes and condolences. Twenty-six transactions failed to meet criteria that were determined to serve an educational purpose.

Retirement party expenditures

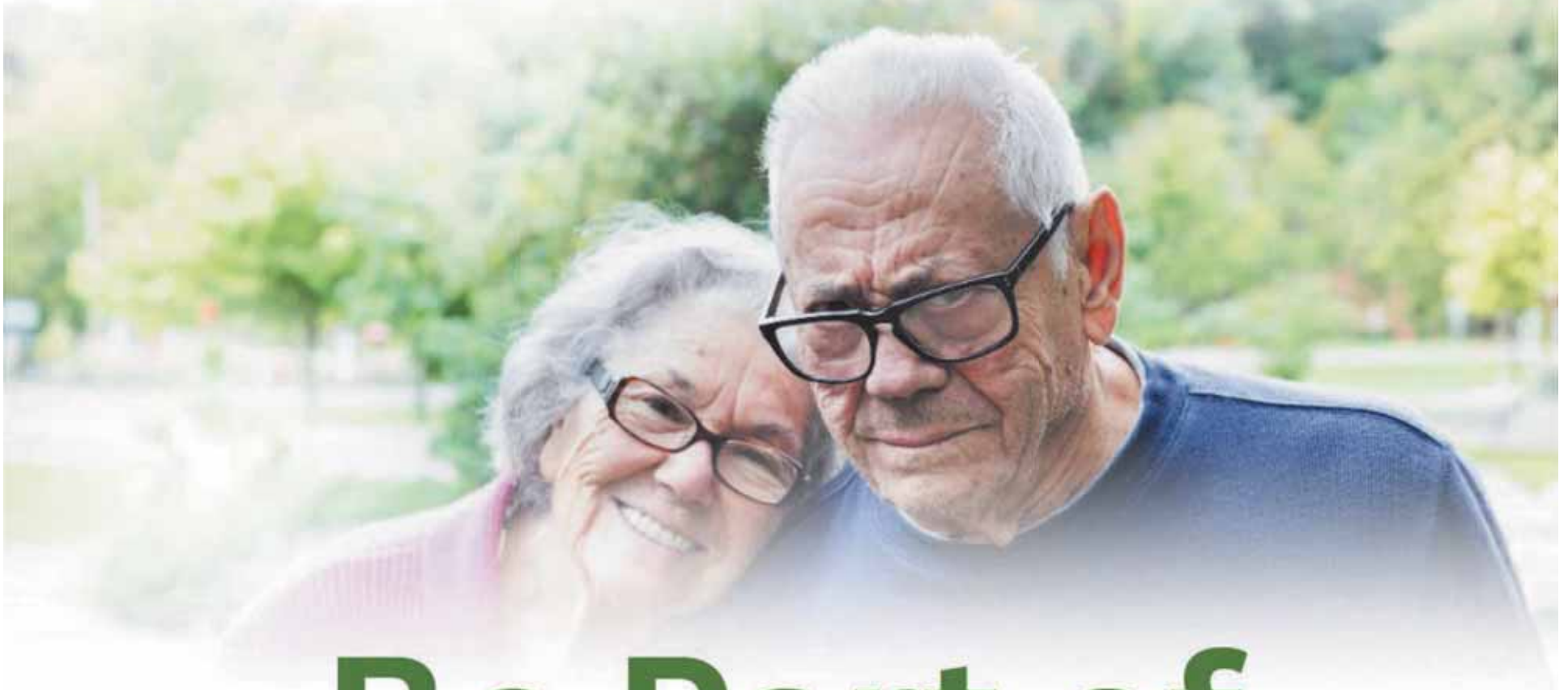
See **AUDIT**, page 16

INSIDE

ARTSCENE 20 | FOOD & DRINK 22

Read up-to-the-minute news on AlmanacNews.com

Senior Activity Center at Little House • Adult Day Services at Rosener House
RIDE PVI • Quiescence • Nutrition Services



Be Part of Their Story.

Your gift brings comfort, connection,
and care to local seniors.

Donate Today



Enabling Seniors to Age in Place
Peninsula Volunteers, Inc.
800 Middle Ave.
Menlo Park, CA 94025
(650) 326-0665 | 1pvi.org

Scan to learn
more or donate





YOUR NEW HOME AWAITS



DeLeonRealty_USA



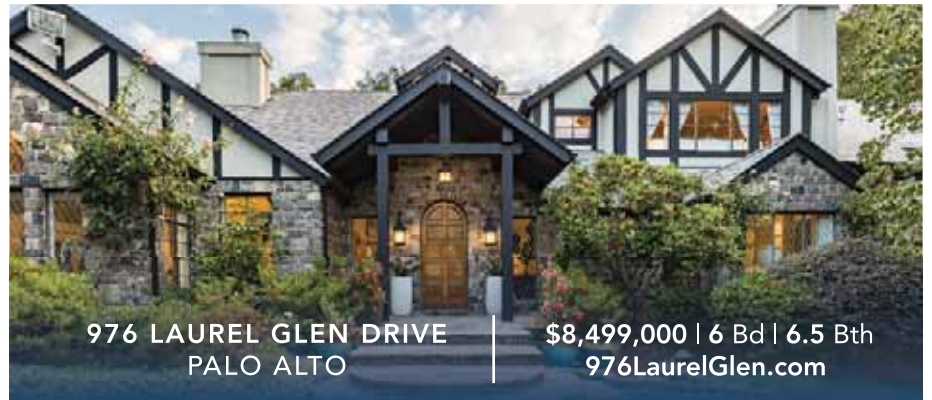
579 GLENBROOK DRIVE | \$5,750,000 | 6 Bd | 4 Bth
PALO ALTO | 579Glenbrook.com



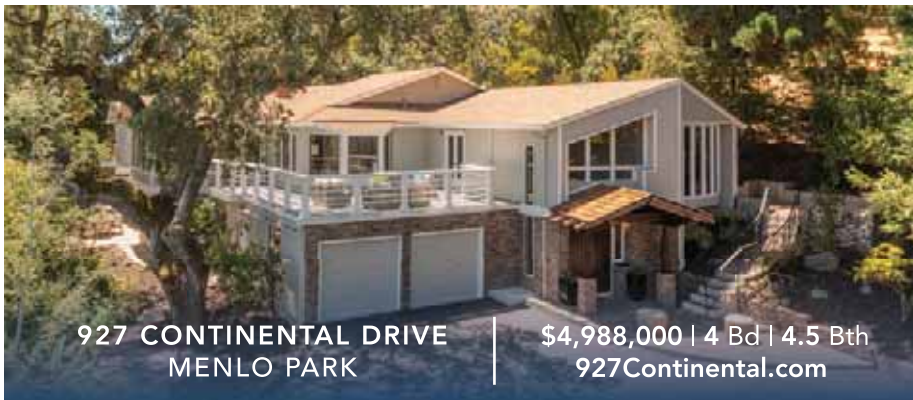
12008 EMERALD HILL LANE | \$6,898,000 | 4 Bd | 3.5 Bth
LOS ALTOS HILLS | 12008EmeraldHillLn.com



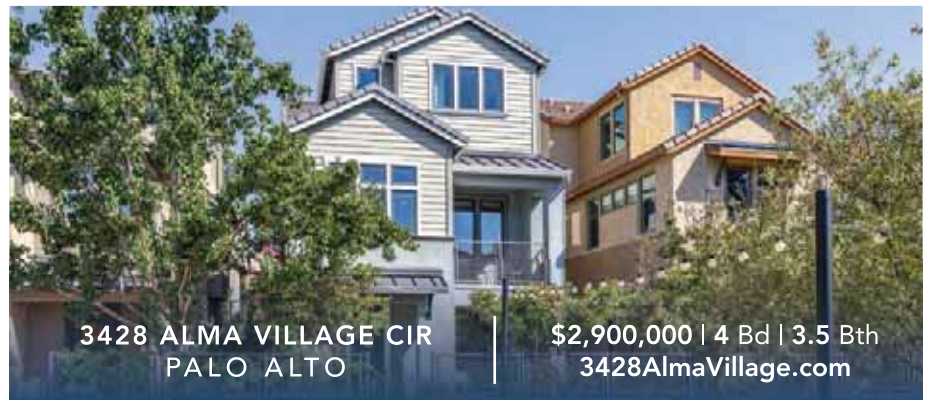
28500 MATADERO CREEK LN | \$9,398,000 | 6 Bd | 9 Bth
LOS ALTOS HILLS | 28500MataderoCreek.com



976 LAUREL GLEN DRIVE | \$8,499,000 | 6 Bd | 6.5 Bth
PALO ALTO | 976LaurelGlen.com



927 CONTINENTAL DRIVE | \$4,988,000 | 4 Bd | 4.5 Bth
MENLO PARK | 927Continental.com



3428 ALMA VILLAGE CIR | \$2,900,000 | 4 Bd | 3.5 Bth
PALO ALTO | 3428AlmaVillage.com



40 TAGUS COURT | \$6,988,000 | 4 Bd | 3 Bth
PORTOLA VALLEY | 40Tagus.com



11722 PUTTER WAY | \$3,200,000 | 3 Bd | 2.5 Bth
LOS ALTOS | 11722Putter.com

Don't Overpay to Sell your Home List with Us for **3% Total commission**

Ken DeLeon (DRE #01342140) **650.543.8501**
Michael Repka (DRE #01854880) **650.488.7325**
中文諮詢請聯繫 Audrey Sun (DRE #01933274) **650.785.5822**
DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224 | Equal Housing Opportunity





HOPE HAPPENS HERE.

Join us and help more than 32,000 people fight the pressures of poverty.

samaritanhousesanmateo.org/donate



Fighting Poverty. Lifting Lives.

FOOD. SHELTER. CLOTHING. HEALTHCARE.



Seeger Gray

Social studies and special education teacher Adili Skillin speaks during a Black Student Union meeting while wearing a "Never Say the N-Word" shirt at Sequoia High School in Redwood City on Nov. 6. Skillin is the Black Student Union's adviser.

Sequoia High addresses use of racial slur in T-shirt campaign

Teachers share message each Thursday

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

On Thursdays, Sequoia High School staff members can be spotted wearing the same black T-shirts across campus. On the front it says, "Never Say the N-word," but as they turn around a bold red message faces the students: "This word is not acceptable at our school. This word will not be used at

Sequoia High School."

The shirts are the start to the Redwood City high school's "Never Say the N-Word campaign," an initiative started by the Black Student Union to stop the excessive use of the N-word on campus.

The racial slur can be heard in hallways and classrooms, mostly by students outside of the Black community, said students and teachers. Some

BSU students said they have removed themselves from friend groups that use the word, explaining that they didn't want to be associated with people who used it.

"Part of the reason why I like this campaign is that I don't feel like I have to go up there and police it, because I don't want to be the person

See **SLUR**, page 15

Almanac launches Holiday Fund drive

Campaign will benefit local nonprofits that serve youth, families and others in need

By Almanac staff

The Almanac Holiday Fund campaign to support local nonprofits that provide critical help to those in need is kicking off this week, with the aim of exceeding last year's record-breaking \$366,000 — every cent of which will be distributed to community agencies.

All administrative and marketing expenses are donated by the Almanac and Embarcadero Media Foundation, the nonprofit that publishes the Almanac and its sister publications and websites.

Ten nonprofit organizations serving needy families in Menlo Park, Redwood City and North Fair Oaks will share equally in the funds raised. Matching funds provided by the Packard, Hewlett and several family foundations, as well as a gift from the Menlo Park Rotary Club Foundation, will add to what local individuals, businesses and other organizations give during the campaign, which runs until mid-January.

All donations are tax deductible and donors may donate in their name, in memory of a friend or relative, or anonymously. Donor-advised charitable donations, stock or IRA distributions are also accepted.

Donations can be made online at AlmanacNews.com/holiday-fund or by sending

a check to Almanac Holiday Fund, Embarcadero Media Foundation, 2345 Yale St., Palo Alto CA 94306. A coupon appears on page 13 of today's edition.

The names of all donors will be published in the Almanac unless otherwise requested.

This year's recipient nonprofit organizations are:

Boys & Girls Club of the Peninsula

Provides after-school academic support, enrichment, mentoring and mental health services for low-income youth.

Ecumenical Hunger Program

Provides emergency food, clothing and household essentials to individuals and families in need.

Fair Oaks Community Center

Helps individuals and families meet their most basic needs, offering homeless services and prevention, food distribution, transportation, rental and utility assistance, shelter referrals, and emergency support.

Haven Family House

Provides interim shelter services and transitional housing in Menlo Park for 23 homeless

See **HOLIDAY FUND**, page 14

Stanford launches new plan for campus growth

University solicits community feedback as it looks to apply for a new general use permit next year

By Gennady Sheyner

Six years after its ambitious growth plan fizzled in the face of community concerns and county demands, Stanford University is preparing to try again.

The university is getting ready to apply for a new general use permit, a document that would govern Stanford's growth and set the parameters for new academic space, housing developments and transportation policies on campus. If things go as planned, Stanford hopes to

submit an application in 2026 and get approval from Santa Clara County in early 2028.

Yet as the university learned in 2019, colossal planning efforts rarely go according to plan. The university abandoned its last general use permit after a protracted squabble with Santa Clara County over a development agreement that would lock in rules for campus growth. Over the course of the review process, the university was besieged by community requests for affordable housing, additional funding for local schools and

stronger protections for open spaces. Stanford also balked at the county's efforts to impose stricter methods for measuring vehicle traffic around the campus.

Last time, the university launched its three-year planning effort by unveiling a growth plan that included 2.275 million square feet of new academic space, 2,600 student beds, 550 housing units for faculty and staff and 40,000 square feet for childcare facilities. This time, Stanford is taking a different approach. Between now

and mid-2026, Stanford will be holding public meetings and convening a stakeholder group that will help it devise the goals of the new plan.

Known as the StanfordNext Advisory Council (SNAC), the 22-member group includes nonprofit leaders, elected officials and experts in land use and transportation. Members include Palo Alto Mayor Ed Luing, Palo Alto Unified School District Trustee Alison Kamhi, Alta Housing CEO Randy Tsuda, Silicon Valley@Home Executive Director

Regina Celestin Williams, and Alice Kaufman, policy director for Green Foothills.

Whitney McNair, Stanford's senior associate vice president and StanfordNext project executive, said in an email the multi-disciplinary group will "help advise the StanfordNext plan to ensure it reflects a broad spectrum of local perspective and expertise."

Stanford also plans to hold open house events to give members of the public a chance to

See **STANFORD**, page 11

New nonprofit aims to bring vibrancy to downtown Menlo Park

Downtown Menlo Fund to spearhead beautification projects, encourage community

By Arden Margulis

A group of Menlo Park residents has formed a new nonprofit to breathe life into the city's downtown. The Downtown Menlo Fund aims to raise money for beautification projects, support local businesses and help bring back the sense of community that once defined Santa Cruz Avenue.

The fund — created by Laura Melahn, Marnie Foody, Ben Eiref and Paul Charrette — hopes to make downtown more welcoming through simple but visible improvements like new planters, street banners and coordinated events. Their vision is to turn the corridor between El Camino Real and University Drive into a lively gathering place where neighbors meet, shop and spend time together.

The idea gained momentum earlier this year when the Menlo Park City Council made downtown revitalization as one of its top priorities.

"I think it's been an evolution. Our team kind of came together ... over time. But I think that the big turning point was when the city put downtown vibrancy as a priority goal for the year. I think that was really the city putting a flag in the ground that we care about downtown and we want to do this," said Melahn. "Residents want downtown to be vibrant and fun. We're trying to be a little bit of an organizing function, like a boat that everyone can jump on."

Melahn moved to Menlo Park's Allied Arts neighborhood in 2020. She said she found strong neighborhood connections but felt something missing at the city level.

"On the very micro level, we have the most amazing community I've ever experienced, where we have block parties every Friday, and it's a super engaged community," she said. "At the intermediate level of downtowns, local governments,



Magali Gauthier

Bikers ride past Camper in downtown Menlo Park in 2020.

and cities, there's a little bit of a gap of ways for people to engage. ... you get to this question of I want my town to feel good and connected, and there's not really a way for people to just kind of sign up and be like, 'I love Menlo Park and let's do it together.' So that's kind of the space we're trying to create."

The Downtown Menlo Fund is a tax-deductible foundation under the Silicon Valley Community Foundation. The founders see the nonprofit as a way to fund simple, high-impact projects to create a welcoming downtown for the city.

Foody, another founding member, said the idea grew out of conversations among residents who saw potential in Menlo Park's central district but wanted to make that potential visible.

"I retired in May of 2024 and I've been living in Menlo Park for about 28 or 30 years, and I always felt our downtown had great potential, but it was unfulfilled," said Foody, whose background is in architecture and development. "Our focus, our mission, is to revitalize downtown. We see three major buckets. The first being beautification, how to make it more attractive than what it is ... then eventually into the streetscape. The second is building out strong businesses, and the third is that people don't go downtown to buy Kleenex or school supplies. They go downtown to engage with other people."

The group is starting small with what Melahn called "high-visibility, low-cost" projects. "We're looking to one, put flags up and down the street; two, banners on the big street pillars," Foody said. "This will start to create a branding, an identification, an awareness that Menlo Park is there, and an awareness of our group. And then we're going to replant all the planters. We're starting in block one, which is El Camino to Doyle Street, and as we get more money, we can work our way down the block."

Foody said other Peninsula cities already have community funds that help fill gaps between what city budgets can provide and what residents want to see. "Most of the towns up and down the Peninsula now have a community fund of some sort," she said. "The cost of operations for cities has risen faster than the revenue. So that's where these community funds have been stepping in to provide the nice things, not necessarily the necessities, but the nice things that might be missing."

The Downtown Menlo Fund has begun fundraising under the Silicon Valley Community Foundation's umbrella, which contributed a starter amount. Foody's son also contributed, in addition to unsolicited donations from other sources.

The group is also helping local merchants form a new Business Association to strengthen coordination between shops and restaurants downtown. "There is no business

association currently, which is a gaping hole," Foody said.

While Menlo Park already has the smaller Menlo Park Design District, the two groups plan to collaborate. "We hope to build with them so we're stronger together, and so we're one downtown," Foody said.

Menlo Park had a chamber of commerce but it dissolved in 2023 due to financial issues caused by the COVID-19 Pandemic.

Melahn said the association will help businesses align on marketing, communication, and events. "A structure like a business association aligns people just by the nature of existing," she said. "It's a really interesting time to be a local business owner in the world ... coming together as a group and having shared resources and thoughts on those sorts of things could be one example of something they do."

The Downtown Menlo Fund has looked to the Los Altos Village Association as a model. That group, founded in 1970, supports two full-time staff and a full calendar of community events.

"They beautify, they help with keeping things clean, and they are a singular voice to work with the city," Foody said. "Things like permitting can be really hard for small businesses, take a lot of time, cost a lot of money, and if you've never gone through it before, it's a really big learning curve. So that's something

Established 1965

The Almanac

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

NEWSROOM

Editor editor@almanacnews.com

Staff Writers

Arden Margulis, 223-6518

Jennifer Yoshikoshi, 223-6536

Print & Lifestyle Editor Linda Taaffe,

223-6511, ltaaffe@almanacnews.com

Arts & Entertainment Editor

Heather Zimmerman, 223-6515,

hzimmerman@almanacnews.com

Features Editor Julia Brown, 223-6531,

jbrown@almanacnews.com

Food Editor Adrienne Mitchel,

223-6539, amitchel@almanacnews.com

Audience Engagement Lead Zoe Morgan,

223-6519, zmorgan@almanacnews.com

Lifestyle Assistant Editor Karla Kane,

223-6521, kkane@almanacnews.com

Visual Journalist Seeger Gray, 223-6530,

sgray@almanacnews.com

Embarcadero Media Foundation

Staff Writers

Hannah Bensen, 223-6527

Riley Cooke, 223-6524

Emily Margaretten, 223-6517

Emma Montalbano, 223-6535

Miranda de Moraes, 223-6533

Lisa Moreno, 223-6526

Contributors Kate Daly, Ashwini Gangal,

Neil Gonzales, Maggie Mah

DESIGN & PRODUCTION

Design and Production Manager

Kristin Brown, 223-6562

ADVERTISING

Major Accounts Sales Manager

Connie Cotton, 223-6571

Multimedia Advertising Sales

Elaine Ogden, 223-6572

Real Estate Manager Neal Fine, 223-6583

ADVERTISING SERVICES

Advertising Services Manager

Kevin Legarda, 223-6597

Sales & Production Coordinator

Diane Martin, 223-6584

The Almanac is published every Friday at
3525 Alameda De Las Pulgas,
Menlo Park, CA 94025

■ Newsroom: (650) 223-6525

Newsroom Fax: (650) 223-7525

■ Email news and photos with captions to:

Editor@AlmanacNews.com

■ Email letters to:

Letters@AlmanacNews.com

■ Advertising: (650) 854-2626

■ Submit Legal Notices:

AlmanacNews.com/legal_notices

■ Submit Obituaries:

AlmanacNews.com/obituaries

The Almanac (ISSN 1097-3095 and USPS 459370) is published every Friday by Embarcadero Media Foundation, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558. Periodicals Postage Paid at Menlo Park, CA and at additional mailing offices. Adjudicated a newspaper of general circulation for San Mateo County. The Almanac is delivered to homes in Menlo Park, Atherton, Portola Valley and Woodside. However, in order to continue delivering you the news you depend on, we encourage you to become a paid subscribing member. Go to AlmanacNews.com/join to start supporting The Almanac today.

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Almanac, 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025-6558.

Copyright ©2025 by Embarcadero Media Foundation. All rights reserved. Reproduction without permission is strictly prohibited.

The Almanac is qualified by decree of the Superior Court of San Mateo County to publish public notices of a governmental and legal nature, as stated in Decree No. 147530, issued November 9, 1969.

To request delivery, or stop delivery, of The Almanac in zip code 94025, 94027, 94028 and the Woodside portion of 94062, call 854-2626.



LEHUA GREENMAN



"Let our lives be full of Thanks and Giving!"

650.245.1845 COMPASS

Menlo Park man accused in vandalism is committed to state hospital

Police say he carved his initial into 16 Redwood City businesses

By Arden Margulis

A Menlo Park man who allegedly carved the letter “R” into several downtown Redwood City business windows, causing more than \$60,000 in damage, has been declared incompetent to stand trial and committed to a state mental hospital.

Roman Leon Contreras is accused of carving his first initial into at least 16 windows on the evening of July 12 and into the morning of July 13. He was reportedly seen on surveillance video using a rock to etch into windows and told police he wanted to carve his signature on every business in downtown Redwood City.

After Contreras’ defense attorney declared doubt regarding his competency, Judge Kevin Dunleavy appointed Dr. Robert Cassidy to evaluate him. On Sept. 17, Cassidy reported that Contreras was not competent to stand trial.

The case was then sent to mental health court, where Judge Susan Jakubowski ruled it was in the interest of justice to send Contreras to a facility to be restored to competency.

On Oct. 29, Judge Dunleavy ordered Contreras committed to the California Department of State Hospitals, which operates

the state’s mental hospitals, for no more than two years. Dunleavy also ruled Contreras lacked the ability to make decisions regarding antipsychotic medication and that he be involuntarily administered medication for treatment of an unspecified mental disorder.

As previously reported by this news organization, Contreras had been released before the July incident over the objections of the San Mateo County District Attorney’s Office after failing to appear in court for three years.

In May 2022, Contreras allegedly broke car windows and caused \$15,000 in damage to a vehicle belonging to the mother of a former classmate. He admitted to the crime and said he was “traumatized by his dreams,” according to the District Attorney’s Office.

He was mailed a summons to appear in court for arraignment, but never did, and a warrant was issued. He was not arraigned in that case until March 18, 2025, after another arrest. While the District Attorney’s Office wanted him remanded until trial, San Mateo County Superior Court Commissioner Timothy Elliott released him on his own recognizance.

Contreras was ordered to appear on April 20, 2025, but did not show up, and another

warrant followed.

When asked why Contreras had been released, District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe told this news organization at the time, “Welcome to 2025.”

“He was granted (release on his own recognizance) over our objection. I don’t know why (the judicial officer) would do that, given he hadn’t shown up in three years,” Wagstaffe added.

According to the court’s website, Commissioner Elliott is typically assigned to the civil division. Commissioners are hired by the judges of the court and can exercise some of the same powers as judges. Judges are either elected or appointed by the governor.

Contreras was returned to custody in the 2022 case after his arrest in the July 2025 vandalism spree.

Both cases are suspended while he has been committed. According to San Mateo County Sheriff’s Office records, Contreras is awaiting transfer to the state hospital while held at the Maguire Correctional Facility.

A hearing will be held on Dec. 30 to confirm whether he has been transported to the state hospital. ■

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

Caltrain warns of possible service cuts if funding measure fails

By Embarcadero Media staff

If a regional transit funding measure, Senate Bill 63, on the November 2026 ballot fails and no other revenue source is identified, Caltrain would be forced to make significant service reductions, the agency said at a recent board meeting.

Potential cuts outlined to the board include eliminating weekend service, reducing trains to once an hour, ending service by 9 p.m., closing more than one-third of stations and shortening segments of the line. Caltrain officials said these steps would be necessary to address ongoing structural budget shortfalls as pandemic-era travel patterns continue to shift.

This comes after the agency raised its base fare by 25 cents on July 1 to help stabilize its finances. At the time, Caltrain said the fare increase was one



Anna Hoch-Kenney

Caltrain may be forced to make significant service reductions if a regional transit funding measure fails.

of several steps already underway to manage rising operating costs.

The warning comes despite recent gains. Ridership has rebounded over the past year, particularly on weekends, and a recent customer survey reported record-high satisfaction with

the system following its move to electric trains. But without a stable funding source, officials said Caltrain would not be able to maintain current service levels.

The board is expected to review detailed budget scenarios in 2026. ■

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Buy First or Sell First?

Dear Monica: We need to move but don’t know if it’s best to sell first and then buy, or the reverse. Advice? James D.

Dear James: This is a common question for many buyers. If you sell first you will likely have to move to a rental until your property sells, but then you will know exactly how much money you have to buy your next home. This scenario has less financial risk.

If you buy first, you will have to either use savings or obtain a bridge loan. You will own two properties for some length of time and the costs that go with this. However, it allows you to move once instead of twice and while the risks are greater, they may be acceptable. Consult your financial advisor on whether this makes sense for you.

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



BAY CHORAL GUILD



Celebrating Cecilia

November 22 & 23, 2025

Honoring the patron saint of music with works including Britten’s *Hymn for St. Cecilia*, Handel’s *Ode for St. Cecilia’s Day*, and Jacob de Haan’s *Missa Santa Cecilia*.

For TICKETS & MORE INFORMATION:
baychoralguild.org

Former Air Force scientist takes helm of \$2B Silicon Valley space center

Victoria Coleman looks to build ‘epicenter’ of new space tech

By Emily Margaretten

The University of California, Berkeley, recently appointed a new official to lead a \$2 billion research and innovation center that is expected to be built at NASA Ames’ Moffett Field in Mountain View.

Victoria Coleman, a UC Berkeley professor and former chief scientist for the U.S. Air Force, took the helm of the Berkeley Space Center as associate provost last month.

Coleman said she’s up to the task of spearheading the research center after 40 years of experience in academia, government and private industry. Most recently, she was the head of the Silicon Valley innovation center for Airbus, a major aerospace corporation.

“At this point in time, I have all these ingredients, and over the years I’ve also learned to be patient and manage complexity,” Coleman said. “This is certainly a complex project so I felt I had a decent chance at making it happen.”

Two years ago, UC Berkeley



Courtesy U.S. Air Force and Airman 1st Class Sebastian Romawac

Senior Airman Sarah Grabowski, 18th Operations Support Squadron aircrew flight equipment journeyman, fit-tests a G-suit for Victoria Coleman, Air Force chief scientist, at Kadena Air Base, Japan in 2022.

announced that it was teaming up with real estate developer SKS Partners to redevelop a 36-acre site at Moffett Field, which it leases from NASA. The project would include 1.4 million square feet of mixed-use space, largely consisting of research and development laboratories, offices and classrooms. UC Berkeley also plans to build

housing on the site, including for faculty, staff and students.

“My vision is that we build this place to be kind of the epicenter of the universe on new space tech,” Coleman said.

The research center is primed to attract some of the brightest scientists, engineers and students in the world, according to Coleman. In Silicon Valley, the

startup ethos pushes people to dream big and try new things, she said. Eventually, it generates success.

“We build things differently here,” Coleman said. “We know how to get started. We know how to build companies, how to build value.”

The space center is currently winding its way through the regulatory process to get environmental approval, Coleman said. The hope is to bring the project to the UC Board of Regents for its sign-off next spring.

“We’re barreling towards that deadline,” Coleman said, adding that the university was looking for ways to get the space center off the ground quickly. “We don’t want to wait until everything is built.”

Coleman envisions the space center as a community hub that will be open to the public.

Currently, it’s difficult to access NASA’s research park, requiring identification and undergoing other security measures to get onto the former military base. It’s not impossible but not as easy as it should be, Coleman said.

The jurisdiction for the space center is another issue that needs to be worked out, Coleman said. Because it is located on federal land, issues around policing and fire protection services are more complex. UC Berkeley plans to involve the city of Mountain View and wider community in these conversations, she added.

“My responsibility is to bring all the pieces together and get the project over the finish line,” Coleman said. ■

Email Staff Writer Emily Margaretten at emargaretten@almanacnews.com.

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Atherton develops Active Transportation Plan

The town of Atherton is updating its Active Transportation Plan, which is used to provide a roadmap for pedestrian and bike infrastructure improvements.

The town is holding a series of community meetings and encouraging residents to fill out an online survey at Atherton.News/ATP-Survey.

The town held neighborhood meetings on improvements to the Selby/Stockbridge area and the Atherton Avenue area on Nov. 12. The town will have another meeting at the Atherton City Hall (80 Fair Oaks Lane) on Nov. 20 to discuss improvements east of El Camino Real. The meeting starts at 6 p.m. and is expected to last an hour.

More information on the community meeting can be viewed at Atherton.News/Active-Transportation-Plan.

— Arden Margulis

Portola Valley has town manager blog

Portola Valley’s Town Manager Darcy Smith announced the launch of a blog that will provide the community with transparency and timely recaps of council meeting discussions and decisions.

Smith’s blogs will be written in a conversational style and will feature two to four posts per month on topics of community interest. These can include budget, projects, community meetings, local issues, town operations and more. Although residents will not be able to comment on the blog, readers can respond by emailing the town manager.

To sign up for email notifications about blog posts visit portolavalley.net/community/stay-informed/subscribe-to-town-enotices.

Alice’s holds Second Harvest fundraiser

Alice’s Restaurant in Woodside will be hosting a special fundraising day on Nov. 17 to support Second Harvest of Silicon Valley. For breakfast, lunch and dinner, any amount in donations will be accepted with a complimentary meal.

“Our goal is to raise funds to help feed families in our community,” wrote the restaurant in a social media post. “It’s a time for giving thanks and a time for giving.”

— Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Menlo Park Monthly Market Report

October 1, 2025 - October 31, 2025

TOP 10 SALES*				
1. \$9,250,000 24 Palm Court	2. \$8,300,000 2240 AVY Avenue	3. \$8,250,000 8 Reyna Place	4. \$7,150,000 1140 Cotton Street	
5. \$7,000,000 20 Cerros Manor	6. \$5,250,000 805 Evergreen Street	7. \$4,600,000 548 Placitas Avenue	8. \$4,600,000 957 University Drive	9. \$4,590,000 980 Lucky Avenue
			10. \$4,375,000 730 Monte Rosa Drive	

<p>ACTIVE LISTING</p> <p>Oct: 52 ↑2%</p> <p>Sep: 51</p>	<p>AVERAGE SALES PRICE</p> <p>Oct: \$3,420,356 ↑9%</p> <p>Sep: \$3,126,045</p>	<p>AVERAGE SALES PRICE/SQ FT</p> <p>Oct: \$1,535 ↓2%</p> <p>Sep: \$1,561</p>
<p>PENDING LISTING</p> <p>Oct: 35 →0%</p> <p>Sep: 35</p>	<p>AVERAGE SOLD DAYS ON MARKET</p> <p>Oct: 16 ↓53%</p> <p>Sep: 34</p>	<p>MONTHS OF INVENTORY</p> <p>Oct: 1.40 ↓7%</p> <p>Sep: 1.50</p> <p><small>If no further homes/condos were to come to market, the owner would be SOLD OUT of residential real estate in the number of MONTHS shown</small></p>
<p>SOLD LISTING</p> <p>Oct: 36 ↑9%</p> <p>Sep: 33</p>	<p>SALE/LIST PRICE</p> <p>Oct: 105.30% ↑1%</p> <p>Sep: 103.80%</p>	<p>30 YEAR MORTGAGE RATE</p> <p>Oct: 6.23% ↓1%</p> <p>Sep: 6.27%</p> <p><small>Source: Bankrate</small></p>

*October 2025 compared to September 2025

*Source: MLS Listings for Single Family Properties | Townhomes | Condos

Making A Move?

Sellers Start Here: RossettiHomeValue.com

Buyers Start here: RossettiPropertyFinders.com

Gail Antoinette Rossetti

Founder | CEO | Broker

License #01179344

3525 Alameda De Las Pulgas Suite C Menlo Park, CA Phone: 650-854-4100

East Palo Alto reconsiders license plate readers

Council, community members raise questions about data sharing, immigrant rights

By Lisa Moreno

East Palo Alto City Council on Tuesday postponed a five-year contract renewal of its Flock Automated License Plate Reader technology, citing concerns over data privacy and immigrant rights.

The city entered a yearlong pilot program in December 2024, installing 25 non-mobile cameras throughout the city to document the rear license plates on cars at a time when the new tech was growing in popularity. But today, under a federal administration that has found new avenues to arrest immigrants, people have expressed distrust of the Flock surveillance cameras, which store recordings for 30 days in East Palo Alto.

“I supported this as a pilot,” Council member Ruben Abrica said. “In some ways I feel like this whole area is always in pilot mode. There are no assurances, in many ways, that we could have complete defense against what the federal government can do.”

City council members requested a presentation from Flock representatives in an attempt to get assurance about the company’s integrity, its safeguards and its data-sharing policies. In doing so, they paused a years-long contract renewal that would’ve cost over \$450,000.

East Palo Alto Police Department Chief Jeff Liu pitched the contract renewal to the council Tuesday night, citing its success in helping solve criminal cases and the growing adoption of data-sharing safeguards.

He cited as an example an Aug. 6 incident in which a suspect drove up to a woman who was walking alone and sexually assaulted her near 77 Newell Road in East Palo Alto. After the woman fought him off, he fled the scene traveling northbound on W. Bayshore Road, where Flock cameras caught his license plate as it left town, Liu said. Local police followed the plate and arrested the man in Mountain View.

“This was a random act, there was no relation between the two and if it wasn’t for the Flock cameras, this person would still be driving around looking for vulnerable females to sexually assault,” Liu said.

While he acknowledged privacy concerns, Liu said the data can only be shared on a case-by-case basis by one staff member and that the federal administration would have to “hack” the system to access its

data. The East Palo Alto Police Department shares its data with neighboring agencies to help apprehend local suspects who travel into other cities, but city policies prohibit the use of Flock technology for immigration enforcement use and out-of-state data sharing, according to city documents. That said, there have been reported instances in other jurisdictions where data was shared contrary to local policies, according to media reports.

“The technology hasn’t failed, it was human error,” Liu said about unauthorized data access.

Some city council members praised the technology for its ability to help find local suspects but were not convinced that the



Courtesy city of Palo Alto

Palo Alto and Menlo Park are among the cities that deploy Flock license plate readers like the one pictured here.

See **PLATE READERS**, page 11

WELCOME TO KENSINGTON PLACE

We're here for you throughout your memory care journey

Here at Kensington Place, we are ready to help you throughout every stage of your memory care journey. Whether you need information, a compassionate ear, help with planning or immediate services, we promise you undivided attention, expertise and the right level of care and support.

Our memory care programs are unique. Two tiers of care address needs common to the different stages of loss. Both are thoughtfully designed, clinically comprehensive, personalized and tailored to address a variety of memory loss conditions, such as Alzheimer’s disease, Lewy body dementia and frontotemporal dementia (FTD).

If you are noticing signs of worrisome memory changes in yourself or someone you love, then now is the time to talk

with us. The sooner we can lend a hand, the better your chances of keeping quality of life as high as possible and even stalling or halting disease progression. Reach out to learn more about:

- **CONNECTIONS for early- to middle-stage loss:** We help residents participate in daily routines and activities that help them feel safe, secure and successful.
- **HAVEN for middle- to late-stage loss:** We provide residents with higher levels of clinical care that increase comfort and reduce agitation.
- **COUPLES CARE:** We welcome couples, even if care needs are not the same.

For more information, please contact Zakera at ZArubi@KensingtonSL.com or (650) 363-9200.

KENSINGTON PLACE
Assisted Living & Memory Care
REDWOOD CITY
— North Atherton —

Assisted Living • Two Tiers of Memory Care • Couples Care • Parkinson’s Support

For more details, scan the QR code.

RCFE License# 415600964

(650) 363-9200 | 2800 El Camino Real | Redwood City, CA 94061 | www.KensingtonPlaceRedwoodCity.com

East Palo Alto woman arrested by ICE released

Experts say there have been no raids throughout city, San Mateo County

By Lisa Moreno

Aleyda Rodriguez, an East Palo Alto resident and mother, fainted and suffered a medical emergency on Aug. 25, when Immigration and Customs Enforcement carried her from her car in a targeted arrest. Hours after she was taken, agents checked Rodriguez, who has a blood condition that is exacerbated by stress, into Stanford Hospital.

In the days following, masked federal agents stood outside of her hospital door, denying visitors and interfering with medical staff who wanted to enter the room. The agents discharged Rodriguez on Aug. 29 without telling her family and against the advice of her doctor, according to Rodriguez's primary care physician Yusra Hussain.

"There was no question in my mind that she was going to be in the hospital for a few more days," Hussain said in a previous interview. "She was very frail. She was drenched in sweat. She actually had sepsis just four days before that, with two infections. She was unresponsive. That was not a healthy picture."

The arrest, which was one of the first in East Palo Alto under the new federal administration, shook the largely Latino community and drove fears about a possible surge of immigration enforcement.

But community leaders and immigration experts confirmed that Rodriguez has been released from custody and in the two months since her apprehension, there have been no confirmed federal raids in San Mateo County.

"I have good news," Palo Alto City Council member Julie Lythcott-Haims, who was among the community members who protested the detention, wrote in a statement in late



Lisa Moreno

Stanford medical staff and community members protest for patient protections on Sept. 2, following a local ICE arrest.

October. "Yenny (Aleyda) has been released from ICE custody."

It wasn't immediately clear when Rodriguez was released.

After Rodriguez was discharged, hospital staff and local advocates rallied for better patient protections under the federal administration, which showed interest in ramping up Bay Area immigration efforts in late October. So far, these enhanced efforts have not materialized, according to the San Mateo Rapid Response Network, which is comprised of immigration experts and local volunteers who work a 24/7 hotline to activate legal support and confirm ICE sightings.

"In the week of October 23-30, our trained verification team responded more than 30 times to possible ICE sightings and rumors by arriving to sites of the possible ICE activity," San Mateo County Rapid Response documents state. "In most instances they found no evidence of ICE

activity, although we did confirm a few targeted enforcement operations on Sunday, Oct. 26."

While there have been no confirmed immigration-related arrests in East Palo Alto since Rodriguez's in August, credible evidence shows federal agents may have made a targeted arrest in the city on Oct. 26, San Mateo County Rapid Response Network representative Nani Friedman wrote in a message to this publication. No family members or relatives reached out to the network to confirm the arrest following reports of the activity.

In October, the San Mateo County Rapid Response Network confirmed 24 targeted immigration arrests including 19 adult men and 5 women across Redwood City, Daly City, San Bruno, San Mateo, Millbrae, South San Francisco and East Palo Alto.

At least nine of the people were parents to children under 18 years old, according to the

network, and no children were detained.

Sixteen of the residents were detained at ICE check-ins, which are required appointments with federal authorities to discuss immigration cases; four were apprehended in targeted arrests; two at immigration court; and two more in other ways, according to a network statement.

October saw three more confirmed arrests than September, when seven individuals were detained during ICE check-ins, seven in targeted arrests, six at immigration court and one in another manner, according to the statement.

Eighteen of the people, who were residents of Belmont, Burlingame, Daly City, East Palo Alto, Menlo Park, Pacifica, Redwood City, San Bruno, San Mateo and South San Francisco, were men over the age of 18.

To date San Mateo County has not experienced immigration raids on the street based on race

RESOURCES

San Mateo County rapid response hotline: 203-666-4472

Santa Clara County rapid response hotline: 408-290-1144

San Francisco rapid response hotline: 415-200-1548

or language, workplace raids or checkpoint operations at schools and hospitals, according to the network.

"Even with an increase in detentions at ICE Check-Ins, it remains true that the vast majority of people who go to their ICE Check-Ins are not detained," according to the network statement.

People who miss check-ins have an increased risk of future detention at their next check-in or in a targeted arrest. Network officials recommend people call the hotline to request accompaniment at a future check-in and request immediate legal consultation if they missed a check-in or other requirement.

During targeted arrests federal agents look for a specific person or people in the same family, most often by waiting outside of their house but occasionally by knocking on the person's door or detaining them in their car, according to the rapid response network.

Legal experts recommend each person remain calm and learn their constitutional rights, like remaining silent or refusing to sign documents, in order to mitigate unjust arrests.

"Some among us have cause to be more worried than others, yet all of us are on edge," Lythcott-Haims wrote. "This is not how Democracy is supposed to function." ■

Email Staff Writer Lisa Moreno at lmoreno@almanacnews.com.

Citing shutdown, Stanford Health Care stops some telehealth

Hospital system expects to keep virtual visits paused until end of November

By Riley Cooke

Stanford Health Care and Kaiser Permanente are just two health care providers on the Peninsula that are pausing certain telehealth visits for Medicare patients as a result of the ongoing federal government shutdown, which is now the longest in U.S. history at 36 days and counting.

That's because pandemic-era telehealth waivers expired on Oct. 1 after Congress failed to

pass a spending bill in time, shutting down the federal government and the possibility of extending telehealth flexibility. The waivers previously saw bipartisan support and were extended and retroactively paid after prior government shutdowns, according to the California Medical Association. Physicians can still choose to bill Medicare for telehealth services, but for now, there is no guarantee that providers and hospitals that do so will be paid.

The California Medical Association advised providers to consider pausing telehealth visits and switching to in-person visits when possible — and it seems that the former is a more popular alternative among local hospitals.

Stanford Health Care paused new scheduling of Medicare telehealth visits from Oct. 14 through Nov. 30, according to a statement provided by senior media relations manager Lisa Kim. If the shutdown ends

sooner than that, Stanford will "adjust these dates as necessary."

"We remain fully committed to ensuring continuity and quality of care and are contacting each patient whose visit needs to be rescheduled," the statement reads.

While Stanford provides health care to many in the greater Peninsula region, patients as far away as the Tri-Valley in the East Bay have taken to platforms like Nextdoor to share concerns about appointments being

cancelled.

"My experience so far is doctor's offices are not aware of this," wrote one Menlo Park user on Nextdoor.

Kaiser Permanente also operates several medical centers throughout the Bay Area, including in Redwood City, Mountain View and San Mateo. According to a statement provided by senior media relations representative Antonia Ehlers,

See **TELEHEALTH**, page 16

STANFORD

continued from page 5

weigh in before the permit application is filed. The first of these will be held on Dec. 10 and Dec. 13.

According to the university, the plan is expected to incorporate the gradual addition of research and academic space, student and workforce housing, transportation improvements and greater community access to events and spaces at Stanford's campus.

That said, the process and the product could be significantly different this time around. For one thing, the main players have changed. Last time, Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian was leading the charge in reviewing the general use permit application. He insisted that Stanford commit to "full



Seeger Gray

A view of the Stanford Clock Tower on Stanford University's campus.

mitigation" for all of its growth impacts, a standard that posed a challenge for Stanford as it tried to respond to county demands for more workforce housing.

Simitian termed out last year and the district is now represented by Supervisor Margaret Abe-Koga, who did not respond to this publication's question

about whether she would apply the same standard to the university's growth plans. Stanford has seen its own change at the top, with Jonathan Levin succeeding Marc Tessier-Lavigne as Stanford president.

The university's needs have also shifted since 2019, McNair noted.

"Since our previous General Use Permit application was withdrawn in 2019, we have navigated the effects of Covid and the rise of hybrid work arrangements, established the new Doerr School of Sustainability, and are currently adjusting to a changing federal policy landscape," McNair said in an email. "These changes have only deepened our commitment to pursuing exciting research and teaching opportunities that have potential to benefit people locally and globally."

How else will this effort differ from 2019? According to the university, the forthcoming application will have a "more defined vision and scope," clearer priorities when it comes to housing, transportation and academic needs, strong alignment with county and state goals and priorities, and stronger stakeholder engagement.

"Our approach to mitigating potential impacts of new academic facilities will be developed as we go through the environmental review process, in consultation with the County and other stakeholders," McNair said in an email. "We look forward to working with the County in a collaborative way that allows time to thoughtfully process the application." ■

Email Gennady Sheyner at gsheyner@almanacnews.com.

PLATE READERS

continued from page 9

data was not used for immigration enforcement.

"Jeff, this is not about you or the department, let's make no doubt about it," said Council member Carlos Romero. "This administration considers undocumented people criminals, period. They

are the criminals they want to round up. They want to round up a million people a year, they're not anywhere near that."

In other states, police departments have provided surveillance data to agencies across the country through audits, according to the American Civil Liberties Union of Massachusetts. It is unclear whether or not the departments

were aware that their data would be shared so widely.

"It's basically a network of agencies and you have to trust every agency is using the system in the right way ... I want to know more about the technology itself," Council member Webster Lincoln said.

Residents were overwhelmingly concerned about how constant

surveillance could affect the health of the city's large immigrant community, which has experienced targeted arrests and the apprehension of a local mother with health issues.

"Over the past few weeks, many EPA residents have already been scared to leave their homes and houses in fear of ICE being in the city," said East Palo Alto resident

Dana Moreno. "This fear will only continue to grow with these cameras being present."

City staff and law officials plan to coordinate a presentation from Flock representatives at a future city council meeting. ■

Email Staff Writer Lisa Moreno at lmoreno@almanacnews.com.

Whether town or country, this local girl has you covered.

Contact me for a free consultation — learn which projects most efficiently increase the value of your home.



Jennifer Pollock

DRE 01215021 | 650.867.0609
jennifer.pollock@compass.com



5 Buckeye Ct, Portola Valley
3 Bed | 3 Bath | \$3,395,000



350 Grandview Dr, Woodside
3 Bed | 2 Bath | \$2,150,000



1230 Sharon Park Dr, Unit 62
2 Bed | 2 Bath | \$1,550,000



535 Tennyson Ave, Palo Alto
4 Bed | 4 Bath | \$6,050,000

Looking for a unique rental opportunity in the Portola Valley School District? Let's talk!

COMPASS

Compass is a licensed real estate broker and abides by Equal Housing Opportunity laws. All material presented herein is intended for informational purposes only. Information is compiled from sources deemed reliable but is subject to errors, omissions, changes in price, condition, sale, or withdrawal without notice. This is not intended to solicit property already listed. Photos may be virtually staged or digitally enhanced and may not reflect actual property conditions.

Police fatally shoot man during standoff in Redwood City

Incident occurred near Woodside Road, El Camino

By Michelle Iracheta

A man shot by a police officer during a standoff in Redwood City on Nov. 11 died after being transported to a local hospital, the Redwood City Police Department announced later that night.

Police were called to the 200 block of Hemlock Avenue, near Woodside Road and El Camino Real — an area locals refer to as “Five Points” — after 48-year-old Redwood City resident Jose

Reynaldo Lombera allegedly shot into the sidewalk.

Police officers used a drone to locate Lombera, and a contact team with both lethal and less-lethal weapons approached him. He allegedly pointed a firearm at officers, who then fired lethal and less-lethal munitions.

Lombera was transported to a local hospital after officers rendered aid, but ultimately succumbed to his injuries.

The officers directly involved in the event have been placed on

administrative leave and the San Mateo County District Attorney’s Office is now leading the investigation with assistance from the Redwood City Police Department and San Mateo County Coroner’s Office.

Under state law, many categories of records including body cameras must generally be released following an investigation into a fatal shooting by law enforcement. This news organization filed a Public Records Act request with the city and county.

At the scene before the victim was identified, neighbors said they were startled by the sudden eruption of gunfire. Daisy, who lives next door to the home where the shooting took place, described hearing a series of shots and seeing emergency crews rush in.

“There were cops, and they just ran in, and there were just a lot of gunshots,” Daisy said. “Then someone came out on the ambulance chair and they took someone to the hospital. But we don’t know — maybe it’s our neighbor or not.”

Daisy said she has known the people who live in the house since she was little. “It sucks, like it’s sad, because I’ve known them since, like, little,” she said. “It’s really sad. But, you know, things happen — it’s just terrible.”

She estimated that she saw the person being taken out on a stretcher around 3:40 p.m., roughly 20 minutes after the first shots were heard. ■

Email Editor Michelle Iracheta at miracheta@almanacnews.com.

FIRE STATION

continued from page 1

code and prepare for potential future demand.

“The biggest benefit is we will have a modern fire station that can actually house more people should we have growth. We know with the USGS and SRI projects, there’s potential for a growing population here, so that helps us deal with it,” Fire Chief Mark Lorenzen said.

The new campus will also have an administration building to replace two office buildings the district owns a few blocks away. The new building will have more space for community events and a multipurpose room which could be used as a command center, for training and for district board meetings.

The new campus will also include underground parking that can be used by visitors during community events. The fire district routinely hosts classes and training for community members.

“I think the other kind of ancillary benefit is we’ll have a really beautiful fire station that represents the Menlo Park Fire District and the communities. It will be beautiful. It’ll be bigger,” Lorenzen said. “The pancake breakfast that we hosted just two weekends ago can be even bigger. It’ll be a community firehouse



Renderings courtesy Menlo Park Fire Protection District

Above: A rendering of what the new Menlo Park fire district Station 1 could look like. Below: An aerial rendering of what the new Menlo Park fire district Station 1, training grounds and administrative building could look like. The fire station is nearest to Middlefield Road and the administrative building is furthest. The building in the middle is the training grounds.

and something that the whole community can be proud of.”

The fire station may have a “mini-museum” with memorabilia and an antique fire truck visible from the street.

In addition to the new administration building and fire station, the training tower will also be replaced. The tower will be designed to provide high-rise training, elevator rescue, high-angle rope, center hallway

construction, confined space, firefighter survival and rapid intervention crew training, as well as propane fire training.

The district will have new training items including propane-fueled props. The district says the propane props will not be visible from the outside and no visible smoke will be generated. Theatrical smoke will continue to be used but should not be visible to people outside the facility.

The exterior of the building will be made of fiber cement panels designed to look like wood, along with metal panels with a matte finish.

Architects from the firm PBK told residents about other features the district is hoping to add to assist the community. The firm hopes that a large number “1” on the station, representing it as Station 1, will be able to change colors to indicate emergencies or celebrations, such as local sports teams winning events. The firm also hopes that native trees and plants will help minimize the impact to neighbors.

However, some residents are not convinced.

Several residents expressed concern that the metal siding would reflect during bright days and shine into neighbors’ and drivers’ eyes. The PBK architects told residents that the metal would have a coating and there would be trees to help limit any impact. The architects said they would look into how the material reflects and consider alternatives.

Another major concern for local resident Sheri Oscarson is that several heritage trees would be removed, including a magnolia tree that she estimates is more than 50 years old.

“It’s a beautiful, beautiful tree. When it blooms in the spring, they take pictures. I mean people are taking pictures all the time. I was surprised that the city even OK’d the thought,” Oscarson said.

The fire district said the tree needed to be removed because required setbacks would have pushed the building 20 feet and would require removing a new driveway the district plans to add

to reduce traffic on neighboring Santa Monica Avenue. Every existing tree would be removed under the current plan, and the district would replace them with 41 new trees, 18 of which would be planted off site.

While the initial design documents will go before the Planning Commission in a study session later this month, it will be a while before the district breaks ground on the project.

Before any demolition can take place, the district will build a temporary fire station at one of its current office buildings on Santa Margarita Avenue.

Additionally, the current station lot is zoned as residential despite being used as a fire station. The district has requested that the city change the zoning to a public facility.

The city is also selecting a contractor to create an environmental impact report under the California Environmental Quality Act.

The district estimates construction will start in July 2026 and conclude in December 2030. The fire protection district has already set aside all the funds it expects to need for the project in a capital improvement fund. ■

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



express

Today’s local news
& hot picks

Fresh news
delivered
daily

Sign up today at
AlmanacNews.com/express



Give back locally

WITH A GIFT TO THE HOLIDAY FUND

Contributions to the Holiday Fund go directly to programs that benefit Peninsula residents. Last year, Almanac readers and foundations contributed a record \$366,000 from more than 150 donors for the 10 agencies that feed the hungry, house the homeless and provide numerous other services to those in need.

Contributions to the Holiday Fund will be matched, to the extent possible, by generous community organizations, foundations and individuals, including the Rotary Club of Menlo Park Foundation, the William and Flora Hewlett Foundation and the David and Lucile Packard Foundation. No administrative costs will be deducted from the gifts, which are tax-deductible as permitted by law. All donations to the Holiday Fund will be shared equally among the recipient agencies listed on this page.

DONATE ONLINE:
AlmanacNews.com/holiday-fund

The organizations below provide major matching grants to the Holiday Fund.



Rotary Club of Menlo Park

The William and Flora Hewlett Foundation

The David and Lucile Packard Foundation

Please consider donating online, which enables your gift to be processed immediately. The secure website is:
AlmanacNews.com/holiday-fund

Enclosed is a check for \$ _____

Name _____

Business Name _____

Address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Email _____

Phone _____

I wish to designate my contribution as follows: (select one)

In my name as shown above

In the name of business above

OR: In honor of: In memory of: As a gift for:

(Name of person)

The **Almanac**



The Almanac
Holiday Fund

All donors and their gift amounts will be published in The Almanac unless the boxes below are checked.

I wish to contribute anonymously.

Please withhold the amount of my contribution.

Please make checks payable to:
Embarcadero Media Foundation

Send coupon and check to:
The Almanac Holiday Fund
c/o Embarcadero Media Foundation
2345 Yale Street, 1st floor
Palo Alto, CA 94306

The Almanac Holiday Fund is sponsored by the Embarcadero Media Foundation, a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt charitable organization, allowing your donation to be tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law. Tax ID #85-0941500

Boys & Girls Club of the Peninsula

Provides after-school academic support, enrichment, mentoring and mental health services for low-income youth.

Ecumenical Hunger Program

Provides emergency food, clothing and household essentials to individuals and families in need.

Fair Oaks Community Center

Helps individuals and families meet their most basic needs, offering homeless services and prevention, food distribution, transportation, rental and utility assistance, shelter referrals, and emergency support.

Haven Family House

Provides interim shelter services and transitional housing in Menlo Park for 23 homeless families with children.

Health Connected

Provides teens and parents with comprehensive sexual health, relationship and digital literacy education programs through local schools.

Literacy Partners

Supports literacy programs that help community members enhance their reading, writing and related skills.

Peninsula Food Runners

Provides food and reduces food waste by picking up from restaurants, caterers and markets and delivering it to nonprofit organizations serving the needs of low-income individuals and families.

Ravenswood Family Health Center

Provides primary medical and preventive health care for low income, uninsured residents of all ages living in Menlo Park, North Fair Oaks and East Palo Alto.

St. Anthony's Padua Dining Room

Serves hot meals six days a week to people in need at its Menlo Park dining room, and provides food and clothing assistance.

St. Francis Center

Helps low-income families become self-supporting through educational and after-school programs, housing assistance, food and clothing at its North Fair Oaks facility.

Upward Scholars

Supports low-income adults by providing them with financial support, tutoring, and other assistance so they can continue their education and qualify for higher-paying jobs.

DONATE ONLINE: AlmanacNews.com/holiday-fund

HOLIDAY FUND*continued from page 5*

families with children.

Health Connected

Provides teens and parents with comprehensive sexual health, relationship and digital literacy education programs through local schools.

Literacy Partners

Supports literacy programs that help community members enhance their reading, writing and related skills.

Peninsula Food Runners

Provides food and reduces food waste by picking up from restaurants, caterers and markets and delivering it to non-profit organizations serving the needs of low income individuals and families.

Ravenswood Family Health Center

Provides primary medical and preventive health care for low income, uninsured residents of all ages living in Menlo Park, North Fair Oaks and East Palo Alto

St. Anthony's Padua Dining Room

Serves hot meals six days a week to people in need at its Menlo Park dining room, and provides food and clothing assistance.

St. Francis Center

Helps low-income families become self-supporting through educational and after-school programs, housing assistance, food and clothing at its North Fair Oaks facility.

Upward Scholars

Supports low-income adults by providing them with financial support, tutoring, and other assistance so they can continue their education and qualify for higher-paying jobs. ■

*Support those in
need in your
community*

**The Almanac
Holiday
Fund**

Donate online:
AlmanacNews.com/
holiday_fund

**Helen Babb***October 12, 1936 – October 18, 2025*

Helen Babb of Portola Valley, California—a cherished wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, gardener, artist, and world traveler—passed away peacefully on October 18, 2025, at the age of 89 after a long struggle with Alzheimer's disease.

Born in Místek, Czechoslovakia (a small Moravian town near today's Czech-Polish border), Helen and her parents, Dr. Ernest Weys and Zdenka Reinelt Weys, escaped the Nazi occupation in 1939. They first lived in Manila until, by a stroke of grace, one of the ships departing the Philippines needed a doctor, and Helen's father was able to secure passage for the family to the United States in 1941. During the remaining war years, the family lived first in Colorado Springs and then later in California, where Dr. Weys served as the physician for the local logging community in the Lake Almanor area. Helen's parents became naturalized citizens in 1948, and under the law at the time, she became a U.S. citizen automatically.

After the war, the family relocated to Stockton, California, where Helen graduated from St. Mary's High School and went on to study art at Stanford University. There she met Dr. Richard Rankin "Dick" Babb; they married in 1958, the year of her graduation. Raising three children, Helen embraced a life of mobility—moving 11 times across the country while Dick pursued his medical training, including two years of service in the U.S. Army Medical Corps.

In 1967 the family settled in Atherton, California, when Dick joined the Palo Alto Medical Clinic. Helen remained a dedicated visual artist, painting canvases—several of which she sold. She developed a passion for needlework, teaching both beginners and advanced students the art of needlepoint. A devotee of the San Francisco Opera and Ballet, she frequently enjoyed performances across the Bay Area.

Helen was a voracious reader, with mysteries her favorite. She also loved to play games of all kinds, from tennis to bridge to LIFE with her children and grandchildren.

Helen's parents were avid travelers who inspired her lifelong sense of wanderlust. Over her life she made major journeys to Mexico, China, England, India, Italy, and beyond. An ardent Francophile, she returned to France many times and embraced its culture wholeheartedly—especially its cuisine, as she loved to cook.

A lifelong volunteer, Helen held leadership positions in the Peninsula Volunteers, the Menlo Circus Club, and the Woodside-Atherton Garden Club. Gardening was a true passion: she worked alongside her mother (an excellent gardener) throughout her life, and drew inspiration from her uncle, who trained in the royal gardens of Europe and later became a noted horticulturalist.

Helen joined the Woodside-Atherton Garden Club as a provisional in 1989 and remained active until the onset of her illness. Over the years she served in nearly every role—including Secretary, Vice President of Provisionals, and Horticulture Chair. She was active at both the Zone and National levels. In 2007 she received the Edith McDonald Chamberlain Award, given to a member whose consistent service, integrity, and contribution have had a positive and lasting effect on the Club.

Helen is survived by her husband, Dick; daughter Liz (Angelo); son Andy; seven grandchildren; and one great-granddaughter. She was predeceased by her parents and her son Peter.

Donations in Helen's memory may be made to the Woodside-Atherton Garden Club.

PAID OBITUARY

**Dr. Ralph Charles Yob***January 12, 1931 – October 28, 2025*

Dr. Ralph Charles Yob, left peacefully on October 28, 2025. He is survived by wife Rosemary, his wife of 73 years, his daughter Victoria (Troy); and his four sons Mark (Andrea); Steve (Randi); Tom (Debi), and Tony; his 11 grandchildren, Brandon, Brenna, Michael (Ashley); Emily (Carlton); Danny (Sarah) Steve (Amanda); Brittney (Jakub); Brooke, Troy, Bradley, Zoe; and his 4 great grandchildren, Rylee Rose, Wyatt, Landon and Hudson.

After graduating from Marquette School of Dentistry in 1954, Ralph enlisted in the Air Force, stationed in a little town near Munich where he lived with Rosie until January 1957. While setting up a dental practice in Milwaukee and teaching at the Marquette University Dental School Clinic, Ralph discovered that many of his colleagues attempted to obtain a license to practice in California as insurance if one wanted to move to warmer climate. Having never been to California, Air Force friends invited Ralph and Rosie to a reunion in Sonoma. Plans were drawn up to not only be at the reunion, but with Rosie's encouragement to take the California Dental Board exam in Los Angeles. Much to Ralph's surprise, he passed the exam. At that point a decision had to be made... to move or not to move.

The decision was made, and in July of 1962 they left Milwaukee with no job and three little boys (Mark 8, Steven 6, Tommy 3), off into a car they set out on a new adventure. Their first stop was Los Altos, then Redwood City where they stopped at a motel owned by an Italian family. The family took them in like family thinking they were nuts... no jobs, three toddlers, no place to live. They introduced them to many other families living in Menlo Park. Wanting their children to go to St. Raymond's school, they found an apartment on Florence Lane paying only \$50 a month.

Ralph met Dr. George Peters who had an extra room in an old house on the El Camino automobile row. He invited Ralph to join his practice. When an office suite became available at 825 Oak Grove Ave., Ralph & Dr. Peters moved to this location until he retired. Needing more space to accommodate Ralph's son Tom's future in dentistry, Ralph purchased an equity in 625 Menlo Avenue Dental Clinic. It was here that Ralph and Tom enjoyed 12 years together before Ralph's retirement at 65. They had 2 more children, Vicki and Tony.

Ralph was an active member of the Mid-Peninsula Dental Society, 1 of 32 dental societies in the state of California, becoming a member in 1962 until his retirement in 1996.

In later years, Ralph dedicated countless hours to shaping young minds as a baseball coach, was an avid spectator of Stanford's Football practices and was a frequent Marshall at the Stanford Golf Course. He will be greatly missed by his loved ones and his community.

In Lieu of Flowers one may donate to the Wiltown Riders in honor of Dr. Ralph Charles Yob (aka Wiltown Riders Ranch Hand) <https://www.wiltownriders.com/copy-of-donations>.

His life was a testament to the power of love and connection, as he cherished not only his family, but also his friends. He had planned to move to the Wiltown Riders Ranch to help out on the ranch in his final years.

PAID OBITUARY

SLUR

continued from page 5

going around saying ‘you can’t do that,’ said BSU Co-president Joella Gaddini. “This is safer and effective too.”

The campaign launched with the T-shirts in the beginning of October and within weeks the word had diminished from Sequoia’s hallways, Gaddini added.

The BSU meets every Thursday at lunch and on that day, staff members show support for the campaign by sporting the shirt to school. With about 80% of staff wearing the shirts, the message is displayed like a “billboard” throughout the campus, said Black Student Union Advisor Adili Skillin.

The use of the N-word among students has long been an issue within the Sequoia Union High School District and Sequoia’s success has been noticed by other campuses. Skillin said teachers from other schools have been asking about the shirts.

“There’s a very different message that’s sent when every single teacher, every single staff member, puts the same message forward simultaneously,” said Sequoia Principal Sean Priest. “It’s very powerful, especially when it’s on a cool T-shirt.”



Left: Social studies and special education teacher Adili Skillin speaks during a Black Student Union meeting while wearing a “Never Say the N-Word” shirt at Sequoia High School in Redwood City. Skillin is the Black Student Union’s adviser. Right: Adili Skillin and Joella Gaddini, a junior at Sequoia High School, speak during a Black Student Union meeting at the school. Gaddini is one of the group’s presidents.



Photos by Seeger Gray

Prior to the campaign, students such as Gaddini would do their part to encourage their peers to not use the word and would often face mixed reactions. Some students would argue and others would apologize but walk away and say it again.

Kamara explained that although she is not afraid to speak up, it can feel bothersome to repeat herself every time she hears the N-word.

“This is not their job to police the students. It’s my job,” Skillin added.

The campaign starts with the staff, he explained. When he first presented the idea during a staff meeting, everybody was on board. Although teachers receive sensitivity training, discussions about the N-word can be difficult for people to have, but with the T-shirts, “you don’t have to say anything,” he said.

A BSU student added that the campaign has created space for more open conversations about the word. While others may still be timid about whether it’s appropriate to ask certain

questions, she said it’s becoming a form of education.

“What’s happening is that you’re affirming what the overwhelming majority of students and staff already know and in doing so you’re empowering people to do the right thing,” said Priest. “That’s consistent with the values of our community.”

The T-shirts are just the start to creating a bigger movement that promotes healing and community. The initiative is a reflection of the school’s values and

its expectations around the use of language, students safety and respect, Priest added.

“This school has a great community, everyone is on board, and that’s how you move the needle,” said Skillin. “You make it a cultural change at your school. And because everybody wants it, it’s already there, we’re giving it that nudge that it needs to make it happen.” ■

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

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.

Stay tasty,
Adrienne
Editor, Peninsula Foodist

Sign up to receive the Peninsula Foodist newsletter at AlmanacNews.com/peninsula-foodist

AUDIT

continued from page 1

included \$1,035 and \$3,004 purchases from Left Bank, a French restaurant in Menlo Park and multiple purchases from Draeger’s supermarket for staff events. A \$160 birthday cake charge was also included in a Dream Inn hotel invoice of \$10,812, described as part of a district’s annual leadership summer retreat. According to the employee, staff were not allowed to bring a cake from outside of the venue, forcing them to purchase one from the hotel.

Many of the hotel expenditures were described as serving an education purpose as team building, educator conferences and networking opportunities.

Among the reviewed transactions, auditors found that 156 were missing receipts with a total value of \$63,018. The audit also looked over 57 credit card statements of which 18 were missing an expenditure log form.

“The team found that the log form is not always used, often incomplete, and missing employee and supervisor signatures,” according to the report.

Board member acknowledgements

The LLESD Board of Trustees commented on their appreciation for the work that was done by the county and FCMAT to produce the extraordinary audit report.

Trustee Heather Hopkins, who served as board president last school year, shared an overview of how the events that led to the audit transpired in November 2024. During the heat of labor negotiation, the community began to share its concerns about Polito’s spending to the board, she said.

After the district received a public records request for credit card statements in October 2024, Hopkins recalled adding a discussion of an audit to the very next meeting. Soon after, the board suspended Polito’s use of credit cards, formed a budget



Magali Gauthier

Las Lomitas Elementary School District office in Menlo Park.

advisory committee and later placed Polito on administrative leave.

As the board waited for the FCMAT audit to be completed, Hopkins said she took the initiative to research and craft policies around administrative regulation credit card use, which was approved by the board last month. Hopkins added that she would like the board to also ensure it has detailed guidelines for reimbursements.

Trustee Kimberly Legg acknowledged the district’s mistakes, insufficient policies and carelessness as she recognized the frustrations that the lack of transparency caused the community.

“Systems in place did not provide the oversight and accountability that our community deserves,” Legg said. “We as a board are fully committed to ensuring that this does not happen again. We’re owning the fact that the system did not work the way it should have, and we’re

rebuilding the system thoughtfully and publicly.”

The school board is expected to create a corrective action plan within 15 days of the presentation. Board members will be meeting in a public session on Nov. 18 at 2 p.m. to discuss its plans, which are required by the county to be implemented within 120 days. ■

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

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include:

William Ernest Green, 88, of Palo Alto, who was a lifetime golfer at the Stanford University Golf Course and also an enthusiastic jazz fan, who loved Miles Davis, Johnny Smith, Carmen McCrae and Dexter Gordon, and who traveled all over the world with his wife, Loretta, to track meets and jazz festivals, died on Oct. 17, 2025.

Ralph Charles Yob, 94, of Menlo Park, was a dentist whose first apartment in Menlo Park was only \$50 a month, and was an active member of the Mid-Peninsula Dental Society until his retirement in 1996, and loved Stanford football. He died on Oct. 28, 2025.

Hortense Hyacinth Burke, 83, of Los Altos, who was born in Kingston, Jamaica, and who was described by her friends and family as a “force of nature” and who would drive about Kingston in a red convertible Aston Healy Sprite, and who worked as a private nurse for many years in California until her retirement loved fashion and traveled the world with her husband and their five children. She died on Oct. 28, 2025.

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

TELEHEALTH

continued from page 10

Kaiser paused telehealth visits on Oct. 1. For patients who have Medicare Advantage through Kaiser, telehealth visits are still available.

Sutter Health, which operates the Palo Alto Medical Foundation near downtown, did not respond to a request for comment about the status of telehealth visits at its medical centers.

However, several patients on Nextdoor wrote that they successfully completed scheduled telehealth visits at the Palo Alto Medical Foundation, which is an affiliate of Sutter Health, as recently as mid-October.

There are a few exceptions that allow a Medicare patient to continue receiving telehealth visits despite the shutdown. Patients seeking telehealth treatment for mental health and substance use disorder and rural patients are still eligible, according to the California Medical Association.

Additionally, patients enrolled in Medi-Cal, the state’s name for federal Medicaid, will not be impacted, the California Medical Association clarified.

“According to the California Department of Health Services,

Medi-Cal payments are not affected by the shutdown at this time,” the CMA statement reads. “Medi-Cal telehealth claims are also not affected by the expiration of the federal waivers, as telehealth parity is written into statute and is not tied to Medicare.”

But that still leaves millions of mostly older adults nationwide who rely on telehealth visits vulnerable to lapses in their health care.

In California, more than 300,000 Medicare patients

accessed telehealth in the first quarter of 2025, around one in five of all Medicare recipients, according to data from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

As the federal shutdown drags on, it remains unclear when the telehealth waivers will be reinstated, and whether providers who billed Medicare during that time will receive any backpay for their work. ■

*Email Staff Writer Riley Cooke at
rcooke@almanacnews.com.*

Employment

ENGINEERING

Robinhood Markets, Inc. seeks a Senior Machine Learning Engineer Gen AI (9174536) in Menlo Park, CA: Desgn, devlp, and dply ctng-edge machn lerng and deep lerng mdl. Tlcmgt prmtd. Salary Rnge: \$187,000 - \$253,000/yr. Bckground chcks req. See bnfts at <https://careers.robinhood.com/benefits>. Email resume with job title & job code (9174536) to rhijobs@robinhood.com

ENGINEERING

Snowflake Inc has mltpl Software Engineer positions avail in Menlo Park, CA. Wrkng w/ cloud resourcs acros AWS, Azure, & GCP, & hndlng user rquests for prvsiong, scaling, & mntrng. Tlcmgt 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 pkgge 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. \$161637-184000/yr. To apply, send rsme & trnspts w/ job title & Ref#9251395 to resume@snowflake.com. EOE.

Visit [AlmanacNews.com/employment_ads/](https://www.almanacnews.com/employment_ads/).



Veronica Weber

Outside the garden terrace at the Stanford Hospital.

The first step in planning your weekend starts here

Weekend Express

Your weekly email
with tips and insights
about hot events
and cool activities

- Music
- Movies
- Art exhibits
- Lectures & learning
- Eating out
- Fun & free
- Theater

SIGN UP AT

[AlmanacNews.com/
weekend-express](http://AlmanacNews.com/weekend-express)

Presented by

The **Almanac**



DOWNTOWN

continued from page 6

where our group can lend expertise and help new businesses through that process.”

The founders see their work as complementary to the city’s own efforts and neutral on political issues. Over the past year, discussion of downtown Menlo Park has been dominated by controversy over affordable housing planned in Menlo Park’s housing element for the downtown parking lots.

“We are neutral on the housing element,” Foody said. “We want to work with everybody.

Whatever the outcome is, we’ll work with whoever that may be. But we are just focused on a revitalization of Santa Cruz Avenue and tying into El Camino.”

In the long term, the nonprofit could help fund or coordinate projects with the city, such as public art or plaza improvements. “There are ideas for projects, and it comes from the community, the city, the business,” Foody said. “It might be let’s build out public art projects, and then we would go out and fundraise and help to bring forward the funds needed.”

The group’s defined area

follows the city’s central business district — El Camino Real between Valparaiso and Middle Avenue, including Springline and Middle Plaza, and Santa Cruz Avenue down to University Drive.

Melahn said residents will likely start seeing visible signs of the group’s work soon. “We’re working on a holiday campaign that might come together for the first banners and planters work,” she said. “We have our website up and are open to engaging with people already.”

Beyond beautification and coordination, the founders hope the effort helps rekindle a sense

of togetherness after years of pandemic isolation.

“I think that from the business perspective, you see that in the economics of downtowns, but it really has changed the way people operate in the world too,” Melahn said. “Doing what we can to help change habits, to make the default thought not be, ‘I’m going to stay in my house because it’s easy,’ but, ‘There’s always something cool going on downtown.’”

Foody said other cities’ experiences show how community events can strengthen civic life.

“Speaking to my friends who live in Los Altos, they said

the number of community engagement events has materially changed the feeling in the town,” she said. “It feels more neighborly, and it’s increased home values. It’s increased the businesses. They do not have a vacancy problem.”

Melahn said she hopes residents feel inspired to join in.

“I want people to take away a sense of, ‘Oh, yay, I was wanting downtown Menlo Park to feel good in these ways,’” she said. “How can I contribute? That’s been the takeaway.” ■

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

Public Notices

MANDALA GROUP
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-301989

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

1.) MANDALA GROUP, located at 1549 Vine St, Belmont, CA 94002.

Registered owner(s):
MANDALA CONSULTING LLC

1549 Vine Street
Belmont, CA 94002

State of Incorporation/Organization:
California

This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.

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

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on October 23, 2025.

(ALM Nov 14, 21, 28 and Dec 5, 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)

1733 WOODSIDE ROAD
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-301982

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

1.) 1733 WOODSIDE ROAD, located at 1733 Woodside Rd, S 2220, Redwood City, CA 94061.

Registered owner(s):
INGRID AALAMI

1733 Woodside Rd, S 2220
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 23, 2025.

(ALM Nov 14, 21, 28 and Dec 5, 2025)

BELMONT VAPE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-302088

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

1.) BELMONT VAPE, located at 840 El Camino Real STE B, Belmont, CA 94002.

Registered owner(s):
BELMONT GOLD CITY INC.

840 El Camino Real STE B
Belmont, CA 94002

State of Incorporation/Organization:
California

This business is conducted by: a Corporation.
Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 11/04/2025.

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

(ALM Nov 14, 21, 28 and Dec 5, 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)

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)

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)

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)

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)

T.S. No. 137960-CA APN: 059-293-160 NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE IMPORTANT NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNER: YOU ARE IN DEFAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST, DATED 10/16/2017. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDING AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER On 12/17/2025 at 1:00 PM, CLEAR RECON CORP, as duly appointed trustee under and pursuant to Deed of Trust recorded 10/23/2017 as Instrument No. 2017-093468 of Official Records in the office of the County Recorder of San Mateo County, State of CALIFORNIA executed by: GABIA KONCE, A MARRIED WOMAN AS HER SOLE AND SEPARATE PROPERTY WILL SELL AT PUBLIC AUCTION TO HIGHEST BIDDER FOR CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK DRAWN ON A STATE OR NATIONAL BANK, A CHECK DRAWN BY A STATE OR FEDERAL CREDIT UNION, OR A CHECK DRAWN BY A STATE OR FEDERAL SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION, SAVINGS ASSOCIATION, OR SAVINGS BANK SPECIFIED IN SECTION 5102 OF THE FINANCIAL CODE AND AUTHORIZED TO DO BUSINESS IN THIS STATE; OUTSIDE THE MARSHALL ST. ENTRANCE TO THE HALL OF JUSTICE AND RECORDS, 400 COUNTY CENTER, REDWOOD CITY, CA 94063 all right, title and interest conveyed to and now held by it under said Deed of Trust in the property situated in said County and State described as: MORE ACCURATELY DESCRIBED IN SAID DEED OF TRUST. The street address and other common designation, if any, of the real property described above is purported to be: 123 STOCKBRIDGE AVENUE, ATHERTON, CA 94027 The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address and other common designation, if any, shown herein. Said sale will be held, but without covenant or warranty, express or implied, regarding title, possession, condition, or encumbrances, including fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee and of the trusts created by said Deed of Trust, to pay the remaining principal sums of the note(s) secured by said Deed of Trust. The total amount of the unpaid balance of the obligation secured by the property to be sold and reasonable estimated costs, expenses and advances at the time of the initial publication of the Notice of Sale is: \$4,905,568.01 If the Trustee is unable to convey title for any reason, the successful bidder's sole and exclusive remedy shall be the return of monies paid to the Trustee, and the successful bidder shall have no further recourse. The beneficiary under said Deed of Trust heretofore executed and delivered to the undersigned a written Declaration of Default and Demand for Sale, and a written Notice of Default and Election to Sell. The undersigned or its predecessor caused said Notice of Default and Election to Sell to be recorded in the county where the real property is located. NOTICE TO POTENTIAL BIDDERS: If you are considering bidding on this property lien, you should understand that there are risks involved in bidding at a trustee auction. You will be bidding on a lien, not on the property itself. Placing the highest bid at a trustee auction does not automatically entitle you to free and clear ownership of the property. You should also be aware that the lien being auctioned off may be a junior lien. If you are the highest bidder at the auction, you are or may be responsible for paying off all liens senior to the lien being auctioned off, before you can receive clear title to the property. You are encouraged to investigate the existence, priority, and size of outstand-

ing liens that may exist on this property by contacting the county recorder's office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge you a fee for this information. If you consult either of these resources, you should be aware that the same lender may hold more than one mortgage or deed of trust on the property. NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNER: The sale date shown on this notice of sale may be postponed one or more times by the mortgagee, beneficiary, trustee, or a court, pursuant to Section 2924g of the California Civil Code. The law requires that information about trustee sale postponements be made available to you and to the public, as a courtesy to those not present at the sale. If you wish to learn whether your sale date has been postponed, and, if applicable, the rescheduled time and date for the sale of this property, you may call (855) 313-3319 or visit this Internet website www.clearreconcorp.com, using the file number assigned to this case 137960-CA. Information about postponements that are very short in duration or that occur close in time to the scheduled sale may not immediately be reflected in the telephone information or on the Internet Web site. The best way to verify postponement information is to attend the scheduled sale. NOTICE TO TENANT: Effective January 1, 2021, you may have a right to purchase this property after the trustee auction pursuant to Section 2924m of the California Civil Code. If you are an "eligible tenant buyer," you can purchase the property if you match the last and highest bid placed at the trustee auction. If you are an "eligible bidder," you may be able to purchase the property if you exceed the last and highest bid placed at the trustee auction. There are three steps to exercising this right of purchase. First, 48 hours after the date of the trustee sale, you can call (855) 313-3319, or visit this internet website www.clearreconcorp.com, using the file number assigned to this case 137960-CA to find the date on which the trustee's sale was held, the amount of the last and highest bid, and the address of the trustee. Second, you must send a written notice of intent to place a bid so that the trustee receives it no more than 15 days after the trustee's sale. Third, you must submit a bid so that the trustee receives it no more than 45 days after the trustee's sale. If you think you may qualify as an "eligible tenant buyer" or "eligible bidder," you should consider contacting an attorney or appropriate real estate professional immediately for advice regarding this potential right to purchase. FOR SALES INFORMATION: (855) 313-3319 CLEAR RECON CORP 3333 Camino Del Rio South, Suite 225 San Diego, California 92108 (ALM Nov 14, 21 and 28, 2025)

The Almanac is adjudicated to publish in San Mateo County.

- Fictitious Business Name
- Abandonment of Fictitious Business Name
- Name Change
- Partnership Withdrawal or Dissolution
- Petition to Administer Estate - Probate Hearing
- Notice of Bulk Sale
- Legal Summons
- Trustee Sale

The deadline is Sunday at 11:59 pm.
Visit AlmanacNews.com/legal_notices/
For assistance email LegalNotices@AlmanacNews.com.

WE'RE PROUD TO BRING OUR READERS SOME OF THE BEST JOURNALISM IN THE STATE

The annual **California Journalism Awards** competition, which celebrates excellence in reporting, design, photography and multimedia, recognized our team with **15 awards** in the following categories:

- Breaking News
- Coverage of Youth and Education
- Coverage of Student Government and Campus Administration
- Environment Reporting
- Feature Story
- Housing and Land-Use Reporting
- In-Depth Reporting
- Photo Story/Essay
- Photo Journalism
- Print Inside Page Layout & Design
- Public Service Journalism
- Sports Action Photo

Please help support the local journalism and the award-winning team that is driven by the desire to bring you fresh, original reporting.

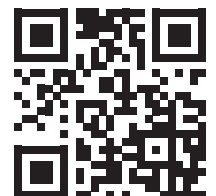
We couldn't do it without you.

The Almanac

SUPPORT LOCAL
JOURNALISM



**BECOME A
MEMBER**



Artscene

PEOPLE AND PERFORMANCES IN ARTS AND ENTERTAINMENT

Towering achievement

Redwood Symphony marks 40 years with an anniversary concert

By Heather Zimmerman

When conductor Eric Kujawsky founded a community orchestra called the Redwood Symphony in 1985, he was looking for an opportunity to branch out creatively. In the decades since, the orchestra has certainly met that brief, taking on complex classics and challenging new works alike. After all, it's no outlier that the symphony's 40th anniversary concert features a piece in which the percussionists will play car parts.

The anniversary concert, which takes place Nov. 22, features a program of Emmanuel Chabrier's "España," Tchaikovsky's Violin Concerto, with soloist Karen Bentley Pollick, and Mason Bates' "Alternative Energy," with Bates performing electronica for the piece, which also features car parts used as percussion instruments.

Bates is the Grammy Award-nominated composer of works that include the opera "The (R)evolution of Steve Jobs." But a focus on new or demanding works is just one part of what makes the symphony special. The group has also become its own close-knit community.

In the summer of 1985, Kujawsky had recently earned his doctorate in conducting at Stanford University and was considering what was next for his career. His wife, Valerie, suggested founding an orchestra.

"I had actually started sort of the skeleton of the orchestra three years earlier, when I did the first Stanford summer orchestra, and we did that over three consecutive summers, and so I had a lot of names and people to call. So the next step was to put together some people who could help me incorporate it and come up with a name for the group," he recalled.



Courtesy Eric Kujawsky

Eric Kujawsky conducts the Redwood Symphony in one of the orchestra's two appearances over the years at Davies Symphony Hall in San Francisco.

In need of a name that wasn't specific to a city, but representative of the Peninsula, the orchestra became the Redwood Symphony.

"We started at Foothill College in the southwest hills, and after two years, we moved to Cañada College in Redwood City. So now people think we're the Redwood City Symphony. But anyway, I like the name. And you know, we have the coolest logo of any orchestra," Kujawsky said, referring to a design resembling a cross-cut from a redwood tree

trunk, complete with the rings that denote a tree's age.

Similar to its namesake, the orchestra's roots run deep. In forming the Redwood Symphony, Kujawsky brought together friends and other local musical contacts, with many other musicians joining the group for performances as guest soloists.

"We have 10 original members who are still playing with us. Forty years is a long time. I've seen so many members who have come and left and, you know, (some) have passed away, new

ones who've come and married and had children, and in two cases, actually, their children are playing with the orchestra. It feels like having a family, and it's something special that most conductors can't experience because they haven't been with the group as long as I have," he said.

The orchestra has even brought together several families. Kujawsky said he was "honored to conduct ad hoc orchestras for two Redwood Symphony couples' weddings," including that of two now longtime members.

He also officiated at the other wedding.

The symphony's traditions include a family-friendly Halloween concert with favorite spooky musical selections and a raffle that offers a chance for audience members to briefly conduct the orchestra. Every summer, the group also performs a special concert for kids in Redwood City's Courthouse Square.

Kujawsky's goal has always been that the orchestra's repertoire would be wide-ranging and adventurous — including many works that are typically less expected for a community, or amateur, orchestra.

"From the very beginning, we were doing pieces that other community orchestras would never dare to do, like (Stravinsky's) 'The Rite of Spring,' lots of Bartók, Mahler's symphonies, things like that," he said.

Kujawsky said that, as founder, he has an unusual amount of creative control as an orchestra director, so the group often takes on some large-scale, demanding works." Some of the things we've done, you would think would be impossible for amateur musicians, like (modernist composer Charles) Ives' Fourth Symphony, or Messiaen's "Turangalila-symphonie'."

This past February, for instance, the symphony performed Mahler's "Resurrection" symphony, and the piece required bringing in 170 guest vocalists, a group of singers larger than the 100-member orchestra itself.

Kujawsky's penchant for musical fireworks presented a challenge when choosing works for the 40th anniversary concert.

"There's a certain amount of pressure to come up with something special," he said.

For the symphony's 30th



Courtesy Eric Kujawsky

Composer Mason Bates, left, will join conductor Eric Kujawsky, right, and the Redwood Symphony for a performance of his piece “Alternative Energy.”

anniversary in 2015, the program featured two major, complex works: Stravinsky’s “The Rite of Spring” and Carl Orff’s “Carmina Burana.”

“It was very ambitious. It went very well. But my first idea was, ‘how are we going to outdo that?’” Kujawsky said.

That’s why he decided to take the programming in a more personal direction, with the anniversary concert highlighting music close to his heart.

“We’re starting with my favorite concert opener, which is “España” by Chabrier. Then I thought we should have a popular piece to bring an audience in, so (that’s) the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto with our very good friend Karen Bentley Pollick,” Kujawsky said.

He has known and worked with Pollick for over 30 years.

“She’s a Palo Alto native. She was in the Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra as a child, and she’s had a brilliant solo career, much of it new music and making recordings in Europe,” he said.

For the concert finale, he chose his favorite 21st-century piece, Bates’ “Alternative Energy,” and invited the composer to perform as a special guest.

“He agreed to do this, which was just amazing. And I’m so excited. So he’ll be playing in the orchestra on electronica, which is his special sort of DJ club-inspired electronic effects that he adds to a lot of his pieces,” Kujawsky said.

The symphony has performed “Alternative Energy” before, in 2016, in a concert that earned the group an audience choice award from San Francisco Classical Voice, Kujawsky noted.

“It’s a four-movement symphony that Mason wrote when he was the composer-in-residence at the Chicago Symphony. It uses electronica in three of the four movements, and the first movement, which is called ‘Ford’s Farm,’ referring to Henry Ford, uses a percussion section made

up of car parts. It’s an amazing piece,” Kujawsky said.

The Redwood Symphony borrowed the automotive instruments from the San Francisco Symphony for this concert.

“There’s a tailgate and carburetor and a bunch of pipes and things that they bang on with different mallets,” he said.

Beyond their regular seasons, among the symphony’s notable moments have been two performances at San Francisco’s Davies Symphony Hall, including one with the San Francisco Gay Men’s Chorus. They have also performed over 10 concert operas, Kujawsky said, and are preparing to release their ninth CD next year.

“We’ve had some really great soloists like (violinists) Eugene Fodor and Miranda Liu, and many local soloists who come and play with us year after year. I built up a roster of friends who play with us now,” Kujawsky said.

In achieving some impressive musical feats, the symphony has also offered unique experiences for local audiences, and hopefully paved the way for greater openness to new music along the way, Kujawsky said.

“I think that gradually we’re wearing away at this perception that modern music is difficult or hard to listen to. There’s actually so much now that’s just wonderful, and that the audience likes and it’s just a matter of finding it and then presenting it to the public.” ■

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

The Redwood Symphony’s 40th anniversary concert takes place Nov. 22, 7:30 p.m. (pre-concert talk at 6:45 p.m.), at Cañada College Theater, 4200 Farm Hill Blvd., Redwood City; \$15-\$35; redwoodsymphony.org.

Worth a Look



Courtesy Jace Kartye

Brent Cobb & The Fixin’s perform Nov. 16 at The Guild Theatre.

Brent Cobb & The Fixin’s

Country artist Brent Cobb and his band The Fixin’s come to the Guild as part of their “Ain’t Rocked in a While” tour in support of the album of the same name, which was released in July. Georgia’s Cobb has toured widely and released multiple albums, as well as writing songs for other artists. For this new album, he blends classic country sounds with a classic rock influence, collecting his “loudest, rowdiest and downright wildest songs “to date,” according to his artist description on the Guild’s website. Indie-rock band Me Like Bees opens the show.

Nov. 16, 7 p.m., The Guild Theatre, 949 El Camino Real, Menlo Park; \$34-\$84; guildtheatre.com.

Ria Carval

Latin pop singer-songwriter Ria Carval comes to Little Green A Plant Bar to perform an intimate concert. Originally hailing from Cali, Colombia, she won national competitions and performed at major events there before moving to the U.S. to pursue music professionally and earn a college degree in New York. Carval is now based in the Bay Area and has released an album, an EP, six singles and multiple collaborations, and performs in California and New York regularly. Her music blends Latin-rooted production and modern pop sensibilities. Little Green’s retail shop is open 30 minutes before and after the concert, well-behaved pets are allowed, and BYOB is encouraged.

Nov. 14, 8 p.m., Little Green A Plant Bar, 1101 Main St., Redwood City; donations suggested; tinyurl.com/CarvalLittleGreen.

Pacific Art League 104th anniversary show

Pacific Art League has been a part of the local art community since 1921, when it was founded as the Palo Alto Art Club. Celebrating its 104th anniversary this year, the league presents its anniversary group exhibition and fundraiser, a salon-style show featuring a range of diverse artistic voices. Veronica Roberts, the director of Stanford’s Cantor Arts Center, was the juror for the exhibition, which also serves as a fundraising event, supporting PAL’s education programs, community outreach and exhibitions.

Nov. 14-Jan. 13, Tuesday-Friday from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. (Saturday-Monday by appointment only), opening reception Nov. 14, 5:30-8 p.m., Pacific Art League, 668 Ramona St., Palo Alto; free; pacificartleague.org/104-anniversary-and-fundraiser.

Sinem Şen Trio

Turkish vocalist Sinem Sen Gültekin pays tribute to three favorite modern Turkish singers: Birsen Tezer, Zuhul Olcay, and Jülide Özçelik, joined by John R. Burr on piano, for an evening at Meyhouse Palo Alto. “Together, they reinterpret iconic pieces from the Turkish songbook through a jazz lens — merging lyricism, longing and improvisational beauty,” according to Meyhouse.

Nov. 15, 5 and 8 p.m. seatings, Meyhouse Palo Alto; 640 Emerson St., Palo Alto; \$38 early bird admission/\$48 general admission; meyhousejazz.com.

‘Morgan Freeman’s Symphonic Blues Experience’

Hollywood legend Morgan Freeman grew up in Mississippi and is an advocate for the preservation of the music and culture of the region. Though Freeman will not be at this show in person, the iconic actor offers a multimedia narration of a history of the Delta blues, along with live performances by Delta blues musicians and a chamber ensemble, in “Morgan Freeman’s Symphonic Blues Experience,” making a stop at Stanford.

Nov. 19, 7:30 p.m., 327 Lasuen St., Stanford; prices depend on ticket type; live.stanford.edu.

Food & Drink

Caucasus cravings *Inside the Peninsula's first* *Azerbaijani restaurant*



NAR Restaurant opened Nov. 8 in Mountain View. It offers dine-in Caucasus cuisine and houses three ghost kitchens for takeaway.

Story by Adrienne Mitchel
Photos by Seeger Gray

What started as a Mountain View food truck four months ago has just become the Peninsula's only Azerbaijani restaurant.

Created by San Jose resident Hikmat Babayev, along with partners Elshan Musayev and Abulfaz Manafov, NAR

Restaurant opened Saturday evening along El Camino Real in Mountain View. The three partners, all hailing from Azerbaijan, aim to bring authentic flavors from the region to the Peninsula, serving traditional dishes such as piti and shah plov as well as pomegranate wine and kampot.

NAR is a full-service restaurant specializing in cuisine from the Caucasus region – Armenia,

Azerbaijan, Georgia and southern Russia. It also houses three ghost kitchen concepts offering an eclectic mix of halal Mediterranean dishes, New York-style pizza, burgers, wings, subs and Caucasus cuisine.

“Our story is a little bit weird,” Babayev said.

He and his business partners immigrated from Azerbaijan about three years ago, but they

actually met in the Bay Area. Upon moving to the Bay Area, Babayev worked as a chef in a Korean restaurant, then a Chinese restaurant and eventually at the Peninsula Turkish restaurant Meyhouse, where he worked as sous chef for six months.

A mutual friend connected Babayev with Musayev, and the two men and their wives started wholesale baklava and cookie

business Buta Bites together. The company's products can be found at international markets, such as Rose International in Mountain View.

Babayev recalled that one day during his lunch break at Meyhouse, Musayev gave him a call and asked if he wanted to open a food truck.

“I said, ‘Hey, listen, I’m a sous chef here. Why should I go to the



The exterior of NAR Restaurant in Mountain View on Nov. 10.



Owner Hikmat Babayev talks on a mobile phone at NAR Restaurant in Mountain View.



Chef Teymur Piriyeve cooks saji chicken at NAR Restaurant in Mountain View on Nov. 10.



Teymur Piriyeve is NAR Restaurant's head chef. Hailing from Azerbaijan, he's worked in Russia, Turkey and Atlanta.

food truck?" Babayev said. "And from that day, he started to insist on it, and we did it."

In July, the pair and Manafov opened Olivia Bros, a Mediterranean food truck located in the parking lot of Embrace Luck, a Chinese restaurant that closed in June. The owner of Embrace Luck let Olivia Bros operate there while the restaurant was shuttered, but he had plans to remodel and reopen it.

"That guy started to come here and got to try our food, and he saw the people here, happy faces, and he decided to hand over this place to us," Babayev said.

Given the opportunity to go from a small food truck to a 110-seat restaurant, they knew they had to utilize the large space to its fullest capacity. They brought on chef Teymur Piriyeve, also from Azerbaijan, and decided to open NAR as both a sit-down restaurant and a to-go ghost kitchen. Olivia Bros would move inside NAR and become one of three takeout concepts. That way, customers who had been frequenting the food truck could still receive the same food for the same price.

Olivia Bros features dishes ranging from a chicken shawarma wrap and lamb shish kebab to burgers. Rosso (specializing in New York-style pizza) and CalSizzle (serving burgers, wings and subs) are the other two ghost kitchen concepts within NAR and are slated to open Nov. 20. During lunch, expected to begin Nov. 17, a special menu with a combination of dishes from each concept will be offered for dine-in.

"For lunch, I will do my best to keep the prices of fast food," Babayev said. "I want the company people to come here, grab their food and go back to work. I want to give them a chance to sit, to get service, (and) have delicious food at a good price."

At dinner, customers can order food to go from any of the three ghost kitchen concepts, via third-party delivery service or opt to dine in for upscale Caucasian cuisine.

NAR Restaurant's dine-in dinner menu offers appetizers (\$11-\$19) such as gurza, traditional Azerbaijani dumplings filled with spiced lamb and served with

yogurt sauce, and Azerbaijani-style dolma, which is made with butter and served warm.

Main courses (\$18-\$38) include ciz biz, a traditional Azerbaijani dish made from roast of lamb by-products, including liver and tail fat, pan-fried with potato spices; lule kebab, chargrilled minced lamb kebab; piti, slow-cooked lamb stew with chickpeas served in a clay pot; and shah plov, rice with lamb, dried fruit and spices baked inside a crispy crust of thin lavash bread.

Also expect traditional Georgian dishes, such as khinkali, hand-folded dumplings stuffed with spiced meat, and khachapuri, a cheese-filled, boat-shaped bread with an egg yolk. Dishes from the North Caucasus region include okroska soup, a chilled yogurt-based soup with herbs and vegetables, and stroganoff, beef in a creamy mushroom sauce over rice.

The dessert menu includes Caucasian baklava, burnt Basque cheesecake and Malaga cake, a banana cream sponge cake coated with a chocolate glaze (\$10-\$12).

For drinks, NAR offers imported pomegranate wine from Azerbaijan, as well as wines from California and the country of Georgia. Nonalcoholic options include kampot, a drink made by boiling fruit in water before chilling it. Babayev likened the appearance of the beverage to a pickle jar with fruit floating in the liquid and said NAR will rotate the featured fruit seasonally.

The main focal point of the restaurant, which seats about 85 inside and 25 outside, is a hand-painted mural of a pomegranate tree. Nar means pomegranate, which is a symbol of fertility and barakat, or good fortune, Babayev said.

"Barakat means a lot of luck, wealth, success, and it's a symbol of our people as well," he said. "In the Caucasus, we have more than 60 nationalities in that small area, and each of them have their own language and their own cultures. But there are some things which are a common value, and nar can symbolize all of us together."

Babayev said a big culture shock that he and his business

partners experienced coming to America was the fast pace at which food is produced and eaten here. Speed is often prioritized over quality, he said, but that doesn't work with Azerbaijani food, which Babayev considers a labor of love.

"We process and process and process food from one shape to another shape," he said. "We have 43 types of rice food. The people spent a lot of time inventing new food, because we love the food." ■

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

NAR Restaurant, 286 W. El Camino Real, Mountain View; 650-226-7900, Instagram: @narrestaurant. Open Tuesday to Sunday from 5-10 p.m. Lunch, expected to start Nov. 17, will be from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Olivia Bros, 650-705-2007, @olivia_bros_mediterranean. Open daily for takeout, online ordering and third-party delivery from 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. Rosso and CalSizzle are expected to open Nov. 20 with hours from 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. daily.



Saji chicken, marinated chicken cooked on a flat cast-iron pan with vegetables and herbs, at NAR Restaurant (\$27).



San Sebastian cheesecake, also known as burnt Basque cheesecake, at NAR Restaurant (\$12).

EXPERIENCE THE BEST IN REAL ESTATE SERVICES



PENDING



30 ADAM WAY, ATHERTON | 7 BD 7 BA 11,080 SF \$25,500,000 30ADAM.COM

OTHER RECENT SALES



602 VISTA DRIVE,
EMERALD HILLS*
Sold \$4,070,000



369 LENNOX AVENUE,
MENLO PARK
Sold \$3,715,000



2230 TIOGA DRIVE,
MENLO PARK
Sold \$4,500,000



93 MELANIE LANE,
ATHERTON
Sold \$6,395,000



TOM LEMIEUX
650.465.7459
tom@lemieuxRE.com
DRE 01066910



ALICIA YOUNG
415.601.4900
alicia@lemieuxRE.com
DRE 02234525



Top 0.5% of Agents in the Nation, RealTrends 2024 | \$3.5B+ in Sales since 1998 | lemieuxRE.com | @lemieuxRE

*Buyer Represented



Compass is a licensed real estate broker 01527235 in the State of California and abides by Equal Housing Opportunity laws. All material presented herein is intended for informational purposes only. Information is compiled from sources deemed reliable but is subject to errors, omissions, changes in price, condition, sale, or withdraw without notice. No statement is made as to accuracy of any description. All measurements and square footages are approximate. Exact dimensions can be obtained by retaining the services of an architect or engineer. This is not intended to solicit properties already listed.