

The Almanac

NONPROFIT LOCAL NEWS FOR THE MIDPENINSULA

FEBRUARY 20, 2026 | VOL. 61 NO. 24



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Woodside looks into stronger safeguards for license plate camera data security

Town Council opts to keep Flock ALPRs, despite some residents' concerns about privacy and misuse

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Woodside officials are taking a closer look at the security of data gathered by automated license plate cameras in town after the company it contracts with came under fire for allowing unauthorized searches in other Midpeninsula cities.

Automatic license plate readers (ALPR) by Flock Safety are a controversial topic after records showed that unauthorized law enforcement agencies accessed sensitive data from cities including Atherton, Menlo Park and Mountain View. During Woodside's most recent quarterly and annual report on license plate cameras, residents were vocal about pausing the license plate readers in town over concerns about the potential invasion of privacy and public safety.

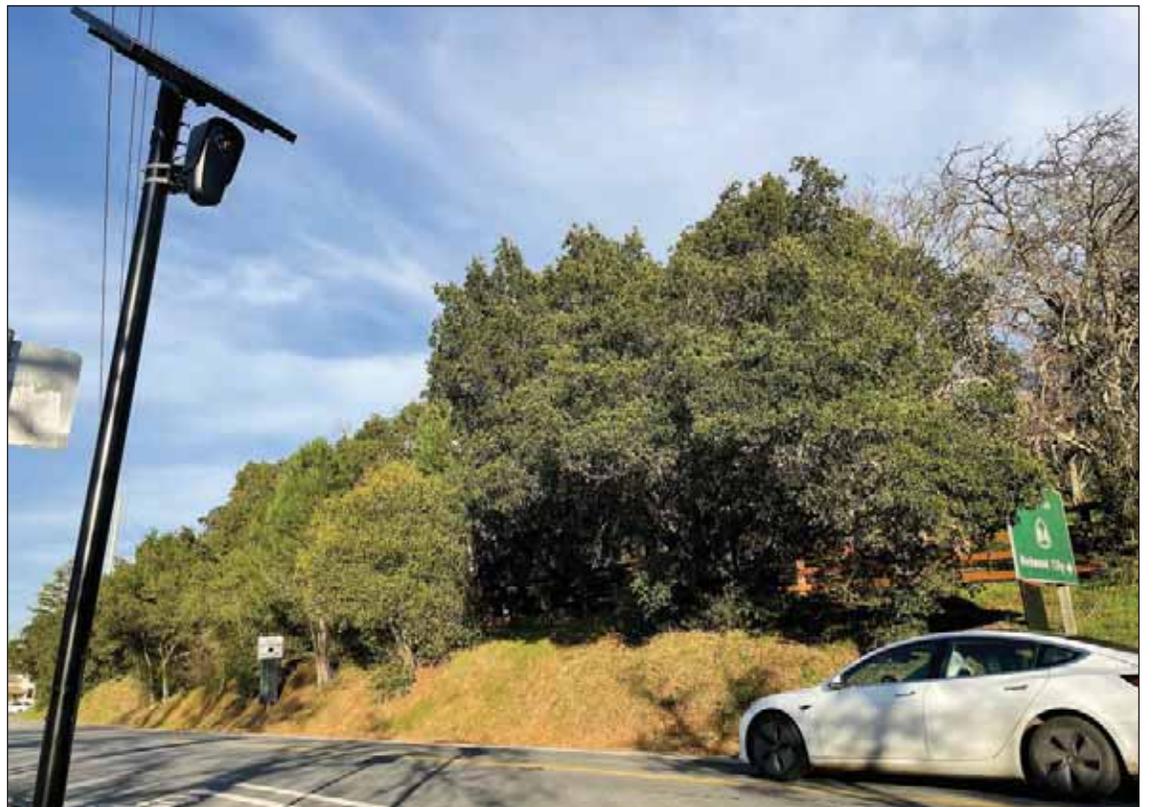
"(Flock's) data has been used to surveil protesters, even to track down women who have

had an illegal abortion," said Nancy Goodban, executive director of Fixin' San Mateo County, at Woodside's Feb. 10 council meeting. "These kinds of threats to the privacy of anyone who drives through Woodside are dangerous to community safety, and these dangers outweigh the benefits."

At that meeting, Town Manager Jason Ledbetter said that an audit of ALPR search queries showed them to be compliant with the town's policies. Woodside's policy requires staff to audit 10 randomly selected searches every quarter to determine compliance with its policy restricting searches to local agencies. Woodside reports having over 117,000 searches across its 26 cameras over the last year.

Town Council member Jenn Wall questioned how valid a small sample size can be in confirming the searches are compliant with the town's policies.

See **CAMERAS**, page 16



Angela Swartz

An automated license plate reader at Whiskey Hill Road and Woodside Road in Woodside. There are 26 of the cameras throughout the town.

Veteran prosecutors vie for rare opening for judge in San Mateo County

Santa Clara County Chief Assistant District Attorney Jay Boyarsky is running against San Mateo County District Attorney Brian Donnellan

By Gennady Sheyner

Jay Boyarsky, a Palo Alto resident who currently serves as second-in-command at Santa Clara County District Attorney's Office, is once again running to become a judge — this time in the neighboring San Mateo County.

Boyarsky is preparing for a June showdown against Brian Donnellan, a veteran prosecutor with more than 20 years of experience in the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office. Both

candidates have told this publication in interviews that they believe their decades of experience as prosecutors in their respective counties have positioned them well for the next step in their respective careers.

The June contest gives San Mateo County voters a rare opportunity to choose a judge. Superior Court judges serve six-year terms, but they routinely are retained during elections with no competition. The county's current roster of candidates for the June 2 primary includes nine Superior Court



Jay Boyarsky



Brian Donnellan

judge seats. Only one of them lists more than one candidate.

In this case, Boyarsky and Donnellan are vying for a seat that opened because of the recent retirement of Judge Susan Greenberg.

But even though competitive races for judge are relatively rare, the June primary is Boyarsky's second bid for an opening in two years. In 2024, he squared off with Johnene Stebbins to fill a Santa Clara County Superior Court seat that became vacant when Judge Vincent Chiarello retired. Stebbins, a former Santa Clara County deputy district attorney, prevailed in that race and assumed her new role in January 2025.

In recent interviews, both Boyarsky and Donnellan point

to their strong local connections as an advantage. Donnellan was born in Ireland, and after a stint in Burlington, Vermont, moved to San Mateo County in 1983 to start fourth grade. His mother worked in municipal government in Vermont and then as a deputy treasurer in San Mateo, while his father was president of Notre Dame de Namur University in Belmont.

"I see both as having public-service-natured careers, and it

See **JUDGE**, page 15

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Congratulations!

Francis Lopez

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DeLeon Realty would like to congratulate Francis Lopez on being elected the 2026 President of the Asian Real Estate Association of America (AREAA), Silicon Valley Chapter.

AREAA is a national trade organization with over 19,000 members across 45 chapters. Their members are real estate, mortgage, and housing professionals dedicated to representing the interests of the Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) real estate market nationwide. Through his role at AREAA SV, Francis has met with real estate leaders across California and the U.S., collaborating and sharing insights while creating valuable connections for DeLeon Realty listings.

Francis' dedication to the AAPI community and the local Peninsula community has pushed him into leadership roles with both AREAA and DeLeon Realty. In addition to his work

with AREAA, Ken DeLeon and Michael Repka have selected Francis to lead DeLeon Realty's listings in Menlo Park, Portola Valley and Woodside. His singular focus, depth of market knowledge and leadership within the industry make Francis an invaluable resource to clients and colleagues alike.

We would also like to congratulate outgoing AREAA National President Jamie Tian, outgoing AREAA SV President Phoenix Chiang, and all AREAA members who devote their time and efforts into strengthening housing opportunities for Asian communities locally, nationally, and abroad.

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Local News

MENLO PARK | AHERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY



Lydia Goodson prepares a cake for a customer of Brookside Bakery at her house in Portola Valley on Feb. 7.

Portola Valley teen's bakery makes cakes for a good cause

Proceeds from Woodside High senior's desserts help support Second Harvest Food Bank

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

A Portola Valley teenager is using her love for cakes, cookies and cupcakes to raise money for charity. Lydia Goodson, a senior at Woodside High School, started her Brookside Bakery in 2021 and since last year, her sweet treats go toward supporting Second Harvest Food Bank of Silicon Valley.

With 80% of Brookside's proceeds donated to charity, Goodson was able to raise nearly \$2,000 through her bakery sales in 2025. She started her business while in middle school, offering baked goods to her neighbors and later expanded to the entire town of Portola Valley.

"I've always loved baking. It was something I always did with my grandparents," said

Goodson, who says her interest in it got stronger during the COVID-19 pandemic.

For the past two years, Goodson has been attending community college classes through the Middle College Program at Cañada College, sitting alongside students from various backgrounds and generations in the classrooms. She

See **BAKERY**, page 15

Woodside seeks lower speed limits on highly trafficked roads

Speeding cars threaten safety near Four Corners, Woodside Elementary School

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Trying to solve a long-standing issue with speeding and reckless driving in Woodside, the Town Council unanimously agreed to ask the California Department of Transportation to lower speed limits near Woodside Elementary School and at the intersection

between Highway 84 and 35.

The highway intersection, also known as Four Corners, is currently considered a safety concern as motorists travel at excessive speeds, often exceeding 40 mph. The town received a petition signed by 543 people asking the council to request Caltrans establish a 25 mph speed limit within 500 yards of the intersection.

In October, Caltrans presented its \$500,000 project to the Woodside community intended to improve safety for drivers, bicyclists and pedestrians, months after a cyclist in the area died in a collision with a truck. The design team proposed making the Four Corners intersection a four-way stop to

See **SPEED LIMITS**, page 10

Menlo Park's \$127K park fee on lot-splits draws scrutiny, state warning

Housing department says Quimby Act fees should not apply to SB 9 projects

By Arden Margulis

Menlo Park is charging homeowners who add a housing unit to their properties about \$127,000 in park fees, even after state housing officials warned the city that it may not be allowed to do so when it comes to certain types of small developments.

The dispute centers on Senate Bill 9, a 2022 law intended to boost housing creation by allowing homeowners to split single-family lots and build up to four units without discretionary review. The California Department of Housing and Community Development informed Menlo Park in 2024 that the city cannot apply so-called Quimby Act park fees to these lot splits because they fund off-site improvements, which SB 9 generally prohibits as a condition of approval.

But Menlo Park officials have maintained that Quimby Act fees are still allowed under state law.

The fees are affecting Palo Alto developer Mircea Voskerician, who applied to split a single-family lot at 12 Maywood Lane into two parcels. While Menlo Park approved the subdivision, the city is requiring him to pay a \$127,400 park fee before finalizing the project.

Voskerician said he has filed a complaint with the state housing department and warned the city of possible legal action, arguing that Menlo Park is improperly applying fees to projects that are meant to be streamlined under SB 9.

"It was never the intent of SB 9. They are playing games with me. They are playing games with the state. And they are taking advantage because the state will not go after them," Voskerician said.

Voskerician said he emailed Menlo Park's city manager, City Council and staff asking for justification for the fee but did not receive a response after 30 days and a follow-up message.

"This is not how a city operates. A city is dedicated to its

people. It's dedicated to the residents. It's dedicated to the law. And they must answer the question to the public," Voskerician said. "They could have said: 'Here's our response,' here's our stance.' In my personal opinion, it just kind of answers the question of how ignorant they are — you cannot be ignorant and silent when people are asking why you are charging fees."

The city did not address its rationale for charging Quimby Act fees on lot splits when responding to emailed questions from The Almanac about this story.

How the fee works

The fees stem from the Quimby Act, a 1965 state law that allows cities to require residential subdivision developers to dedicate land for parks or pay a fee in lieu of providing parkland. The goal is to ensure that growing communities have adequate open space and recreational areas.

"The logic (of the Quimby Act) is when you're creating land or creating housing on a property, or whatever else you would construct, they want to make sure that there is some amount of public parkland that is preserved," said attorney Jack Farrell of the pro-development law group YIMBY Law.

In Menlo Park, the city requires the developer to dedicate 5 acres of park and recreation land per 1,000 additional residents or pay the equivalent value. In the case of one additional single-family home, the city assumes 2.59 people will live there and therefore requires the developer to pay the "fair market value" per acre of 0.013 acres of land (566 square feet).

The city sets a fair market value of \$9.8 million per acre, which means a single-family home requires a fee payment of \$127,400.

While the fee is determined based on the value of acquiring land, the city does not have to spend it on buying land. The city is allowed to spend the fees

See **PARK FEE**, page 9

Atherton council may dump missing town committee member

By Arden Margulis

The Atherton City Council is set to discuss removing a member of the Environmental Programs Committee after she failed to show up to meetings and did not respond to emails, according to city staff.

The City Council appointed Atherton resident Sophia Tang to the environmental committee in July 2025. She was the only applicant for one of three open seats on the volunteer body at the time. With two vacancies and one member about to resign, the five-member committee would have lacked a quorum and been unable to meet until another member was appointed.

While Tang originally applied for the Atherton Tree Committee (which is not one of the town's official advisory bodies), she said she wanted to join the environmental committee to "give back to this beloved town in a meaningful way."

The Environmental Programs Committee meets every other month and provides suggestions for outreach on environmental issues as part of the town's Climate Action Plan. Committee members are unpaid. Its signature event is the town's Earth Day Festival, which is scheduled on April 26 this year.

"I believe in Atherton's



Magali Gauthier

A member of Atherton's Environmental Programs Committee, which helps organize the town's Earth Day Festival, may be removed after missing several meetings. In this April 2024 photo from the event, children learn about fire extinguishers.

Climate Action goals and would be honored to help shape programs that make sustainability accessible, visible and vibrant," Tang wrote in her application. "It's my hope to not only serve the present community but to be an example of civic engagement that my children will one day be proud to follow."

According to city staff, while Tang attended the first meeting after her appointment, she missed the following three

consecutive meetings, most recently on Jan. 22.

After each absence, city staffers said they emailed Tang but she did not respond.

Atherton town policy states that if a committee member misses two consecutive meetings without informing staff beforehand, the town will automatically vacate their seat. However, the City Council can overrule that decision.

Since the environmental

committee currently has five members, Tang's removal will not impact its ability to hold meetings.

The City Council was scheduled to discuss Tang's removal at its meeting on Feb. 18, after The Almanac's press deadline. If Tang is removed, the city will start recruitment efforts to fill her vacant seat. ■

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

San Mateo County sees big jump in rabid bats after two years with no cases

By Arden Margulis

New San Mateo County data from 2025 shows a significant jump in the number of bats that tested positive for rabies after two years without finding any cases.

All of the positive tests occurred in the last three months of the year, according

to the county. Of the 13 bats tested between Oct. 1 and Dec. 31, six were positive for rabies. None of the 30 bats tested earlier in 2025 were found to carry the virus, according to data San Mateo County Health released on Feb. 10.

In total, the county tested 140 animals in 2025, including 43 cats, 30 dogs and one

unidentified animal, but only bats tested positive for the dangerous disease.

On Oct. 24, 2025, a dead bat found near Little People's Park playground at the Portola Valley Town Center tested positive for rabies. At the time, San Mateo County Health encouraged anyone who might have been exposed to it to contact their medical provider but no people or their animals came forward. On the same day, San Mateo County Health officials tested a rabid bat in Half Moon Bay.

It was the first positive rabies test in San Mateo County in two years.

Statewide, bats account for most of the rabid animals that are identified, according to the California Department of Public Health. Between 2015 and 2020, 1,190 rabid bats were identified statewide, including 16 in San Mateo County.

None of the 138 animals, including 37 bats, that San

Mateo County tested for rabies in 2024 were positive. Over the past 11 years, an average of two bats a year tested positive for rabies.

Live animals can't be tested for rabies because the only definitive test requires brain tissue, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Rabies is an especially dangerous disease because once symptoms appear, there is no treatment and it is almost always fatal, according to the county. Symptoms of rabies include neuropathic pain, paralysis, seizures and sensory and motor deficits.

Rabies can spread to humans and other animals if they are bitten by a rabid animal or if the saliva or brain tissue from the infected animal makes contact with broken skin, the eyes, nose or mouth. You cannot become infected just by being near a rabid animal, petting it,



Anna Hoch-Kenney

A rabid bat was found at Little People's Park at the Portola Valley Town Center in October 2025.

Established 1965

The Almanac

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■ **Submit Legal Notices:** AlmanacNews.com/legal_notices

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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/become-a-member/ to start supporting The Almanac today.

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Cesar Chavez Middle School loses its principal mid-year

By Miranda de Moraes

Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School in East Palo Alto will spend the rest of the school year without a principal, according to Ravenswood City School District's superintendent, who announced Cristian Miley's departure in January.

Attempts to get comment from Miley by The Almanac's Wednesday press deadline were unsuccessful.

Superintendent Gina Sudaria emailed the school community on Jan. 16 to announce that Miley would no longer serve as principal, with little explanation.

"We wish him continued success in his next chapter," the superintendent wrote. "As we move forward, I want to reassure our families and community that Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School remains in capable hands."

The school's assistant principals will fill in, with Candace Gonzales in charge of sixth grade, Kyle Tana overseeing seventh grade, and Patrick Anseth covering eighth grade.

Omar Currie, the chief academic officer, will also work on campus three days each week to offer "direct support and continuity during this transition," the superintendent wrote in her community message.

Joy Shen, the district's director of strategy and operations, declined to discuss the reason for Miley's mid-year departure, citing her inability to "share the details of personnel matters for any employee."

On Jan. 29, the board approved a Human Resources Department personnel recommendation that included Principal Cristian Miley's term under "public employee resignations/retirement" to expire March 6.

In her email, Sudaria outlined Miley's accomplishments over his nearly three-year tenure at Cesar Chavez, which began on June 1, 2023. They included the opening of a new school building, implementation of a "clear" cellphone policy, and "more consistent structures" for



Courtesy Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School

Cristian Miley, former principal of Cesar Chavez Ravenswood Middle School.

family and community inclusion in school activities.

Miley describes himself in his LinkedIn biography as "dedicated to creating inclusive and supportive school cultures through restorative practices and a focus on student success." The principal posted on the social platform one month ago that he's "so excited" to have been selected to be a coach with Solutionary Advisors, an education consulting firm based in Menlo Park focused on equity.

"I have always had a dream about using my background, expertise, and education to support all areas of education with real transformation," Miley wrote about his new coaching job, "and supporting school leaders to be able make real, sustainable, and truly

impactful change."

The Ravenswood School District will hold a "thoughtful and inclusive" hiring process in the coming weeks to find a new principal for the 2026 to 2027 school year, according to Sudaria. Families, staff and community members will be included, and the district expressed hopes that it will yield "a leader who brings the Ravenswood Promise to life."

"We have full confidence in their leadership and in the strength of the entire school community," the superintendent concluded. "Thank you to our staff, families, and students for your ongoing partnership and trust." ■

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CORRECTIONS

In the Feb. 13 edition of The Almanac, the story "First look at plans for major housing, office project at Menlo Park USGS campus" misstated the size of the USGS site. It is 17 acres.

In the Jan. 20 edition of The Almanac, the story "Menlo Park school district weighs cuts for libraries, music and language" incorrectly said Menlo Park City School District Replace: did not have to operate transitional kindergarten without state funding. The district must offer transitional kindergarten, regardless of state funding.

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REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



Rain Tips

Dear Monica: Is it a bad idea to market my home while the rains are continuing or should I wait? Rachel T.

Dear Rachel: We are in the midst of another round of significant rain and you may want to postpone bringing your property on the market until it dissipates. Buyers are anxious for new properties to see but if you don't want people traipsing through your house with wet feet, you could wait a week or so.

The rain will show you if you have any roof or other leaks. Make sure gutters and drains are clear of leaves so water doesn't pool or come into the house. The soil will be saturated soon so monitor your trees and be sure they are stable. In the end the flowers will bloom and the air will be fresh, which will enhance your property.

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

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Stanford vandalism case ends in mistrial with ‘hopelessly deadlocked’ jury

Santa Clara County District Attorney Jeff Rosen says prosecutors will retry the case

By Riley Cooke

A Santa Clara County judge declared a mistrial on Feb. 13 in the felony vandalism case of five Stanford University students who had barricaded themselves in the president’s office during a spring 2024 protest in support of Palestine, after he found the jury to be “hopelessly deadlocked.”

The 12 jurors were split 9-3 on the first count of felony conspiracy to trespass and split 8-4 on the second count of felony vandalism. Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge Hanley Chew asked the jurors individually in the courtroom whether they believed any further information or deliberation to reach a verdict, which they confirmed they did not.

“It appears that this jury is hopelessly deadlocked, and I will declare a mistrial on counts one and two of the indictment,” Judge Chew said to the courtroom.

During closing arguments on Jan. 30, defense attorney Leah Gillis called for a mistrial, describing the prosecution’s behavior as “abhorrent.” Judge Chew denied the motion at the time.

The jury went into deliberations on Feb. 2. On Feb. 5, the jurors sent a note to Santa Clara County Superior Court Judge Hanley Chew that they were split 8-4 on a conspiracy charge, but it remained unclear at the time whether they were leaning toward a conviction or an acquittal.

Initially, 13 students were



Lisa Moreno

A crowd of people gather outside of the Santa Clara County Hall of Justice in support of 11 Stanford students facing felony charges for protesting the war in Gaza on Nov. 17, 2025.

arrested in connection with the protest. The five who proceeded to trial — German Gonzalez, Maya Burke, Taylor McCann, Amy Jing Zhai and Hunter Taylor-Black — were charged with felony vandalism and conspiracy to trespass. Six other protesters who were with them in the president’s office took plea or alternative deals before the trial began. One additional protester, John Richardson, entered a youth deferment program and worked with the prosecution. A student journalist with the Stanford Daily who was covering the protest was arrested as

well and later cleared.

Throughout the trial, the defense argued that the protesters did not intend to damage property or remain in the president’s office for a prolonged period of time. During the June 5, 2024, demonstration, the students allegedly broke one window to enter the office and then opened the door to let everyone else inside. They then allegedly barricaded the doors with furniture, hung a banner, spilled fake blood and covered cameras with tissues and cloth.

Before police entered the building, the protesters allegedly

began cleaning up the damage and complied with their arrests. Initially, Stanford estimated that the damage would cost \$700,000, but a more thorough investigation concluded that \$300,000 in damage could be attributed to the protesters, according to court documents.

In order for the prosecution to prove vandalism, they must first prove that the students conspired to trespass and occupy the building for an extended period of time.

Deputy District Attorney Rob Baker, who is leading the prosecution, alleged that the students

knew they were committing felony crimes and pointed to messages between the students where they discussed attorney contacts, protective gear against police force, strategies for barricading the building and the option of bringing diapers and electrolytes. He argued that the chats, which took place on the encrypted messaging app Signal, were evidence that the protesters planned to remain in the president’s office for some time and were prepared for confrontation with law enforcement.

But the defense pointed out that the students failed to actually bring longer-term supplies like diapers, and that the protective gear was due to students fearing excessive force by police.

Baker also urged the jury not to consider the war in Gaza or the students’ motivations while deliberating. Throughout the trial, supporters of the students gathered outside the courthouse with Palestinian flags, food and music.

The court will reconvene on Feb. 25 at 1:30 p.m. in Santa Clara County Superior Court Department 24. Santa Clara County District Attorney Jeff Rosen said that the prosecution will seek to retry the case.

“This case is about a group of people who destroyed someone else’s property and caused hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage,” he said in an email to this publication. “That is against the law and that is why we will retry the case.” ■

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

Berman bill aims to enhance suicide prevention training at schools

Education would be available to all students, teachers, parents

By Emma Montalbano

With Palo Alto facing increased pressure to address youth mental health, Assembly member Marc Berman introduced legislation this week aimed at providing access to free suicide prevention training to all K-12 students, teachers, administrators and parents in California.

Assembly Bill 2003, which Berman put forth this week, comes as Palo Alto is in the midst of its third “suicide cluster” — a short period of time when multiple deaths by suicide happen. The bill seeks to provide communities with the resources and knowledge needed to recognize vulnerable youth and support them, according to a press

release from his office.

“Too many communities across California have been devastated by youth suicides, including my hometown of Palo Alto,” said Berman, whose district includes Mountain View, Palo Alto and Menlo Park. “We must do everything we possibly can to prevent these tragedies.”

Berman’s legislation also looks to ensure that suicide risk screening data is shared publicly so that communities can identify trends and create plans to tackle the issue.

In the wake of a Palo Alto High School student’s death by suicide earlier this month, students urged school district leaders to create stricter policies against bullying, establish more personalized responses to

student deaths and look into the accessibility of current mental health resources.

Suicide is the second-leading cause of death across the state for people ages 10 to 25, and rates have increased over the last 20 years, Tuesday’s press release said.

Berman had previously secured funding for an online suicide prevention training program for middle and high school students and staff under a pilot program that was available from June 2020 to December 2024. More than 20,000 people completed the training, and the vast majority reported that they felt they could help someone who might be considering suicide, according to Berman’s office.

His proposed bill would significantly expand that program.

Berman partnered with the Commission for Behavioral Health in creating the legislation, which Al Rowlett, the commission’s chair, said supports the agency’s “extensive policy recommendations for suicide prevention and school behavioral health.”

“Suicide is preventable, and this training is essential to give Californians the knowledge, tools, and resources to know what to look for and feel confident in supporting youth in their life who need help,” Berman said. ■

Email Staff Writer Emma Montalbano at emontalbano@almanacnews.com.

HELP IS AVAILABLE

Any person who is feeling depressed, troubled or suicidal can call 988, the mental health crisis hotline, to speak with a crisis counselor. In Santa Clara County, interpretation is available in 200 languages. Spanish speakers can also call 888-628-9454. People can reach trained counselors at Crisis Text Line by texting RENEW to 741741. You can also call or text 988, the Suicide & Crisis Lifeline, to connect with trained counselors nationwide or call the San Mateo County Crisis Line at 650-579-0350 or go to smchealth.org/suicide-prevention to access local suicide prevention resources in San Mateo County.

PARK FEE

continued from page 5

on any park or recreational purposes. For fiscal year 2024-25, the city collected \$411,600 in in-lieu park fees and used it, plus previously collected fee revenues, to pay for building part of the Belle Haven Community Campus and improvements at Willow Oaks Park.

Conflict with state law

In 2022, a new state law created by SB 9 required cities to allow homeowners to split a single-family lot into two lots and allow up to two units on each lot, in an effort to increase housing availability in the state. Cities are required to approve eligible projects without discretionary review.

However, to be eligible, the applicant for a lot split must agree they intend to occupy one of the lots for at least three years.

As part of that streamlined process, the law generally prohibits cities from requiring off-site improvements as a condition of approval.

The California Department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) sent Menlo Park a letter in 2024 informing the city it could not charge Quimby Act fees for SB 9 subdivisions. According to HCD, the city can not charge Quimby Act fees since those are used for off-site improvements.

City Attorney Nira Doherty's response to HCD said that SB 9 allows the city to charge fees under any other law and that Quimby Act fees don't count as off-site improvements.

"The argument from the city feels a little strained," Farrell said. "The logic of SB 9 is to make special exceptions for very small projects. It's a ministerial tool for only two to four units. The idea of leaving extra land aside when you're making a small project, it's not a massive subdivision. It makes a little less sense."

Farrell added that most SB 9 applications are by small developers or homeowners, instead of corporations, which typically are involved in larger subdivisions.

Regardless of legality, Jeremy Levine with the Housing Leadership Coalition of San Mateo County says lot splits can help create housing for families.

"Lot splits are an important strategy to create new

family-friendly housing opportunities in neighborhoods that have historically restricted it," he said in an email. "A \$127,000 fee per home is a perverse penalty against the future families who will one day live there."

"To the extent the city charges parks fees on lot splits, it needs to think about not just its legal wobble room but also its housing needs," Levine added.

While cities were initially concerned that SB 9 would eliminate single-family zoning, few projects have actually been approved in Midpeninsula cities.

Potential legal risks

According to Farrell, the city could face legal penalties for prohibiting these types of developments.

Under Assembly Bill 712, Farrell explained, cities that take actions in violation of housing laws after receiving a warning from the state housing

department or the attorney general's office can face fines of \$50,000 or more if a developer prevails in court.

It is unclear whether the state's 2024 letter to Menlo Park would trigger those penalties.

The state housing department did not respond to requests for comment. ■

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

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Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Cars and motorcycles speed through the Four Corners intersection of Highways 84 and 35 in Woodside on a busy Sunday afternoon.

SPEED LIMITS

continued from page 5

slow down motorists as they pass through the area.

“The stop signs are ignored when people are racing. Speed limits are a suggestion on (Highway) 35,” said Woodside resident David Mittleman. “What really needs to be done is a traffic study and a redesign of that area, which Caltrans said they were going to do, but not in a way that was amicable to anybody listening.”

Council members recognized that speeding and road safety have been an ongoing issue at Four Corners and voted to move forward with a request to lower the speed limit.

Woodside Elementary School

After multiple requests from the community to lower the speed limit near Woodside Elementary School, the town staff found through traffic surveys that the average driver travels faster than the posted 25 mph speed limit. The resolution passed by the council will request Caltrans to establish a 15 mph speed limit on the stretch of Woodside Road near the elementary school.

In October 2025, the state passed Assembly Bill 382, permitting local jurisdictions to establish 20 mph speed limits in school zones and 15 mph speed limits for residential

areas on a highway.

Speed trailers set up along Woodside Road measured driver speeds exceeding 25 mph during school drop-off and pickup hours, said Ehsan Farkhondeh, chair of the Circulation Committee.

Drivers who are not familiar with Woodside might not expect to be driving into a school zone if approaching from the mountain side, he said. Farkhondeh said he believes the reduced speed limit will create more awareness for highway drivers.

Christina Warren, a member of the Circulation Committee explained that it’s a daily issue for children walking from the west side of the school who do not have any crosswalks or sidewalks to safely get to school.

“Everything’s been addressed for kids east of the school from the Glens to get to school. But we have tons of kids west of the school that are having to deal with high-speed cars passing them while they’re trying to get to school that live less than 500 yards away,” she said.

Woodside parents shared their support for lowering the speed limit, describing many near misses their children have faced as cars attempt to pass traffic by moving into bike lanes as students are making their way to school.

Council member Jenn Wall suggested adding a school zone sign to alert drivers within 500 feet west of the school and Mayor Brian Dombkowski supported an idea proposed by Farkhondeh to establish the new speed limit within the property line of Woodside Elementary School. ■

*Email Staff Writer
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COMMUNITY BRIEFS

Ravenswood school district recognized with sustainability award

Ravenswood Elementary School District was recognized as a California Green Ribbon School this year, acknowledged for its leadership in sustainability and environmental justice. The recognition is only given to select districts across the state and country.

“This recognition affirms that transformative climate action in public education is driven not by wealth, but by equity, vision, and long-term commitment,” wrote district staff in a press release.

Ravenswood Superintendent Gina Sudaria said the award honors not only the school district’s buildings but also its comprehensive systems built to support students through free programs, mental health assistance, educational field trips and more.

Recently, the school district celebrated several school reopenings, introducing fully electrified campuses powered by solar energy, and creating more green spaces by partnering with environmental nonprofit Canopy to plant more than 1,000 trees on district property.

“This is a generational opportunity to rebuild our schools, made possible through deep partnerships with energy, environmental, civic and wellness organizations. Together with donors and community partners like Canopy, we’ve secured more than \$50 million in support to ensure climate action and student opportunity move forward hand-in-hand,” said Assistant Superintendent William Eger.

Applications now open for San Mateo County Libraries maker-in-residence

San Mateo County Libraries are accepting applications for its first “maker-in-residence,” a six-month program that aims to bring interactive science, technology, engineering, art and math experiences to communities across the county.

The maker-in-residence will travel throughout the county to lead workshops, host studio sessions and visit communities with the library’s Makermobile. The library is seeking individuals who have a passion for teaching and community engagement and welcomes scientists, technologists, engineers, artists and mathematicians to apply.

Applicants must be 18 years or older and live in the San Francisco Bay Area and will commit to the full six-month residency. The maker-in-residence will receive a \$10,000 honorarium. Applications are accepted through March 4.

For more information visit smcl.org/maker-res.

Atherton seeks volunteers for annual Earth Day event

Atherton is preparing for its annual Earth day event at Holbrook-Palmer Park on April 26 and is seeking volunteers to help with setup, activities, guest engagement and event breakdown. The event will take place from 1-4 p.m. and will feature the theme of “Our Power, Our Planet — Take Action Today!”

The town also welcomes community members to showcase their local sustainability projects, especially those led by students. Those with projects should contact Christabel Soria-Mendoza at csoria-mendoza@athertonca.gov. To sign up as a volunteer, visit atherton.news/volunteer-form.

Las Lomitas school district refinances bonds

In early February, the Las Lomitas Elementary School District completed the refinancing of \$23.6 million of its outstanding Measure S bonds, which were approved by more than 70% of voters in 2013.

Refunding a school district bond is similar to replacing a home mortgage and reduces tax rates by replacing existing bonds with new shorter-term bonds with lower interest rates. According to the district, this will save local taxpayers \$2.8 million through 2040. On average, a residential property within the district is projected to save about \$40 per year, more than \$600 by 2040.

“This refunding is a testament to the district’s commitment to fiscal responsibility and its dedication to maximizing taxpayer dollars,” said Superintendent Erik Burmeister in a press release. “The board and I are incredibly excited to save our residents money and we’ll continue to do everything we can to be good stewards of our community’s investment.” ■

— Jennifer Yoshikoshi



LAS LOMITAS ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICT

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING AND OF PROPOSAL FOR INCREASING SCHOOL FACILITIES FEES AS AUTHORIZED BY EDUCATION CODE SECTION 17620 AND GOVERNMENT CODE SECTION 65995

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE that immediately following a public hearing on the matter, a resolution will be considered by the Board of Trustees of the Las Lomitas Elementary School District at its regular meeting on March 4, 2026 which, if adopted by the Board, will increase development fees established by the District against residential construction and reconstruction to \$5.38 per square foot and against new commercial or industrial construction to \$0.87 per square foot. The proposed fees are authorized by Education Code Section 17620 and Government Code Section 65995. Data pertaining to the cost of school facilities is available for inspection during regular business hours at the District’s administrative offices at 1011 Altschul Avenue in Menlo Park. The increased fees, if approved by the Board of Trustees, will become effective on May 4, 2026 which is 60 days after the proposed adoption by the Board of the resolution levying such fee.



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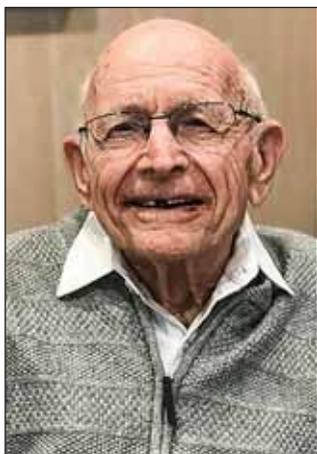
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Arthur Hausman

November 24, 1923 – January 18, 2026

Arthur Herbert Hausman passed peacefully at Stanford on Sunday, January 18, 2026, at the age of 102, surrounded by his family and loved ones. He is remembered for his warmth, quiet humor, intellectual brilliance, curiosity and lifelong devotion to family and public service.

Born in Chicago, Illinois, Arthur moved with his family to El Paso, Texas. He graduated from the University of Texas at Austin in communications-electronics, with advanced study in mathematics and cryptography.

In 1944, during World War II, Arthur received a letter from the Secretary of War directing him to enlist in a highly specialized cryptologic role. As an US Naval Intelligence officer with OP-20-G, he served at Bletchley Park, working alongside mathematicians such as Alan Turing on Project ULTRA, contributing to code breaking efforts that materially aided the Allied victory. In recognition of his service, he received the Naval Unit Commendation ribbon in 1946.

After the war, Arthur earned a Master's degree in Engineering Science and Applied Physics at Harvard University and pursued postgraduate work in Electrical Engineering at the University of Maryland. He co-founded Engineering Research Associates (ERA), later part of Sperry Rand Corporation. He then served as an electronic scientist for the U.S. Department of Defense, receiving the Meritorious Civilian Service Award.

In 1960, Arthur joined Ampex Corporation, advancing audio and video recording technologies, and became CEO and President in the early 1970s. He guided the company through global innovation, including pioneering Olympic coverage and technologies used in broadcasting, defense, and aerospace. In 1985, he was appointed by President Ronald Reagan to the President's Export Council, chairing a subcommittee on advanced technology transfer. In 1995, the National Security Agency (NSA) awarded him the Exceptional Service Award, recognizing his contributions to cryptography. Arthur continued as a trusted consultant to defense and intelligence agencies into his 90s.

Over the years, Arthur also served as a board director for numerous organizations, including the National Security Agency (NSA) Scientific Advisory Board, CalAmp Corporation, the Bay Area Council, Drexler Technology, and other technology and civic institutions. Arthur was elected to the COSMOS Club, an organization for distinguished scientists, artists and public servants.

Arthur married Helen Mandelowitz (1924–2015) in 1946. They raised three children: Susan Hausman Brunner (deceased), Kenneth, and Catherine. Arthur and Helen were founding members of Congregation Beth Am and lifelong residents of Atherton, California.

He is survived by his children Kenneth (Malathi Srinivasan, MD) and Catherine (Stephen Fox), and grandchildren Sarah (Hudson Arnold, great-grandchildren Brooks & Callan) and Raea.

The Hausman Family will host a Memorial Service at Congregation Beth Am in Los Altos on Sunday, February 22nd at 1:30 pm with reception to follow at 3pm at Donatos.

All are welcome. If schedules permit, please RSVP at www.tinyurl.com/arthurmemorial. Remembrances may be sent to arthurhausmanmemorial@gmail.com.

PAID OBITUARY

San Mateo County aims to make opioid overdose drug easily accessible

By Bay Area News Service

San Mateo County announced the launch of a program last week to place emergency overdose medication in publicly accessible boxes around the county.

The program will place a small newspaper box in front of businesses and organizations that will be filled with naloxone, which comes in a nasal spray and can reverse the effects of an overdose from opioids. It is commonly known by one of its brand names, Narcan.

The Naloxone Stand Box program is being rolled out by the San Mateo County Overdose Prevention Coalition, which is a partnership of community organizations and San Mateo County Behavioral Health & Recovery Services, part of the county's health department.

The first box was placed at the Allcove youth center on El Camino Real in San Mateo in December.

"Beyond expanding access to lifesaving medication, the Coalition is an important and necessary step in reducing the stigma associated with substance-use disorders and overdose through education, training and engagement with youth, schools, unhoused and other at-risk populations," said Ronni Brown, the



Courtesy San Mateo County

A box containing naloxone, which can reverse the effects of an opioid overdose, at Sequoia Station in Redwood City.

Overdose Prevention Coalition's chairperson and a senior community health planner with the county's Behavioral Health & Recovery Services division.

There were 54 opioid-related overdose deaths in the county in 2024 and 121 opioid-related emergency department visits, according to the county's health department.

Applicants should be able to securely keep one of the boxes in a publicly accessible place and restock it as needed, according to a news release detailing the program.

To apply for a box at no cost, visit <https://tinyurl.com/yh4w8fd5>.

The boxes can hold up to 74 doses of naloxone. Participants are responsible for restocking the boxes, but the San Mateo County Overdose Prevention Coalition will help connect volunteers with free supplies from a state program that makes them accessible at no cost.

The boxes are a little over 3 feet tall, weigh about 30 pounds and are 16 inches wide by 15 inches deep. Smaller versions are also available.

The program also asks participants to track the number of boxes restocked and the number of overdoses that were reversed using supplies from each box. ■

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include:

Marlow Savelle, 81, of Menlo Park, who spent a part of her youth in Europe, where she got married and had her first daughter, who then returned to the United States and founded the company Cookie Habit, a Palo Alto institution known for its oatmeal-butterscotch-chocolate-chip-walnut cookies and golden brownies, who was an active member of the Palo Alto Junior League, who loved jewelry, swimming and music, and who moved to Napa in 1999, died on Jan. 6, 2026.

Arthur Hausman, 102, of Atherton, who was born in Chicago and lived in El Paso, Texas, who became involved in cryptography and was then recruited to serve as a U.S. Naval Intelligence officer, who served at Bletchley Park alongside mathematicians such as Alan Turing and contributed to code-breaking efforts, who received the Naval Unit Commendation ribbon in 1946 and later served as an electronic scientist for the U.S. Department

of Defense, who worked at Ampex Corporation, becoming the company's CEO in the early 1970s, who chaired a subcommittee on advanced technology transfer at the President's Export Council during the Ronald Reagan administration, and who in 1995 received an Exceptional Service Award from the National Security Agency, died on Jan. 18, 2026.

Phil Bobel, 78, of Palo Alto, a champion for environmental sustainability who was born in Washington, D.C., who earned a degree in civil engineering from Stanford University, who worked at the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency before joining the Public Works Department at the city of Palo Alto in 1989, who spearheaded many environmental initiatives and capital projects before retiring in 2021, who championed waste-to-energy technology and guided the update of the city's Sustainability and Climate Action Plan, who was honored with a Man of the Year award by Acterra, and who mentored

countless colleagues in Palo Alto, died on Jan. 31, 2026.

Robin Faisant, 94, of Portola Valley, who was born in New Jersey and attended University of Idaho, where he helped organize a ski patrol with fellow members of the Delta Sigma Phi fraternity, who served in the U.S. Navy during the Korean War and was responsible for gun batteries aboard the heavy cruiser U.S.S. Bremerton, who then earned his law degree from Stanford Law School and practiced law for 55 years, starting with corporate litigation and later specializing in estate planning, who served as city attorney at Los Altos Hills, San Carlos, Belvedere and Atherton and as a director at Los Altos Chamber of Commerce, Los Altos Rotary Club and other civic organizations, who loved cooking and baking and who perfected the tarte tatin, died on Feb. 3, 2026.

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

Carl Stanford Treichel

January 26, 1965 - November 14, 2025

Obituary of a Young Sailor

Carl Stanford Treichel was released from the grasp of Schizophrenia and Parkinson's Diseases when he died at home on November 14, 2025. He lived two lives: a brief life of joy and adventure followed by a long life in the captivity of illness. This is not a usual obituary because Carl's life was lived in two separate eras. In fact, it is more of a tragic story.

It was a miracle when Carl Stanford Treichel was born at Stanford Hospital in Palo Alto, California, on January 26, 1965.

From birth to age 23, he was fortunate to be himself and grow into manhood gradually, normally, and experience the pleasures of life. But his life was fractured, shattered and destroyed forever when he contracted Schizophrenia, a devastating disease at age 23.

Carl's short life extended from birth to age 23.

He went to Ormondale and Corte Madera Schools in Portola Valley and Woodside High School where he and his friends, Ian Cummings and Alan Hancock, biked daily to and from Portola Valley to Woodside and skied at Sugar Bowl when it snowed.

He loved his dogs: Dinka, the cocker spaniel, Wednesday, the German Shepherd, and Poopsie and Mimi, the Maltese, but especially, Poopsie, during his brief early life.

His life was rich in aquatic experiences. There was a cruise to Alaska, another of the Hawaiian Islands, and trips to Cabo San Lucas and Acapulco where he sailed catamarans. He was quite young when he went down the wild rapids of the Colorado River on a Dory with Martin Litton. And later, there was a cruise around the South American continent.

In this earlier life, he became a sailor and self-taught musician. He was a true Aquarius loving all the water activities, but especially sailing; he was a natural mariner, like his grandfather, Tancredi Nieri.

Carl was an only child and shy early on, but when he learned to sail, he suddenly became "Captain Ahab" and having gained great confidence, later taught "the ropes" to younger sailors at Tiburon and Sausalito.



When he was 13, he acquired a Laser, a sailboat similar in size to a surfboard. It was meant for one but he often sailed initially with his mother, Jeanie. One day, he sailed to the San Mateo Bridge and encountered a fierce storm, forcing the Laser to "surf" dangerously all the way back to the Redwood City Harbor. The story was newsworthy and written up in *Latitude 38*, the sailors' "rag."

Deciding he needed a bigger boat, he then acquired a 20-foot mini-yacht, the *English Signet*, in which he sailed down the California coast to the Channel Islands. He was only 16. His mother Jeanie joined him for 3-weeks exploring the islands, including Santa Rosa and Santa Cruz where it seemed they were discovering a new world.

When Carl graduated from high school in 1982 at age 17, he wanted to sail around the South Pacific islands. With a one-way ticket to Tahiti, he waited until the right yacht came along for his adventure. It was the 98-foot ketch *Sintra*, a

yacht which had been exploring all the islands including Bora Bora and Tahiti. He was hired on as the fourth mate of the crew. On the *Sintra*, his music flourished and he wrote over 36 original songs with beautiful lyrics.

Carl wrote of his love of the islands and the romance of the voyage into times past where their yacht was met by the islanders laden with leis to greet them at each destination. He said it was just like being in the movies.

This adventure of over a year was the zenith of his life. It was an incomparable voyage for a young vibrant sailor. Something happy to remember.

Carl's long tragic second life lasted from age 23 to 60 when he died.

When he was 23, the terrible scourge of life, Schizophrenia, took over. His whole future was destroyed. There would be no career, no family, only a series of crises and suffering. Schizophrenia smothered the self. One mother, when seeing her son said, "Who

are you? What have you done with my son?"

Through it all, he was strong and independent, kind and gentle. To the question, "how are you?" he always replied, "I'm fine."

At this time, he was still physically fit until ... Parkinson's Disease struck and made him an instant invalid depending on pills just to walk or stand. His life then became just a routine of taking pills throughout the days with trial-and-error results.

His medication for schizophrenia was based on limiting dopamine, a brain chemical. But later when he developed Parkinson's disease, where the medication was based on increasing dopamine. So, he was simultaneously taking two contradictory medications causing various effects.

Life became a daily struggle. But music was still important in his life. He continued to play his guitar each day, and played the piano with passion. There were a few joys or other simple pleasures, such as going out for coffee each day or driving around the valley. It was a life searching for simple ephemeral pleasures.

Caretakers were required to allow him to do the things he wanted to do that he could do. Although he was strong, determined, and always wanted to do everything himself, it was a struggle. His mind was not in control of his body at all times.

Even so, his determination and spirit despite the physical and mental challenges seemed heroic. Carl was an inspiration to all who knew him and he will be remembered and missed forever.

He is survived by his mother, Jeanie Nieri Treichel, his aunt Matilda Marie Nieri, cousins Beverly Rullhausen of SF, Gina Milani of Angels Camp, Claudia Miller & Dennis Miller of Escalon, Gene Nieri, Jr. of El Dorado Hill. Pre-deceased were his father, Professor George Treichel (2008) and his siblings, Tiffany, Todd, Jennifer and David Nieri-Treichel who were born and died on the same day (1968).

Contributing to Save the Bay in his honor would be appreciated.

PAID OBITUARY

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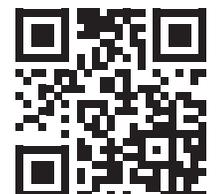
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**BECOME A
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Photos by Seeger Gray

Lydia Goodson makes a cake for a customer of Brookside Bakery at Goodson's house in Portola Valley on Feb. 7.

BAKERY

continued from page 5

said that having classmates who are adults with children and rent to pay opened her eyes to a “whole new world” outside of high school.

Every Tuesday morning, Goodson would see Second Harvest distributing food in the Cañada College parking lot. Dozens of people, including her high school and college classmates, would pick up food from the nonprofit.

“It really just struck me how local Second Harvest’s impact is, how close it is and that really made me realize how important

it is, so it led me to do some more research on it,” she said.

Goodson was inspired by the organization’s mission to serve the community and said she decided that she wanted to contribute to it through her bakery.

“My whole bakery is built on being community-centered, like the connection I have with my neighbors, so I just thought it was something that could really make a difference,” Goodson said.

From her sales to Portola Valley residents, she’s been able to raise hundreds of dollars each month. Goodson operates her bakery with a “pay what you

can” model, taking 80% of what her customers donate to her and contributing that amount to charity. Her menu does not have set prices, she said.

Goodson said Brookside Bakery has connected her with the wider community. She’s also spreading the word about Second Harvest to town residents, some of whom learned about the nonprofit’s existence through her bakery, she said.

“I never would have met some of the customers without this bakery,” Goodson said. “But now I know what their favorite kind of sweet bread is and what kind of cake their

mother likes. It’s just this amazing connection that I have with my town.”

Goodson said that to balance the demands of being a student and a baker, Brookside Bakery is only able to take orders from

Portola Valley residents. For more information, visit brookside-bakery.com/home. ■

*Email Staff Writer
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jyoshikoshi@almanacnews.com.*

JUDGE

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was kind of implanted in me,” Donnellan said.

After several years in the airline industry, Donnellan enlisted in the U.S. Army and was deployed to Iraq in 2004 to work in logistics. In early 2005, he returned to San Mateo County and began his work at the district attorney’s office. Among assignments that he finds most meaningful is his work at Veteran’s Treatment Court, which helps connect veterans who get caught up in the justice system to critical services, he said.

“It matters a lot to me, and it also gives me perspective and insight in dealing with folks who are also dealing with substance abuse, PTSD and a myriad of problems that makes them ‘justice involved,’” Donnellan said.

He cited his strong connection to San Mateo County and his long list of endorsements from county judges, attorneys and politicians. That includes state Assembly member Marc Berman, U.S. Rep. Kevin Mullin and San Mateo County District Attorney Stephen Wagstaff, according to his campaign website. It also includes many of

the Superior Court judges who would be his colleagues if he is elected.

Boyarsky, for his part, is undaunted by his opponent’s homefield advantage. For one thing, Palo Alto is at the northern edge of Santa Clara County and Boyarsky notes that he lives closer to the courthouse in San Mateo County than the one in San Jose. He also said he would not face the same types of conflicts of interest that a San Mateo County prosecutor like Donnellan would face as a judge on criminal cases.

“If someone comes from the District Attorney’s office and goes right to the bench, they’re typically conflicted from sitting on criminal matters for at least a year or two, especially if it’s a second-in-command like someone like me,” Boyarsky said. “Because I don’t practice in San Mateo County, there are no such restrictions. I wouldn’t be conflicted from handling criminal matters in San Mateo County.”

He also noted that the governor regularly looks to adjacent counties when filling a judicial appointment. Donnellan countered that he does not expect to have many recusals, if any, noting that his caseload represents just a tiny fraction of the many

cases that San Mateo County judges face, which include civil, criminal and family court cases.

Boyarsky is hoping to counter Donnellan’s list of San Mateo connections with support from elected leaders in his own county. His supporters, he said, include U.S. Rep. Sam Liccardo and Santa Clara County District Attorney Jeff Rosen.

Boyarsky also pointed to his own extensive experience. He has been an attorney for more than 32 years and has appeared in front of more than 100 judges, he said. After graduating from U.C. Berkeley School of Law in 1991, he worked at the San Francisco firm of Steefel, Levitt & Weiss before joining the Santa Clara County District Attorney’s office, where he currently serves as chief assistant district attorney.

He cited in an interview his wealth of management experience in a position that oversees about 200 attorneys in the district attorney’s office.

“I would bring a lot to the bench and I want to serve,” Boyarsky said. “I want to contribute and I’m ideally suited.” ■

*Email Gennady Sheyner at
gshyner@almanacnews.com.*

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

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS HEARBY GIVEN THAT THE PLANNING COMMISSION OF THE TOWN OF WOODSIDE will hold a hybrid public hearing allowing for the option to attend by teleconference/video conference or in person in Independence Hall, 2955 Woodside Road, Woodside, CA on Wednesday, March 4, 2026, at 6:00 PM, to consider:

1583 Cañada Lane

VARI2025-0008

**Alena Campagna, Stoecker & Northway Architects, Inc.
Planner: Keigo Yamamoto, Assistant Planner**

Presentation, review, and approval, conditional approval, or denial of a Variance for the construction of a new garage that would encroach into the required front setback.

This application is Categorically Exempt under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) Guidelines 15303(e), new construction of small structures including appurtenant structures and garages.

The application materials are available for public review by contacting Keigo Yamamoto at kyamamoto@woodsideca.gov.

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

*Lasting
Memories*

An online directory of
obituaries and remembrances.

Search obituaries, submit a memorial,
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Go to: AlmanacNews.com/obituaries

CAMERAS

continued from page 1

To maintain oversight, the town established policies that require a quarterly review of search inquiries, intended to provide the community with transparency over the use of license plate reader data.

San Mateo County Sheriff's Sgt. Nick Boragno confirmed that he has looked through every search inquiry from outside agencies since ALPRs were installed into Woodside in May 2023 and continuing to the present day. Over the past three years, searches in Woodside have only been

conducted by the Sheriff's Office, Redwood City and San Mateo police departments. These are the only three agencies that have authorized access to Woodside's data, he said.

The Sheriff's Office staff routinely conduct audits which the county's civil grand jury also reviews, Boragno added.

In 2025, license plate readers in Woodside helped law enforcement locate two stolen vehicles and identify suspects involved in a theft that occurred in Portola Valley, according to the staff report. Last year, over 3 million unique license plates were read in the town. Woodside's data

was searched at least 111 times to identify potential witnesses in active investigations, according to the staff report.

Last year, an investigation by The Almanac also found that federal agencies have been conducting searches in Atherton and Menlo Park, despite such searches being restricted by those towns.

Last month, the security of the data collected by Flock cameras again came under scrutiny after a Mountain View Voice investigation revealed that over 250 agencies across California had searched Mountain View's license plate camera data without

its authorization, violating the city's rules for accessing the data.

Mountain View's national and statewide sharing mode had been turned on by Flock between August and November 2024, without the city's knowledge, which allowed federal agencies to conduct searches of Mountain View's data.

In March 2025, Flock created a policy that helps agencies comply with state laws by prohibiting federal agencies from accessing Flock's database in California and Virginia, said Flock spokesperson Lily Ho. She explained that the national lookup model was removed from California

agencies so that there would be no accidents.

At Woodside's meeting, Ho clarified that Mountain View was on a pilot program with the company and was testing out the product during the investigated time in 2024. The city did not officially become a customer of the vendor and establish its own license plate reader policies until January 2025, she said.

After Mountain View opted to disable its cameras earlier this month, the City Council of East Palo Alto decided to explore whether it would renew

See **CAMERAS**, page 17

Public Notices

NOTICE OF LIEN SALE

Notice is hereby given that Westpoint Harbor LLC, located at 101 Westpoint Harbor Drive, Redwood City, CA 94063, will sell the personal property of Jonah Lane to satisfy a lien for unpaid storage charges pursuant to the California Self-Service Storage Facility Act.

The property to be sold consists of miscellaneous used personal property and storage items located in the above-referenced locker. The property is sold as-is, where-is, without warranties of any kind.

The sale will be conducted at public auction on February 23rd, 2026 at 10:00am at 101 Westpoint Harbor Drive, Redwood City, CA 94063.

(ALM Feb 20, 2026)

LL CONSTRUCTION SUPPLY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-302891

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

1.) LL CONSTRUCTION SUPPLY, located at 189 Constitution Dr., Menlo Park, CA 94025.

Registered owner(s):

LOVAZZANO LOGISTICS

189 Constitution Dr

Menlo Park, CA 94025

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA

This business is conducted by: a Corporation.

Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 12-1-2025.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 05, 2026.

(ALM Feb 20, 27, Mar 6 and 13, 2026)

X DRIVE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-302591

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

1.) X DRIVE, located at 1383 Laurel Street #B, San Carlos, CA 94070.

Registered owner(s):

NADER HADIZADEH RAEISSI

1383 Laurel Street #B

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 January 07, 2026.

(ALM Feb 13, 20, 27 and Mar 6, 2026)

ERLY'S SHEAR BEAUTY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-302932

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

1.) ERLY'S SHEAR BEAUTY, located at 611 West Orange Ave, South San Francisco, CA 94080.

Registered owner(s):

MARAH LICUANAN

611 West Orange Ave

South San Francisco, CA 94080

This business is conducted by: an Individual.

Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 02/10/2026.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 10, 2026.

(ALM Feb 20, 27, Mar 6 and 13, 2026)

GREEN GARDEN GONZALEZ
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-302731

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

1.) GREEN GARDEN GONZALEZ, located at 219 Jervis Ave, East Palo Alto, CA 94303.

Registered owner(s):

ARNOLDO GONZALEZ VASQUEZ

219 Jervis Ave

East Palo Alto, CA 94303

This business is conducted by: an Individual.

Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 01/01/2026.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 21, 2026.

(ALM Feb 20, 27, Mar 6 and 13, 2026)

MP JUNK REMOVAL
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-302749

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

1.) MP JUNK REMOVAL, located at 836 Willow St, Redwood City, CA 94063.

Registered owner(s):

MARCO FABRICIO PALOMINOS

836 Willow St

Redwood City, CA 94063

This business is conducted by: an Individual.

Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 01/23/2026.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 23, 2026.

(ALM Feb 20, 27, Mar 6 and 13, 2026)

DECCAN DENTAL
DECCAN DENTAL SLEEP CENTER
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-302742

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

1.) DECCAN DENTAL, 2.) DECCAN DENTAL SLEEP CENTER, located at 1528 S EL CAMINO REAL, SUITE 408, SAN MATEO, CA 94402.

Registered owner(s):

SAMIR NANJAPA DDS, A DENTAL CORPORATION

1528 S EL CAMINO REAL, SUITE 408

SAN MATEO, CA 94402

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA

This business is conducted by: a Corporation.

Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 05/15/2013.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 23, 2026.

(ALM Feb 6, 13, 20 and 27, 2026)

FENCE MOD
POLLIONI
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-302948

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

1.) FENCE MOD, 2.) POLLIONI, located at 292 Raymundo Drive, Woodside, CA 94062.

Registered owner(s):

POLLIONI GROUP LLC

292 Raymundo Drive

Woodside, CA 94062

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA

This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.

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

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 11, 2026.

(ALM Feb 20, 27, Mar 6 and 13, 2026)

GYMIO
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-302835

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

1.) GYMIO, located at 1580 Southgate Avenue 416, Daly City, CA 94015.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 11, 2026.

(ALM Feb 20, 27, Mar 6 and 13, 2026)

BEYOND LLC
1580 Southgate Avenue 416
Daly City, CA 94015

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 07/01/2025.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on February 02, 2026.

(ALM Feb 20, 27, Mar 6 and 13, 2026)

CERTILINK SIGNING AGENCY
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-302614

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

1.) CERTILINK SIGNING AGENCY, located at 171 Lassen Dr, San Bruno, CA 94066.

Registered owner(s):

TRICIA LLANA MANGABAT

171 Lassen Dr

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 January 08, 2026.

(ALM Feb 13, 20, 27 and Mar 6, 2026)

PERFORMANCE SPACE HOOPS
PERFORMANCE SPACE CLUB
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-302767

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

1.) PERFORMANCE SPACE HOOPS, 2.) PERFORMANCE SPACE CLUB, located at 3553

Haven Ave. Ste 4, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

Registered owner(s):

PERFORMANCE SPACE LLC

2108 N ST #8596

Sacramento, CA 95816

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA

This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.

Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 1/1/2026.

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 27, 2026.

(ALM Feb 6, 13, 20 and 27, 2026)

HIKARI & YUME DESIGNS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-302811

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

1.) HIKARI & YUME DESIGNS, located at 402 Poinsettia Avenue, San Mateo, CA 94403.

Registered owner(s):

LINDSY DEANNI HERTANU

402 Poinsettia Avenue

San Mateo, CA 94403

This business is conducted by: an Individual.

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

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 30, 2026.

(ALM Feb 6, 13, 20 and 27, 2026)

CAUSWELLS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-302787

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

1.) CAUSWELLS, located at 550 Oak Grove Ave, Ste A, Menlo Park, CA 94025.

Mailing Address: 32 Terrace Dr Sausalito, CA 94965

Registered owner(s):

CAUSWELLS 2, LLC

32 Terrace Dr

Sausalito, CA 94965

State of Incorporation/Organization: CA

This business is conducted by: a Limited Liability Company.

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

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on January 28, 2026.

(ALM Feb 6, 13, 20 and 27, 2026)

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF:

DAVID LEON HILL AKA DAVID LEON HILL SR.

Case No.: 26-PRO-00140

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of DAVID LEON HILL AKA DAVID LEON HILL SR..

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

The Petition for Probate requests that:

Danielle Hill be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

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

A HEARING on the petition will be held on March 02 2026 at 9:00 AM in Department 13 of the Superior Court of California, County of San Mateo, located at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063.

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

If you are a creditor or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58 (b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law.

You may examine the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for Petitioner:

Arthur Swid Weil

671 Oak Grove Ave. Ste K

Menlo Park, CA 94025

650-322-4244

(ALM Feb 13, 20 and 27, 2026)

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.

CAMERAS

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its three-year contract with Flock.

Woodside Council member Wall expressed concerns about the settings on Woodside's data system and asked Flock and the Sheriff's Office to confirm that the "sharing mode" remains off and that future system upgrades will not cause changes to the town's settings without its knowledge.

The Sheriff's Office confirmed that the national search settings are off for Woodside's data, meaning federal agencies do not have access to local information.

Ho also assured Wall that written confirmation can be provided stating that settings for Woodside's cameras are set to local access only and that any software changes will not "silently" revert the town's sharing permissions.

"Even though it states in our policy that we can share with anyone in the state of California, it has been kind of the inferred policy that any request that comes in that's not from Redwood City Police Department, San Mateo Police Department or the Sheriff's Office is just dismissed," said Ledbetter.

Seven residents of Woodside and San Mateo County spoke

during the Town Council meeting, urging the town to pause its license plate readers, citing incidents of privacy and safety risks in Virginia, Illinois and Texas.

"I think it's wild that until tonight, I didn't hear about any verification of the settings that are even in our dashboard," said one public commenter. "We cannot continue just blindly trusting a vendor that I think has lost the confidence of our community."

Even San Mateo County residents who live outside of Woodside urged the council to reject the annual report and pause its Flock cameras. In public comments at the Town Council meeting they shared their concerns about Flock's involvement in local audits and compliance checks.

"We know that Flock's program puts the Woodside community in danger. The fact that there hasn't been any problems with the Woodside data yet does not predict that there won't be future issues," said a public commenter.

Wall called for the town to pause the license plate reader program and the installation of additional cameras, including the one on Runnymede Road. Her recommendation to the council included an immediate transition to a third-party audit model and

hiring of an independent firm with expertise in privacy and security.

"As we review the data tonight, we must look beyond the compliant labels in our internal audits and address the significant negative press coverage surrounding Flock Safety," said Wall, who added that the vendor's behavior suggests they are unreliable.

Other members of the council shared their uncertainties about pausing the program but were open to changing the audit reporting structure between the Sheriff's Office and the town.

Council member Dick Brown opposed Wall's position, mentioning how easily private information can be obtained through things like supermarket transactions and the Internet.

"I'm just not sure I'm ready to do a wholesale change just because there's a few instances around the country," said Brown.

Mayor Brian Dombkowski acknowledged that there are a lot of unfavorable conditions with the town's contract with Flock, including its self-certification model, software concerns and balancing safety with privacy. Although it would be easy for the council to decide to pause the program, he said he cannot dismiss the benefits of the cameras and the original unanimous vote

to install it a few years ago.

"I think the Mountain View example is a false equivalency," Dombkowski said.

Council member Hassan Aburish said he believes that there should be a safety net within Woodside that protects its community members from crime. While he wasn't in favor of pausing use of the cameras, he was open to changing the reporting structure and looking into alternative vendors.

Council member Paul Goeld said he agreed with Aburish but highlighted that, no matter what vendor the town works with, the audit on license plate reader

searches will be dependent on the truthfulness of the Sheriff's Office and its deputies.

After a long discussion, members voted to approve the annual audit and unanimously moved to reinstate a relationship with the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office to provide direct audit reports to the council. The council also voted 4-1 to search for a third-party auditor for license plate reader search inquiries. Council member Dick Brown cast the dissenting vote. ■

*Email Staff Writer
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BATS

continued from page 6

or through contact with animal excrement.

Bats are considered a high-risk animal for rabies transmission because all bat species are able to transmit the virus. The county said that bat bite marks are very small and can go unnoticed.

If residents find a bat in their room after sleeping or see a bat in a room with a child or a mentally impaired or intoxicated person, they should seek medical treatment and get the bat tested, according to the county.

The county also encouraged residents not to discard or release any bat that may have come into contact with humans so it can be tested. Even if there are no obvious bite marks, people are asked to contact the Peninsula Humane Society at 650-340-7022 so the bat can be tested for rabies.

Aside from bats, in the U.S., raccoons, skunks and foxes can also be a reservoir for rabies. However, rabid raccoons are rarely reported outside of the eastern United States, according to the county. ■

*Email Staff Writer Arden Margulis
at amargulis@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

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The **Almanac**



Seema Kohli's 'internal journey'

Artist holds first solo U.S. show, along with workshops and talks

By Heather Zimmerman

Change is a constant in the works of artist Seema Kohli, whether it's the cyclical unfolding of time, or even the medium she uses to portray that.

Though she says that her work begins with lines — drawings — Kohli works in a variety of media, bringing a vibrant universe alive in works of art that include paintings and drawings, sculpture and performance pieces. She also writes poems that complement her pieces.

Kohli, who was born in Delhi, India, where she still lives, has shown internationally, including at the Venice and Florence biennales. Her works are also held in collections of institutions such as the British Museum in London, New York's Rubin Museum and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

Kohli will be on the Peninsula for her first solo U.S. exhibition, "Samsara & Metamorphosis: The Mystical World of Seema Kohli," at the Pacific Art League, and will also offer several workshops and talks, coordinated by Sonia Patwardhan of Palo Alto-based Lasaya Art. We spoke to Kohli recently via Zoom about her work and her upcoming U.S. show.

This conversation has been edited for clarity and length.

The Almanac: The sacred feminine and time are major themes in your work. What drew you to explore these themes?

Seema Kohli: In India, I think it is very easy to understand this, because we are continuously talking about the changing face of our own life. We are seeing ourselves and discussing it constantly in families, at least in my own family, as I see it.

It may be different now, but as I was growing (up), it was a very important thing to constantly understand how we are changing as people, as humans, but at the same time not changing, you know?

That's what I tried to interpret in my work. Because my work is not about what is happening outside. It is an internal journey. It is a very — I can't say lonely, but I can say a space in which I

internalize and try to interpret various moments of joy and other very different emotions also. They get a form, they get an image.

Most of these images are feminine. Earlier, I was not realizing (why) and I used to think, because I have a female body, that is the reason I'm able to express it like that.

But over the years, now that I'm 65 and I see how life is happening, and I see the dance of the celebration of feminine, the energy that we call Shakti (divine feminine energy in Hinduism).

Energy is something which is constantly expanding, even when it is deeply depleting, it is going somewhere and coming back as something else, as we see in the cycle of life, it is never going away.

The Almanac: You have mentioned in previous interviews that "the image is living." What do you mean by that?

Seema Kohli: The image is living because it is constantly interrogating me, constantly questioning me: "Why the hell am I going to be here sitting on your canvas? Why do you want me?"

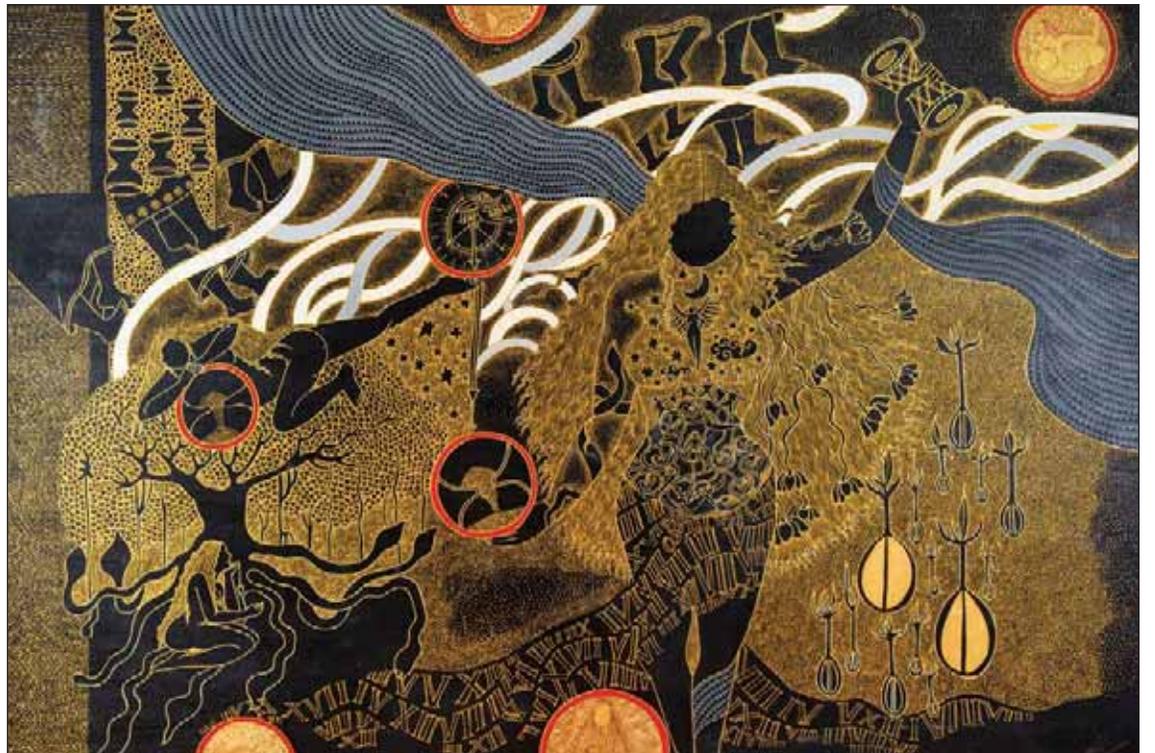
So I need to make a constant conversation with the image, to give it a complete identity, a sense of respect that "You are here with me, not as something I want. It is something that you would like to be."

My images are like friends who come and visit me on my canvas, and I have my conversation with them.

I'm not there to express or interpret those things in (people's) homes, but they are able to make a direct connection with these images, these paintings. I don't need to be there because (the images) are making their direct communication with the viewer, with the collector, with their homes, with their people, with different generations.

The Almanac: You work in a wide variety of media. What draws you to use a particular medium for a work?

Seema Kohli: As I was working with my images, I realized that certain images wanted to be expressed, maybe as a sculpture. My main source is through line, through drawing, and then maybe on the canvas and paper.



Courtesy Lasaya Art

"Heartbeat of the Universe" is a 2023 acrylic and ink piece on canvas with gold and silver leaf. "This work embodies (Kohli's) exploration of the feminine divine as an ever-present, fluid force that permeates all existence, merging the mythological with the everyday," according to a description of the piece.

But as I'm doing that and having a conversation with them, I realized that it's much more than that.

Maybe they want to be a performance. So the conversation between me and my image becomes more of a conversation on a stage, which I call narrative performances. These are narrative performances because these images have communicated certain verses to me while I was having a talk with them.

It is like there are days when you want to dress up for a party, and you are usually in your loose jeans. But some days you just want to dress up. So I think it's my images who want to just dress up.

The Almanac: Can you talk about some of the pieces that you'll be showing here?

Seema Kohli: (Kohli's gallerist, Sonia Patwardhan, holds up a painting during our Zoom call)

I call it "Harud." It's a Kashmiri word. Harud means autumn, a time for change — a time for rejuvenation and how beautiful it is. It's like fire all around you.

Even if you're walking on the dry leaves, the sound they make, it's so sensuous. That's what death is all about. It is all about rejuvenation. It is the time to change. It is

the time to let go and to receive.

We humans get so stuck to the fact that death is something negative. It should not be discussed. But we experience it every night. We experience it in the seasons. We experience it every moment, one breath going, one breath coming. So it is a constant. It's a yogic or a tantric practice that you experience letting go and receiving. That's what this work is all about.

The Almanac: What can people expect at the workshops you'll be presenting during your visit?

Seema Kohli: It's about tracking your memory and how memory plays in your life. How beautiful it is to see that memory does not have any timelines. You know, it does not have past, present or future. It is working in the present always. You may be thinking about your childhood, the smells, the flowers, maybe an image, maybe a bed sheet, maybe a photograph, maybe a book, maybe a name of a person who you really don't know in this era, this time, but they come alive in memory. They come alive in memory, and we need to keep honing it.

So this is what memory I want to take you back. I want to tell you, "Well, there is no past, there is no

future, there is only present, and we live in present always." It's only we need to just shift that space of consciousness.

The Almanac: This is your first solo show in the U.S. What do you hope the viewers take away from seeing your works themselves?

Seema Kohli: If they're able to connect in some part of themselves in these works, and if they talk to them in some way, I think that would be just what is very rewarding for me. ■

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

"Samsara & Metamorphosis: The Mystical World of Seema Kohli" takes place Feb. 27-March 1 at the Pacific Art League, 668 Ramona St., Palo Alto. Kohli will be on hand for an opening reception Feb. 27, 5:30 p.m. and lead workshops Feb. 24 at the Pacific Art League and Feb. 25 at the Triton Museum in Santa Clara. Kohli will also give a talk and poetry reading Feb. 24 at Stanford University and discuss her work Feb. 26 in a talk at the Palo Alto Art Center. For a full schedule of events, visit laasyaart.com.

Mountain View theater offers a 'Pear'-ed down 'My Fair Lady'

Intimate musical production spotlights social commentary and song

By Karla Kane

The teeny-tiny Pear Theatre may not be the first venue that comes to mind when picturing a production of a lush, golden-age Broadway favorite, but the Mountain View theater company's artistic director Sara Dean said the Pear's smaller-scale, immersive take on "My Fair Lady" offers Peninsula audiences a fresh take on the charming-yet-sharp exploration of class, gender and society.

"My Fair Lady" is generally known for big, lavish costumes and big, lavish sets, and is very much kind of ornate theater-making at its finest," Dean said. "At the Pear, we cannot do big and grand. Everything's a little bit 'Pear'-ed down," she said (the black box theater can seat only about 70 in its "My Fair Lady" configuration).

Dean was excited by the challenge of distilling the show down to its essence, she said, and making it work within the Pear's constraints, as well as digging into its commentary on class division, which she said is still relevant today.

"I'm also hoping to appeal to folks that might have written it off as stuffy, and something that's less appealing, or more traditional musical theater. This is a very non-traditional version," Dean said. "The music is the same, the story is the same, the characters are the same. But the way that we're telling it, how we're trying to re-envision it ... I think that is something that newer audiences who may never have experienced that before might find engaging and interesting."

Alan Jay Lerner and Frederick Loewe's Tony Award-winning 1956 musical, based on George Bernard Shaw's 1912 play "Pygmalion," features songs including "The Rain in Spain," "I Could Have Danced All Night" and "Get Me to the Church on Time." It tells the story of Eliza Doolittle, a working-class Cockney woman who turns to the smug phonetics professor Henry Higgins to coach her on

"proper" speaking — with the hope of improving her circumstances, and he with the motivation to prove language is the key to passing her off as posh.

The Pear's version is a story told "from the bottom up instead of the top down," as Dean wrote in her director's note. Set within an English pub, "it feels as if we have a troupe of performers coming to tell this story. As if they were pub patrons," performing for an audience of their peers, she said.

Everything takes place within the pub setting, making clever use of props, and with various members of the ensemble themselves providing musical accompaniment rather than relying on an unseen, offstage orchestra.

"I find what is really delightful about our production is the discovery aspect of it. It's a little bit like an advent calendar, or like a puzzle box, where there is a little surprise behind many doors, and you don't know when those doors are going to open or what that surprise is going to be," Melissa Mei Jones, who plays Higgins, said. Audience members are even invited to sign up ahead of time to participate by chiming in with a line or two (those interested can apply online).

The film version of "My Fair Lady," starring Audrey Hepburn and Rex Harrison, is one of the first musicals Jones can remember seeing as a child. And though she's played male characters before, being cast as the pompous Higgins was unexpected.

"I did *not* think that I would be considered for Henry Higgins," Jones said, "so that was a lovely surprise. It's not a role that I ever in my life considered playing."

Portraying the privileged, often-insensitive and blatantly sexist Higgins has proven interesting.

"It has been a wonderful opportunity to discover what these, frankly, misogynistic or chauvinistic lines sound like coming out of somebody who identifies and presents as a woman," she said.

Jones is curious to see how

audiences react to her performance, and predicted that although there may be some grumbling from traditionalists, "for most audience members, my guess is that the shift is not going to be too big for them," she said.

She, like many, grew up with Harrison's memorable portrayal "embedded in my brain," as she put it and, when digging into the text, found a more sympathetic side of Higgins.

"I realized that, actually, Rex Harrison, for whatever reason, I feel like kind of deliberately ignored some of the more progressive or expansive parts of the character. There are a number of lines in the text where (Higgins) talks about wanting to bridge the gulf between classes. And that's what his hope is for teaching Eliza how to be able to speak in a higher-class accent. She's a prototype for trying to be able to help lower-class people have upward mobility, which gives them more financial stability," Jones said. "There's literally a line that says ... 'filling the deepest gulf that separates class from class and soul from soul.' And that's what his goal is."

In her portrayal, she didn't want that element to be lost in Higgins' misogynistic bluster.

"I don't think that he is a jerk on purpose. He's a product of his time. He is a product of a patriarchal society, absolutely, but I think there is a part of him that really is not about following the class rules, the social structure rules; that he is trying actively to rebel against that and to defy that and to subvert that."

Despite his flaws, she hopes her Higgins can show character growth, and "warmth and compassion and care, because I do think that that is supported by the text," she said.

Dean also wanted to de-emphasize any romantic overtones between the characters of Higgins and Eliza (played in the Pear's production by Corinna Laskin).

"They connect, they fuel off each other, they feed off each other in a different way, that's



Courtesy The Pear Theatre

Melissa Mei Jones plays Professor Higgins in The Pear's production of "My Fair Lady."

nonromantic, because so many of our relationships are not that way," she said.

Bringing different perspectives and textures to theater "absolutely is what Pear's identity is about," Dean said. "What I wanted to tell with this story, is say, 'No matter what, if you see this cast list, you know this is going to be a very different version. And so there'll be no hiding that at all.'"

The ambiguity in "My Fair Lady" is part of what makes it thought-provoking. Eliza's journey is not a simple Cinderella story and her future is not clear.

"There is no safety net for her," Dean said. "Even though ... her goals and her hopes and her dreams were achieved, that has not necessarily netted her what she needs to survive."

Eliza's struggle to navigate a social system stacked against her is "totally relatable to what many people are going through today," she said.

Though Higgins may fancy

himself an expert teacher who can mold Eliza into someone else, Eliza understands that her status isn't a measure of her inherent worth. As she says, "the difference between a lady and a flower girl is not how she behaves but how she is treated."

The team behind the Pear's stripped-down production aims to showcase the wit and beauty of the show while highlighting, at its core, the notion that "everybody deserves to be treated with a certain level of dignity by virtue of being human, regardless of social standing or class," Jones said. ■

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"My Fair Lady," through March 8, Thursday-Sunday, The Pear Theatre, 1110 La Avenida, Mountain View. For specific showtimes and ticket options, visit thepear.org/whats-playing.

West Bay Opera's 'Salome' takes audience on wild, wild ride

Richard Strauss' spin on biblical tale is bursting with innovative music and otherworldly performances

By Michael J. Vaughn

West Bay takes one of the more provocative creations in opera and gives it a grand treatment. The resultant performance resembles an acid trip married to an absurdist horror film with a great soundtrack. It's a wild, wild ride.

Much of the wildness originates in Strauss's score, which flies through key changes and uses dissonance and atonal passages that were, in 1905, far ahead of the curve. Jose Luis Moscovich and a larger-than-usual orchestra (literally packed into the wings) handled the challenge with aplomb, particularly in Strauss's inventive use of woodwinds. The visual I would offer is a gurgling pot of musical magma, bursting forth at regular intervals.

And there's a lot to burst forth about. Created from Oscar Wilde's play of the same name about biblical characters, the drama focuses on the evil king Herod, who openly lusts for his stepdaughter Salome, and is willing to do just about anything — including, say, executing a left-wing agitator — to feed his unquenchable desires. (I'm sorry, does this seem familiar?)

The opera is hugely dependent on its title character, and in this category West Bay has hit the jackpot. Joanna Parisi brings a dramatic soprano so vibrant and powerful it almost seems otherworldly. At the same time, she proves capable of pulling back to sterling pianissimos, perhaps during an intimate rendezvous with a severed head.

Her presence, also, seems extra-terrestrial, fueled by Salome's sociopathic desires. The Dance of the Seven Veils is a huge demand for any opera singer; Parisi and choreographer Daiane Lopes da Silva devise a dance that makes use of Parisi's natural appeal and quirky moves that match her character's insanity. At one point, she drapes her voluminous blonde hair across the stage floor and pokes her hands through it like puppets. It sounds just plain weird, but it's an arresting image. (The nudity factor is somewhere around high PG-13.)

A small distraction to Parisi's performance is her habit of swimming into her entrances, as if she were using her body to count off beats. This is generally an opera no-no, but it seems to fit in with Salome's dancer mentality, and really I don't care, as long as that magnificent voice keeps coming out.

Baritone Nathaniel Sullivan offers a strong presence as John the Baptist, known here as

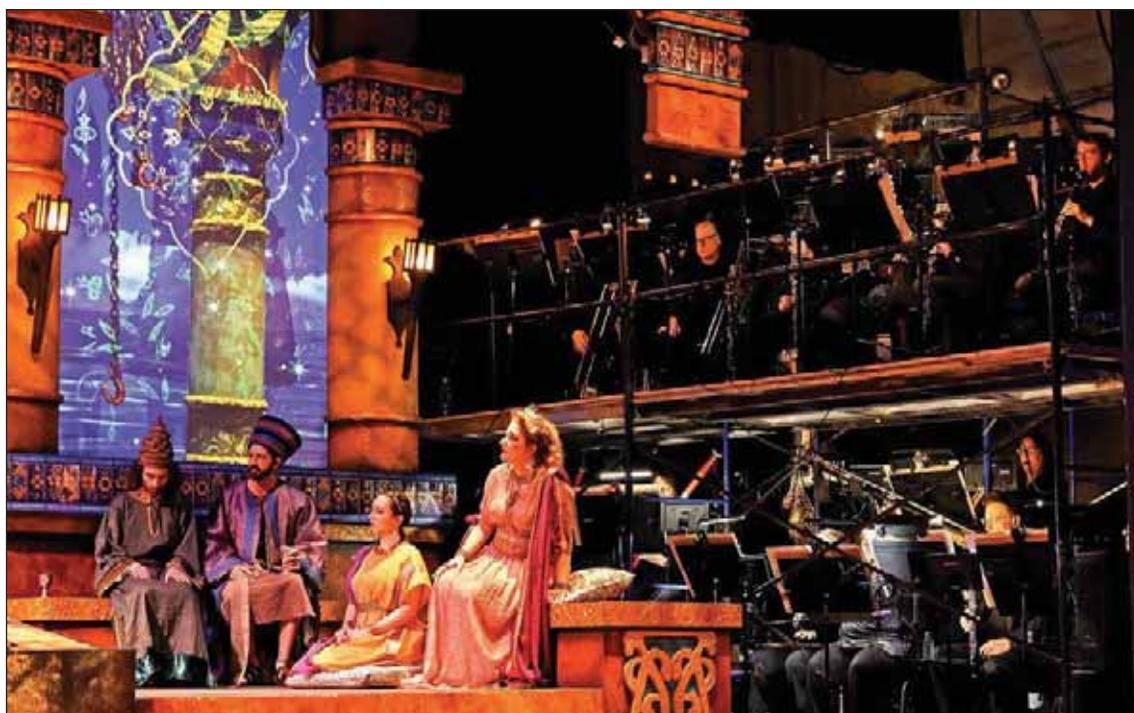
Iokanaan. His forceful rejections of Salome's adorations turn them instantly into insults. As Salome's mother Herodias, mezzo Laure de Marcellus conveys all of the queen's desperate frustrations, watching her victories dissolve in the wake of her husband's insane lust. This builds to a stunning forte and then a shout that silences the court and sends a thrill through the audience. (Strauss' score is so packed with sound that most of the dramatic moments come in silences.)

Tenor Will Upham brings a calm, lyric tone to Herod, an effective contrast and a reflection of the king's weaselly personality. This is most effective when Herod realizes what Salome is asking for as a fee for her dance. Frightened by Iokanaan's prophecies, Herod tries to moonwalk out of his grandiose offerings.

The "five Jews" scene is a nice bit of comic relief, as Herod's theological counselors squabble about religion and their prisoner/prophet's fate. And it was a pleasure to hear Kirk Eichelberger's resounding bass as the Fifth Jew.

In general, the opera offers more laugh lines than one might expect. This most often arrives in the form of people acting as if everything is normal when absolutely nothing is normal. Herod slips on the blood next to the body of suicidal captain Narraboth (Brian Skoog) and complains to his staff about their shoddy housekeeping. Given the opera's origins as a Wilde play, perhaps these morbid laughs shouldn't be a surprise.

The best thing about stage director Richard Harrell's work is that I didn't really notice it - the story came through as naturally and directly as it should. The projection work by Peter Crompton added greatly to the



Courtesy West Bay Opera

The large orchestra performs in the wings as well as the orchestra pit for West Bay Opera's production of "Salome."

phantasmagorical feel, phasing the moon from eerie silver to blood red to drifting lumps of lava lamp fire as the evening progressed. As for Iokanaan's severed head, it was effectively gory but much lighter than a real head. But that's all right; we were all pretty creeped out.

The opera is in German with English supertitles, and is a one-act running 95 minutes. ■

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West Bay Opera presents
"Salome" Feb. 21, 7 p.m. and
Feb. 22, 2 p.m. at the Lucie Stern
Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road,
Palo Alto. Tickets are \$54-\$140.,
650-424-9999 or wbopera.org/salome-2026.



Courtesy West Bay Opera

Herod (Will Upham) discovers some less-than-paternal feelings for his beautiful stepdaughter Salome (Joanna Parisi).



Courtesy Nancy Gill

Fundraising concert pays tribute to Willie Nelson's music

Steve and Nancy Gill of Los Altos will hold their 24th annual benefit concert for Lighthouse for the Blind's Enchanted Hills Camp at Menlo School on Feb. 22. The Enchanted Hills Camp is a summer retreat for deaf and blind individuals. This year's concert features Mollie and the Sweet Shop Boys (pictured), with Steve Gill, singer Mollie Hudner Thomson, guitarist Bob Feiner and drummer Steve Beitler. The 2026 program features the music of Willie Nelson, as well as selections by his good friends such as Johnny Cash and Ray Charles.

The concert takes place Feb. 22, 7:30 p.m. at Menlo School's Martin Family Hall at 50 Valparaiso Ave., Atherton. Requested donation is \$20. Seating is on a first come, first seated basis, but those planning to come are asked to contact Nancy Gill at 906-5264(c) or email gillnancy@gmail.com.

Food & Drink

What's on tap?

SF BEER WEEK BRINGS BEER RELEASES, FOOD TRUCKS, LIVE MUSIC AND MORE TO THE PENINSULA

By Jake Hutchinson

The crown jewel of the Bay Area's beer calendar is back. SF Beer Week kicks off Feb. 20 and runs through March 1. The festivities, which started in 2009, will include more than 100 different events and 130 participants, including breweries, bars and kitchens in Silicon Valley. From events like Alpha Acid Brewing Company's Barrel Constrictor release weekend to Taplands Taproom & Brewery's Wake n' Break featuring breakfast-inspired brews and doughnut breakfast sandwiches, there's a wide variety of festivities for beer lovers looking to imbibe on the Peninsula. Here's our guide to what's happening locally for SF Beer Week this year.



Alpha Acid Brewing Company, Belmont

This Belmont brewery has a full slate for the week, featuring food from Alebrijes Oaxacan Kitchen, Ramos Food, Dom's Noms, Gax, Chidos Pizza, Jika's Kitchen and Lord of the Ribs Barbecue.

They'll host a Final Final Triple IPA release party on Friday and a two-day Barrel Constrictor release Saturday and Sunday featuring eight barrel-aged imperial stouts and chocolate tasting. A speed puzzlers competition is scheduled for Feb. 25 and trivia is on Feb. 26. A strong ale day featuring an urban par golf simulator is Feb. 27, and live music and a chili dog release is set for March 1.

Alpha Acid Brewing Company, 121 Industrial Road # 11, Belmont; 650-394-4728. Instagram: @alphaacidbrewingco. Open Monday to Wednesday from 3-8 p.m., Thursday and Friday from 3-9 p.m., Saturday from 1-9 p.m. and Sunday from 1-7 p.m.

Barebottle Brewing Company, Menlo Park, Santa Clara

Barebottle kicks off SF Beer Week on Friday with a "Doomsday" party celebrating the release of Doom Bloom, a triple IPA with prickly pear cactus fruit, across its locations. Barebottle will host the SF Beer Week Gala on Saturday at its Salesforce Park taproom in San Francisco, with drag brunches tentatively scheduled across its taprooms on Sunday.

The rest of the week features trivia on Tuesday, collab night—the release party for all its collaborative SF Beer Week brews, with beers from Old Caz, Hop Dogma and Bartlett Brewing—on Feb. 25, and an arcade night with free arcade games Feb. 26.

Barebottle Brewing Company, 550 Oak Grove Ave., Suite B, Menlo Park; 650-320-8348. 2520 Augustine Drive, Santa Clara; 408-564-5722, Instagram: @barebottle. Menlo Park taproom open Monday from 2-9 p.m., Tuesday to Saturday from noon to 11 p.m. and Sunday from 1-8 p.m. Santa Clara taproom open from 1-9 p.m. Monday, Tuesday to Saturday from noon to 11 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 9 p.m.

.....
Above: Freewheel Brewing Company will bring back an IPA and have an open mic night for SF Beer Week. Photo by Michelle Le. Left: Alpha Acid Brewing Company will host food trucks, release parties, live music and more for SF Beer Week. Courtesy Alpha Acid Brewing Company.



From left to right: The Refuge in San Carlos, State of Mind Public House and Pizzeria in Los Altos and Redwood City and Freewheel Brewing Company in Redwood City are all participating in SF Beer Week this year. Courtesy The Refuge. Courtesy State of Mind Public House and Pizzeria. Photo by Michelle Le.

Blue Oak Brewing Company, San Carlos

Blue Oak will celebrate its ninth year stationed in San Carlos on Saturday with live music, beer and food from noon to 10 p.m.

Blue Oak Brewing Company, 815 Cherry Lane, San Carlos; 415-273-9676, Instagram: @blueoakbrewing. Open Monday and Tuesday from 2-8 p.m., Wednesday and Thursday from 2-10 p.m., Friday from 1-10 p.m., Saturday from noon to 10 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 8 p.m.

Freewheel Brewing Company, Redwood City

Freewheel will be bringing back their Mind the Gap IPA — an American IPA, “brewed in a British style” — across all three Bay Area locations. They’ll host musician Nick Peters for an Open Mic Night on Feb. 26.

Freewheel Brewing Company, 3736 Florence St., Redwood City; 650-365-2337. Instagram: @freewheelbrew_redwoodcity. Open Monday through Thursday from 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. and Sunday from 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Devil’s Canyon Brewing Company, San Carlos

San Carlos brewery Devil’s Canyon will roll out a slate of specialty beers “in extremely limited quantities” through its online store and debut a new beer to be announced.

Devil’s Canyon Brewing Company, 935 Washington St., San Carlos; 650-226-6958, Instagram: @devils canyon. Open Fridays from 4-10 p.m.

Gourmet Haus Staudt, Redwood City

Gourmet Haus Staudt has a full slate of SF Beer Week events largely paying homage to other breweries in California. The German bar, market and bottle shop starts on Friday with a lineup of strong

beers from Perennial Artisan Ales, followed by a Sacramento-oriented offering on Saturday. Sunday will focus on lambic draft and bottles. Monday will pay homage to the East Bay, and Tuesday will spotlight beers from Southern California. They’ll officially close the week on Feb. 28 with a Firestone Walker tap takeover.

But the real gem, as regulars know, is March 1, an unofficial event when they bring out the kegs they haven’t tapped for those who might have missed their chance earlier in the week.

Gourmet Haus Staudt, 2615 Broadway, Redwood City; 650-364-9232, Instagram: @gourmethausstaudt. Open Monday from 3-8 p.m., Tuesday to Saturday from noon to 10 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 7 p.m.

Ludwig’s Biergarten, Mountain View

Ludwig’s plans to honor local craft beers with a special flight for SF Beer Week. It’s the first time the Mountain View German beer garden will create a local beer flight, which will include offerings from Barebottle and Narrative Fermentations.

Ludwig’s Biergarten, 383 Castro St., Mountain View; 650-282-5342. Instagram: @ludwigsmv. Open Tuesday to Thursday from 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 11 p.m. and Sunday from 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m.

Out of the Barrel, San Carlos

Out Of The Barrel will host its third annual Craft Beer Fest & Competition Feb. 28. The competition will take place at their San Carlos location, with more than 20 California breweries and a variety of beers, from lagers to IPAs, stouts and sours. A winner will be crowned by patrons. Participants include Alpha Acid, Barebottle, Humble Sea, Narrative Fermentations and others.

Out Of The Barrel, 555 El Camino Real, Suite 150, San Carlos; 650-226-5025, Instagram: @outofthebarrelsancarlos.

Open Monday and Tuesday noon to 9 p.m., Wednesday noon to 10 p.m., Thursday noon to 11 p.m., Friday-Saturday 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., and Sunday 11 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Smoke Eaters, Santa Clara

On Saturday, Smoke Eaters of Santa Clara will host Hops for Hope featuring specialty beers, including Pliny the Younger. A portion of sales will be donated to Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital.

Their Independent Brewery Day on Feb. 27 will include beers from Humble Sea, Barebottle, Fieldwork, Original Pattern, Alvarado Street Brewery, Cellarmaker and more.

Smoke Eaters, 3175 Mission College Blvd., Santa Clara; 408-293-9976. Instagram: @smokeeaters. Open Monday from 11 a.m. to 10 p.m., Tuesday to Thursday from 11 a.m. to 11 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 11 a.m. to midnight and Sunday from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m.

State of Mind Public House and Pizzeria, Los Altos and Redwood City

State of Mind will continue its seventh annual Hazy versus West Coast IPA flight all day on Feb. 28 at its Los Altos location, featuring blind flights from Narrative Fermentations, Humble Sea and Original Pattern, with a raffle for participants. They’ll have pitchers and pizza at both locations all day Feb. 24-25, with a pizza and “select CA pitchers” for \$40.

State of Mind Public House, 101 Plaza N., Los Altos; 650-383-5210 and 3710 Florence St., Redwood City; 650-995-7478. Instagram: @stateofmindpub. Open Sunday to Thursday from 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m., Friday and Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 10 p.m.

Taplands Taproom & Brewery, Santa Clara

Taplands kicks off the week with its ninth annual Wake n’ Break at 9 a.m. on Saturday featuring breakfast beers

—pastry stouts, coffee porters, fruity sours and Micheladas —paired with a doughnut breakfast sandwich, with doughnuts from Stan’s.

Taplands continues with a Brews and Brines event Sunday, pairing beers like saisons and farmhouse ales with oysters. Feb. 26 is their “Collab-a-Palooza,” showcasing collaborations with Brewing with Brothas and Settle Down Beer. They finish SF Beer Week with the eighth annual locals-only event Feb. 28-March 1, showcasing beers brewed by the Silicon Valley chapter of the Bay Area Brewers Guild.

Taplands Taproom & Brewery, 1171 Homestead Road, Santa Clara; 408-709-2990, Instagram: @taplandssantaclara. Open Monday to Thursday from 3-10 p.m., Friday from noon to midnight, Saturday from noon to 11 p.m. and Sunday from noon to 10 p.m.

The Refuge, San Carlos

The Refuge in San Carlos will kick off SF Beer Week with an Alvarado Street Brewery tap takeover Friday. A beer trivia night follows Monday, with another tap takeover Feb. 25 from Russian River Brewing Company. The Refuge closes SF Beer Week out with a smattering of beers across the globe Feb. 27.

The Refuge, 963 Laurel St., San Carlos; 650-598-9813, Instagram: @refuge_pastrami. Open Monday to Friday from 11:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. and 5-9 p.m., Saturday from 11:30 a.m. to 9 p.m. and Sunday from 11:30 a.m. to 8 p.m. ■

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