

The Almanac

NONPROFIT LOCAL NEWS FOR THE MIDPENINSULA

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New tours reveal the dirty work that helps keep the Bay clean Wastewater gets transformed at Redwood Shores facility

By Sydney Feldman

Aiko Chikaba first toured a wastewater treatment facility with her elementary school class in Japan. Now a resident of Burlingame, she jumped at the chance to bring her 14-year-old son to see the place where their sewage is treated.

“It was fascinating, and was great learning for me — young me,” Chikaba said. “So I wanted to give him the same opportunity.”

During Silicon Valley Clean Water’s (SVCW) first free public tour on Wednesday, June 17, a group of 10 residents expressed enthusiasm about seeing the wastewater treatment systems in action.

After being flushed down the toilet, over 15 million gallons of water per day — enough to fill almost 23 Olympic-sized swimming pools — flow through a network of underground pipes to SVCW in Redwood Shores for treatment before being released into the San Francisco Bay. In the receiving lift station, a cavernous, 90-foot-tall chamber, six pipes

each pump a hot tub’s worth of water per second into the facility’s headworks, where large pieces of trash like wipes, bandages, and feminine hygiene products are removed and solid organic matter is made into a sludge that later becomes fertilizer.

The partially cleaned water then undergoes a multi-step biological process where microorganisms are deployed to eat the water-soluble waste. Finally, the water is chemically disinfected with chlorine.

But the facility does more than clean sewer water. Some of it undergoes extra treatment for use as recycled water that can irrigate lawns and fill toilets to reduce the use of drinking water. During digestion, the facility produces a large amount of methane gas, which is repurposed to generate about 65% of its energy needs, lowering SVCW’s power bill by \$18 million per year.

Matt Zucca, the facility’s authority manager, said SVCW offered ad-hoc tours before the

See **WASTEWATER**, page 16



Seeger Gray

Silicon Valley Clean Water’s authority manager, Matt Zucca, walks with Rui Pierre, 14, past the headworks building during a public tour of Silicon Valley Clean Water’s wastewater treatment facility in Redwood Shores on June 17.

Woodside and SoCal developer wrangle over 16-story housing project’s fate

Builder’s remedy project makes no progress, application incomplete

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Among Woodside’s redwood trees, open space and horse stables, a 16-story housing complex would be an unusual sight in a town that prizes its rural lifestyle. A development proposal from a Southern California developer could change all that.

Documents obtained through a Public Records Act request reveal Woodside Community Housing in 2024 submitted paperwork for a 105-unit residential development, located on a vacant lot at 4224 Jefferson

Ave. In a town where even a modest multifamily project can provoke a swift outcry, the reasons why this multistory apartment project has gone largely under the radar is worth unpacking.

Owned by Ben Eilenberg, a Fullerton-based former attorney turned affordable housing developer, Woodside Community Housing’s application invokes California’s so-called builder’s remedy, an exemption that allows developers to bypass local zoning restrictions if they submit applications while a city doesn’t have a state-certified

housing element in effect.

Woodside’s existing height restrictions for residential developments typically are limited to about 30-feet. The Jefferson project would be 7 times the town’s standards.

The preliminary application to build the 16-story project in Woodside was submitted before the town’s housing element was certified by the state Department of Housing and Community Development in January 2025, said Acting Town Manager Melissa Cardinale.

Eilenberg is also involved in multiple multifamily

housing proposals in Los Gatos, Carpinteria, Santa Barbara and near Yosemite National Park. Woodside Community Housing declined a request for comment, saying it is currently discussing potential modifications to the project with the town of Woodside.

A towering design

The proposed apartment building’s site on Jefferson Avenue is a 0.36-acre lot that is currently occupied by yellowed grass, shrubbery and a shed, located on a slope near Cañada Road and Highway

280. Blueprints show an existing home on 668 Woodside Way, less than 30 feet away from the proposed Jefferson project.

Within its 16 floors, the development would hold 105 housing units: 18 three-bedrooms, 25 two-bedrooms, 47 one-bedrooms and 15 studios. The complex would include a basement, above-ground parking garages, a community room, fitness center and roof deck. Twenty percent of the units will be designated for low-income housing, which triggers California’s

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INSIDE

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Aging with *Dignity*

Living with *Connection*

Meet Marie.

At 72, she's a proud grandmother who treasures staying close to her family. This spring, as she celebrated her birthday through video calls, laughter, and messages from loved ones around the world, she reflected on how much her independence means to her. But living alone had started to feel harder—preparing balanced meals was tiring, arranging safe transportation felt stressful, and she worried about becoming isolated.

That's when Marie connected with PVI.

Today, one of her favorite parts of the week is visiting the Adult Activity Center at Little House, where she takes classes, shares laughter, and enjoys meaningful conversations with friends. Nutritious meals are delivered to her door, and with RIDE PVI, she can travel safely to appointments, run errands, and stay connected to her community.

For Marie's family, PVI brings peace of mind. Even from miles away, they know she's supported by trusted resources and a caring community.

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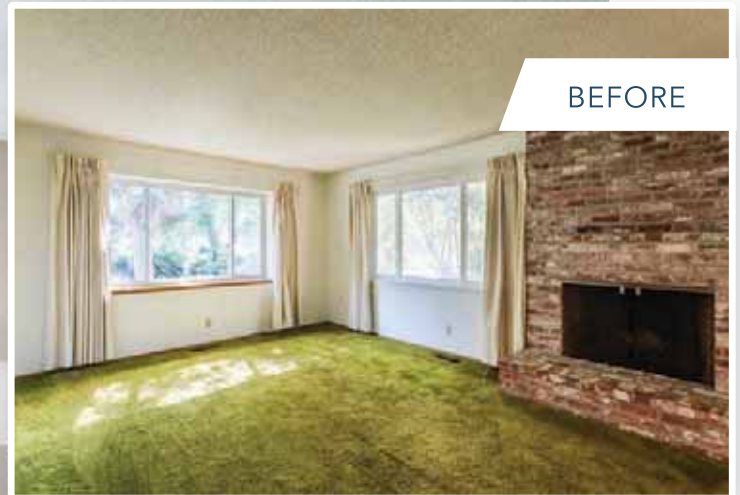
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Local News

MENLO PARK | AThERTON | WOODSIDE | PORTOLA VALLEY



Seeger Gray

Empty downtown Menlo Park storefronts like 714 Santa Cruz Ave. may soon be filled by salons and spas as part of the city's effort to address vacancies.

Menlo Park clears way for new businesses on Santa Cruz Avenue

Council loosens restrictions to fill downtown vacancies

By Arden Margulis

The Menlo Park City Council approved a package of zoning changes on June 23 that will allow more types of businesses to open on Santa Cruz Avenue as part of the city's efforts to address a growing vacancy problem.

The changes stem from an application filed by Windy

Hill Ventures, the owner of 870 Santa Cruz Ave., which argued that existing zoning rules have made it difficult to attract tenants and contributed to persistent vacancies along the city's main commercial corridor.

City officials and property owners for years have pointed to a retail vacancy problem downtown, with large storefronts sitting empty and rents outpacing what many

retailers can afford. The city's El Camino Real/Downtown Specific Plan, adopted in 2012, imposed strict limits on uses along Santa Cruz Avenue and in downtown in order to cultivate a retail-focused streetscape.

"The specific plan has been almost a complete failure as it relates to actually revitalizing

See **SANTA CRUZ AVE.**, page 15



Courtesy Google Maps

The Atherton City Council is weighing whether to address backups on Watkins Avenue by adding a stoplight at its intersection with Middlefield Road.

More stoplights on Middlefield Road?

Atherton eyes impacted intersections

By Sydney Feldman

Drivers on Middlefield Road could be facing new stoplights in Atherton at the intersections of Watkins Avenue and Fair Oaks Lane.

During commute hours, traffic on both side streets can become congested with queues of vehicles waiting to turn onto busy Middlefield Road. Results of a traffic study conducted for the town earlier this year suggest that adding stoplights to these intersections could help control the flow of traffic.

The study, approved by the Atherton City Council in January, examined adding

traffic control devices like stoplights or pedestrian crossing signals to both intersections. Currently, there are stop signs at the ends of Watkins and Fair Oaks, but none on Middlefield Road at those intersections.

At the June 17 City Council meeting, Councilmember Bill Widmer said a stoplight at the Watkins Avenue intersection would be useful, but one was not necessary at Fair Oaks Lane. "You don't necessarily have that same impact at Fair Oaks," Widmer said.

Councilmember Eric Lane, who said he frequently drives in

See **STOPLIGHTS**, page 6

A new start: TIDE teachers and students transfer schools in the fall

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

TIDE Academy has officially closed its doors, ending its six-year run as the Sequoia Union High School District's only small alternative public school in Menlo Park. Next school year, former TIDE students and teachers will be parting ways as more teachers will be starting fresh at Woodside High School, while the majority of students will enroll at Menlo-Atherton High School.

"No one lost their job," said SUHSD Public Information Officer Naomi Hunter. This includes all teachers, counselors and classified staff such as

paraprofessionals, administrative assistants, food service workers and campus security, she added.

Sequoia's Board of Trustees voted to close down TIDE Academy in February after a series of public meetings to discuss data on the district's declining enrollment projections and budget constraints. Despite an outcry from students, parents and teachers opposing the closure, the board cited the need to avoid future layoffs and worsening budget deficits when it made a unanimous decision to close the school this summer.

TIDE's STEM-based programs will be absorbed into Woodside

High School starting next school year. The fate of its \$50 million campus on Jefferson Drive, completed months after the school opened in August 2019, has yet to be decided.

While the Class of 2026 was the last to graduate from TIDE, its students in grades 9 through 11 had to provide their first and second choices for schools to transfer to in the fall: East Palo Alto Academy, Menlo-Atherton, Woodside, Sequoia and Carmont high schools.

The M-A Chronicle student newspaper reported that out of 187 TIDE students, the majority would be transferring to

Menlo-Atherton High School. However, it appears that most of TIDE's teachers won't be joining their former students in the new school year.

This news organization found that out of TIDE's 21 teachers, one third have been transferred to Woodside High School, according to the district's updated campus staff directories for the 2026-27 school year that starts in August.

A comparison of each campus's updated staff list shows approximately five teachers transferring to both M-A and Carmont, three to Sequoia and seven to Woodside. One former TIDE teacher did not appear on any of

the district's staff lists.

TIDE's principal, Simone Rick-Kennel, will become an administrative vice principal at Carmont High School.

A former TIDE teacher told this news organization in February that staff members were able to tour the other campuses and connect with their colleagues prior to being transferred.

Teachers were able to request which school they would like to transfer to, Associate Superintendent Bonnie Hansen said at the board's March 4 meeting. Final decisions by the district prioritized student needs and staffing vacancies, she added. ■

State budget could send San Mateo County \$77M in vehicle fee relief

By Miranda de Moraes

San Mateo County could see almost \$77 million if Gov. Gavin Newsom approves the state budget recently passed by the California Legislature, which would close a significant portion of the vehicle license fee owed to the county and its cities.

The funding in the state budget would provide relief to local governments and support police and fire protection, transportation infrastructure, libraries, parks, childcare programs and social services, according to a news release from the Office of Assembly member Diane Papan.

If passed, Menlo Park city officials expect to get \$1.9 million from the proposed budget.

“This legislative funding proposal is an important step forward, but it does not make our communities whole,” Papan (D-San Mateo) said in a statement. “We are proud to have successfully included this potential relief during a challenging budget year, but the underlying inequity remains unresolved.”

The Senate Budget Committee on June 15 approved the latest version of California’s 2026-27 budget, greenlighting \$356 billion in spending, nearly \$77 million of which would go to the county for backfill.

While the proposed budget allocation represents a substantial gain for San Mateo County, the funding would restore only about two-thirds of the amount that local governments estimate is owed under the original statutory framework.

For the last few years, San Mateo County was one of the few counties in California that was skipped by California’s Vehicle License Fee mechanism.

While the state stepped up with backfill for the last decade or so, prompting the county and its 20 cities to count on that money for their budgets, the state dug in its heels this year and appeared poised to offer zero backfill, prompting local leaders to head to Sacramento.



Miranda de Moraes

San Mateo County Supervisor Jackie Speier addresses a crowd of roughly 200 at a press conference in Redwood City April 7 calling for a solution to the state’s Vehicle License Fee backfill dilemma.

Local officials said the state’s payment mechanism for this funding has left the county and its 20 cities \$157 million short over two fiscal years without state action, a figure projected to exceed \$1 billion over the next decade without a permanent solution.

The problem first surfaced in fiscal year 2011-12, when San Mateo County faced a \$432,000 shortfall, according to Justin Mates, a county assistant executive. The state wrote this backfill for San Mateo County into the governor’s proposed budget for fiscal year 2013-14 without any resistance. The county did not see another shortfall until fiscal year 2019-20, he said.

California had a large budget surplus at the time because of the COVID-19 pandemic, so the state jumped in to help and plug the shortfall again, according to Kenneth Kappahn, a principal fiscal analyst with the Legislative Analyst’s Office.

However, Mates said the county faced an “increasingly contentious fight to get that money” starting with the fiscal

year 2021-22 shortfall, when the state’s Department of Finance no longer included the county’s shortfall in its budget. That’s because state spending started to exceed its revenue.

The county and its cities were able to win this fight year after year, with the state finding just “enough coins underneath the cushion,” said Paul Steenhausen, a principal fiscal analyst at the California Legislative Analyst’s Office.

That is, until last June, when the state declined to fully reimburse the county and its cities for the first time, given the state’s annual deficit of around \$35 billion the last few years, Mates said. Local leaders secured \$76.5 million in backfill for fiscal year 2023-24, but San Mateo County and its cities were still left about \$38 million short, Mates said.

The state’s defense has been that its reimbursements have been one-time gifts, no strings attached, according to the Legislative Analyst’s Office.

In fiscal year 2024-25, the countywide shortfall reached

\$119 million. County officials submitted a reimbursement claim to the state in August for inclusion in the 2026-27 state budget, Mates said.

In August, San Mateo County sued the state, along with its 20 cities and the counties of Mono and Alpine, which were also excluded from the backfill mechanism.

A press conference at Fire Station 9 in Redwood City on April 7 was meant to raise awareness of this VLF mechanism issue and appeal for inclusion in the state budget.

“We need two things to correct this inequity — full payment of the outstanding amount owed, and a permanent legislative fix so this never happens again,” said Noelia Corzo, then-president of the San Mateo County Board of Supervisors at the time. ■

Almanac Reporter Arden Margulis contributed to this report.

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STOPLIGHTS

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the area, agreed with Widmer’s assessment. “I never use Fair Oaks toward Middlefield, ever,” Lane said, citing the left turn onto Middlefield as “too unreliable.”

Lane called the left turn from

Watkins “flat-out dangerous.”

Based on the data, Atherton’s Transportation, Bicycle and Pedestrian Safety Committee recommended a follow-up evaluation to determine the impacts of adding a traffic signal at both intersections. Members will first investigate the effectiveness of a stoplight

at the Watkins Avenue intersection and then evaluate whether a light at the Fair Oaks Lane intersection would have a significant additional impact. ■

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LEHUA GREENMAN



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Convicted arsonist arrested for allegedly setting fire at Menlo Park coffee shop

By Arden Margulis

A 50-year-old Berkeley man who was recently convicted of arson was arrested for allegedly setting fire to an outdoor umbrella at a Menlo Park coffee shop early on June 19, according to police.

Kenneth Stine pleaded not guilty June 22 to one count of felony arson in San Mateo County Superior Court and remains in custody on \$2,500 bail after Court Commissioner Cristina Mazzei found he posed a threat to public safety.

Officers responded around 1:50 a.m. to Saint Frank Coffee at 1018

Alma St. when a private security guard reported that a patio umbrella was on fire and that someone had been seen running from the area. Police reviewed surveillance footage of the suspect, later identified as Stine.

About 38 minutes later, at approximately 2:28 a.m., he returned to the scene and was taken into custody. According to the District Attorney's Office, Stine was chanting "Burn, burn, let it burn." Police said Stine had a lighter but denied setting the fire when he was arrested.

The fire caused an estimated \$1,500 in damage to the umbrella. No injuries or

additional property damage was reported.

The District Attorney's Office said that Stine had recently been convicted of arson in Contra Costa County. Court records reviewed by this news organization show he has been convicted of several felonies and misdemeanors including several cases of vandalism and battery. He has also been found to have violated probation at least four times.

He is scheduled to return to court July 2 for a preliminary hearing. ■

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



Arden Margulis

Saint Frank's Coffee in Menlo Park is located on Alma Street.

Woodside hires Pamela Antil as new interim town manager

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Woodside appointed a new interim town manager at its June 23 Town Council meeting, four months after former Town Manager Jason Ledbetter was placed on paid leave following the release of a 14-page whistleblower report. Pamela Antil will take over July 1, when Melissa Cardinale returns to her role as assistant town manager.

Antil brings more than 30 years of experience in local government leadership, having served as city manager for Encinitas in San Diego County and most recently as interim assistant city manager for San Bruno. She's also held executive leadership roles with the cities of Palo Alto, San Jose and Santa Barbara.

"Her extensive background managing complex local government operations will help ensure continuity of service and organizational stability while the council takes the time needed to identify the long-term leader for Woodside," said



Courtesy town of Woodside

Pamela Antil was appointed as Woodside's interim town manager on June 23.

Mayor Brian Dombkowski in a June 24 press release.

Antil will continue to serve as interim town manager for 12 months or until the appointment of a permanent town manager.

Her salary has been approved at \$335,000 plus benefits.

"Woodside is a unique and special community with a strong commitment to preserving its character and quality of life," said Antil in a written statement. "I look forward to working with the Town Council, staff, residents, and community partners to maintain excellent municipal services and support the council as it evaluates the qualities and priorities it seeks in its next permanent town manager."

The decision to hire Antil came at the request of Cardinale, who had been working as both acting and assistant town manager since the departure of Ledbetter in February.

"It has been an absolute pleasure to serve as acting town manager. It has been difficult completing work for two positions and so I have made the

decision to return to my role as assistant town manager," Cardinale said during the council meeting.

"We're deeply appreciative of your willingness to step in during this transitional period. Your leadership has been outstanding, your collegiality has been wonderful, and I don't know what we would have done without you the last four months," Dombkowski added.

Councilmember Paul Goeld commended Cardinale for her strength and leadership during a period when the public believed the town was in chaos.

Antil is recognized for leading organizations through complex challenges in infrastructure

investment, public safety initiatives, environmental sustainability, strategic planning and organizational improvement.

During the meeting, Goeld commented that Antil is "a star."

"She's actually exactly what we need at this particular moment in time. We need the help that she has ... especially with things like the housing element," Goeld added.

The Town Council has determined that the recruitment process for a permanent town manager could take several months. ■

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

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include:

Robert B. Flint, Jr., 86, of Woodside, who studied electrical engineering at Stanford, who worked maintaining electro-mechanical systems for a year at Byrd Station in Antarctica and then continued his career on the continent, and who served on the boards of the Sierra Club Foundation, Woodside Elementary School and Woodside Community Foundation, died on May 28.

Eddie Dorosin Kirkwood, 90, of Palo Alto, who graduated from Stanford University in 1957 and returned in 1973 to earn her master's degree in civil engineering and urban planning, who served in leadership roles at the Santa Clara County Manufacturing Group and the Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce, and who loved spending time in nature, including fly fishing and leading family hikes, died on Jan. 30.

Donald Arthur Langrock, 93, of Woodside, who served as a pilot flying A-4 aircraft in Vietnam, who later flew for American Airlines, was a flight instructor for the Marines, taught high school and later coached softball, and who was an avid fly-fisherman and hunter, died on June 11.

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

REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman

Turning Over a Property to the New Owner



Dear Monica: I'm getting ready to move out of my home so the new owner can move in. Do I have to paint and fill holes where pictures were hung?

Cora D.

Dear Cora: When you take all the pictures off your walls, there will be nail holes. If they're small you can fill them and if they're larger you can decide if you need to do more. It may be necessary to repaint the wall if the damage is apparent. Some buyers want sellers to leave the wall in perfect condition and others are not as fussy. A good standard is to imagine how you would like the wall to look if you were the buyer and let that be the guide.

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Juneteenth flag raising calls for action in San Mateo County

Speakers urged for deeper support for Black residents

By Anya Motwani

Five years after Juneteenth became a federal holiday, dozens gathered at the County Courtyard on June 17 for Redwood City's second Juneteenth Flag Raising Ceremony, where speakers called for deeper investment in Black communities across San Mateo County.

Central to many of the speeches by city officials and other local figures was how to better support Black residents of San Mateo County, from addressing displacement to improving access to health, education and economic opportunity.

City Council member and former Menlo Park Mayor Cecilia Taylor noted that Menlo Park has the second-largest Black population in the county. Specifically, Taylor noted that Black residents of Belle Haven, a Menlo Park neighborhood, once made up 97% of the community but now hover at about 6%.

"How are we assuring that Black Americans in San Mateo County have access to a high quality of life, eliminating barriers and disparities, freedom from poverty, freedom from poverty pimping, freedom from barriers and social health determinants, freedom from health disparities, freedom from under investment, freedom from disinvestment, freedom from miseducation, freedom from obesity, freedom from stress, freedom from structural and systemic racism," Taylor said.

County Supervisor Lisa Gauthier reiterated the importance of remembrance and advocacy.

"This day serves as a powerful reminder of the resilience, brilliance and unbreakable spirit of Black Americans who fought



Anya Motwani

County Supervisor Lisa Gauthier speaks to the crowd about the importance of Juneteenth and continued advocacy and action toward racial justice at a flag-raising ceremony June 17.

for liberation and who continue to shape the story of this nation here in San Mateo County," Gauthier said. "We are committed to ensuring that Juneteenth is not just a date on the calendar, but a call to action. A call to building systems that are fair, communities that are inclusive and opportunities that reach every resident."

On June 19, 1865, two years after the Emancipation Proclamation was signed, "news of freedom finally reached those enslaved in Galveston, Texas," Gauthier said. Juneteenth has long been celebrated in Black communities, well before becoming a federally recognized holiday. It is considered a second Independence Day for the United States, according to the National Museum of African American History and Culture.

For many, the June 16 flag-raising was more than symbolic.

"I've celebrated Juneteenth for more than 30 years of my life, and I've never been in the city where they raised the Juneteenth flag," said poet Cherie "Chillin'" Kabba. "So, shout out to San Mateo County."

The celebration was a space to highlight the Black communities of San Mateo County and vocalize the pressing issues.

For Taylor, Juneteenth provides a unique opportunity to learn about the history of Black Americans and to question what more can be done for such communities. "What are you willing to do to improve the quality of life of our Black families?" Taylor asked.

"I'm hoping that now that it is a holiday that folks are taking the day and utilizing their time as far as learning more about Juneteenth, learning how they can support communities around what Juneteenth means,

and then if they don't know, to educate themselves," Taylor said in an interview with the Redwood City Pulse.

Menlo Park will be hosting its annual Juneteenth celebration on Friday at the Belle Haven Community Campus. In partnership with Belle Haven Action, an advocacy nonprofit founded by Taylor for the neighborhood's residents, the celebration will once again feature the Freedom Wall, where attendees can answer the question of what freedom means to them.

In her speech, Taylor recited some of the wall's responses from over the years.

"Freedom Wall 2025. Freedom means being exactly who I am. I can make space wherever I am, because we are free," Taylor said. "Freedom means living the life you want, pursuing your passion, and working in the profession you

love, freedom means when people are, when people are conscious of their oppression and elect to do something about it. Freedom is community."

Two members of the Black Youth Advisory Board, a Bay Area Community Health Advisory Council initiative, also spoke at the flag raising about Juneteenth as a reminder to persevere, to continue the fight for racial justice and a moment that honors the struggles of Black Americans.

The Juneteenth Flag was raised, adorned with the Pan-African colors. Gauthier explained the colors' significance: Black, symbolizing the people and their strength; Red, for bloodshed and sacrifice in the pursuit of freedom; Yellow, for rich heritage and culture; and Green, for growth, renewal and thriving communities. For Gauthier, the colors were raised as a symbol of history and hope.

"When I looked out and I saw the kids and the community and the staff, everyone taking their time to come out to support, it really felt like a community and my heart is just warm," Gauthier said in an interview with this news organization. "We're a diverse community; we need to celebrate our differences and this is something that's important. Black history is American history."

Gauthier encouraged residents to attend Juneteenth events across the county, but said the holiday should be about more than festivals.

"Please go out and enjoy the food, the community, the music, but really just embrace it," Gauthier said. "Because right now more than ever we need to show some unity in this country." ■

Email Editorial Intern Anya Motwani at amotwani@almanacnews.com.

Sheriff's Office arrests two in connection to Woodside home burglary

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

The San Mateo County Sheriff's Office arrested two suspects from Redwood City in connection with a residential burglary that occurred on June 13 in Woodside, according to a press release issued on June 22. Law enforcement officials used security footage and automated license plate readers to identify the suspects' vehicles.

The burglary occurred around 5:45 a.m. at a home on the 2100 block of Greenways Drive. The resident reported the incident two days later, on June 15.

Home security footage showed the suspects entering the residence through the garage and looking through items. The video showed the burglars fleeing the home when the alarm system activated and no items were taken.

Using the security footage and ALPR technology, deputies identified the vehicle and located it in the area of Twin Dolphin Drive in Redwood City on June 16.

The suspects, ages 37 and 46, were arrested and booked into the Maguire Correctional Facility on suspicion of residential burglary.

"While no property was stolen in this

incident, the case underscores the value of home security systems," according to the Sheriff's Office.

The Sheriff's Office also offered the following tips:

- Do not advertise your absence or post about vacation plans on social media. For more information about the Sheriff's Office vacation house checks visit tinyurl.com/SheriffVacationCheck.
- When going out of town, hold your mail and deliveries or ask a neighbor to collect them.
- Use a security system if you have one.

- Ensure your home is well-lit and consider installing motion-sensor lights.
- Eliminate hiding spots by trimming bushes and trees near windows.
- Report suspicious activity by calling the Sheriff's Office at 650-363-4911 or 911 in an emergency. ■

The Almanac does not publish the names of suspects before they have been formally charged with a crime.

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

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 ~2.51 acres, 5 beds, office, 3 baths, ~3,350 sf
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63 Ridgecourt, WOODSIDE
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OPEN SUN 1:30PM – 4:30PM

103 Toyon Court, WOODSIDE
 4 beds, 3.5 baths, ~3,090 sf, ~15,638 sf lot
 Offered at \$5,495,000 | 103Toyon.com



OPEN SUN 1:30PM – 4:30PM

3270 Woodside Road, WOODSIDE
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New study measures microplastics in the Bay smaller than human hair

By Ruth Dusseault /
Bay City News

A pilot study by the San Francisco Estuary Institute captures plastic particles in the Bay that are 10 times smaller than measured before, the width of a human hair.

These smaller microplastics may account for the vast majority of those present in the water. The study could inform broader research on plastics and human health, coastal ecosystems and the ability of the sea to trap carbon from the earth's atmosphere.

The term "microplastics" encompasses many different materials, said SFEI lead scientist Diana Lin.

"They include tire-wear particles and fibers from our clothing," said Lin. "It's from the food that we eat, the air that we breathe. It's in the dust from our carpets, from ripping plastic items where little particles get threaded."

SFEI has previously measured particles as small as 0.1 millimeter.

"Here we're down to 20 microns (0.02 millimeters)," Lin said about the pilot study.

According to Sierra Garcia, a science communicator for SFEI, the goal of this work is to test a standardized way to accurately monitor smaller microplastics in surface waters like the Bay.

Garcia said a statewide plastics monitoring project will begin this summer under the California Ocean Protection



Devin Roberts

A view from the Baylands Observation Deck and Boardwalk in Palo Alto.

Council, a cabinet-level state body that works jointly with state and federal agencies and organizations. Tracking super-small particles could be incorporated in monitoring efforts across the state if this work is successful, she said.

A SFEI study from 2019 found that urban stormwater runoff contains hundreds of times more microplastics than wastewater, and San Francisco Bay water and sediment contain higher levels than comparable regions around the globe.

"When it rains, all that gets flowed down storm drains and into receiving waters," Lin said. "The San Francisco Bay drains

a large part of California, so there's the potential for a lot of transport through urban stormwater runoff."

Microplastics have flowed through the Golden Gate and entered the base of the food chain in the Greater Farallones and Cordell Bank National Marine Sanctuary.

Jaime Jahncke is the director of the California Current Group a Point Blue Conservation Science, a nonprofit research organization based in Marin County. His team of researchers has worked with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration for over 20 years, monitoring the health of

the sanctuary, which spans from San Francisco to Point Arena.

"We have been using seabirds as our samplers and evaluating particle incidence in the fish/krill they eat," said Jahncke, adding that about 69% of the northern anchovies and over 90% of the juvenile rockfish they sampled had plastic microparticles in them. The particles they find are only visible under a microscope, he said, not visible to the naked eye.

According to data from NOAA, the ocean is the largest carbon sink in the world, accumulating 20% to 35% of atmospheric carbon. Phytoplankton, microscopic

plant-like organisms that drift in the ocean's sunlit upper layers, absorb carbon through photosynthesis. Globally, phytoplankton populations capture the equivalent of 40% of annual global carbon emissions. Krill eat phytoplankton, and fish eat krill. When the animals defecate or die, the carbon in their bodies drops to the bottom of the sea, where it can be stored for millennia. Think trees, capturing carbon from the air and returning it to the soil as fallen leaves.

A 2020 study published in the *Marin Pollution Bulletin* found that microplastics ingestion can have toxic effects on krill and other fish at the base of the food chain, by impacting their ability to develop and reproduce. A 2024 study conducted at the University of New Hampshire found that microplastics can attach to carbon-loaded phytoplankton, making them more buoyant and slowing their descent to the sea floor.

Citing concerns about plastic pollution, California Attorney General Rob Bonta in 2024 sued the world's largest producer of plastics, Exxon Mobil. The suit alleges the corporation engaged in a decades-long campaign of deception that caused and exacerbated the global plastic pollution crisis. The corporation filed an appeal for the case to be brought to federal court, but in May a federal judge agreed with the state that the case should be heard in the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of California. ■

Redwood City School District regroups after parcel tax measure falls short

Officials brace for budget uncertainties after narrow defeat of Measure C

By Neil Gonzales

The Redwood City School District faces ongoing budget deficits, program reductions and additional challenges following the narrow defeat of parcel tax Measure C on the June 2 ballot.

Still, the measure's proponents remained encouraged, given that the voters in the school district, which includes portions of Atherton and unincorporated North Fair Oaks, showed strong support. At least one RCSD board member believes that is a strong signal to make another attempt.

"I do," Board President David Weekly said Friday, June 19, when asked if the district could pursue such an initiative again.

"Parcel taxes are the only way we can directly raise revenues to increase teacher pay to

stay competitive with nearby districts, especially for new talent," he said in an email to the Redwood City Pulse. "Nothing impacts student achievement more than the quality of a teacher we can put in the front of their classroom."

Measure C garnered 65.3% yes votes (15,654 district voters) — just short of the two-thirds supermajority needed, according to the semi-official count from the San Mateo County elections office. Election results are set to be certified July 2.

The measure would have generated \$12.2 million annually over eight years and helped fund teaching positions, educational programs and manage class sizes in the K-8 district.

"It's obviously a disappointment to come up just shy of the mark we needed to hit to

pass the measure but a clear sign that we live in a community that does support and value public education," Weekly said.

Superintendent John Baker echoed that sentiment in a message to the community, saying, "the results tell an important story" of more than 15,600 voters casting their ballots "in support of local schools and local students."

The near-win "is a reminder that Redwood City values its public schools and remains committed to the success of its students," Baker said.

Jessica Shade, an organizer for the Yes on C committee, also chose to take positives from election night and the campaign leading up to it.

"One of the most encouraging parts of this process was seeing the community

come together around a shared goal," Shade said. "Parents, teachers, classified staff, community members, business leaders and district leadership all spent countless hours working together because they care deeply about local schools. Those relationships and that sense of shared purpose don't disappear because one measure fell short."

Without Measure C, she said, the district will have to brace for "further budget cuts, larger class sizes and fewer resources for students. Ultimately, it's the kids who will feel those impacts most directly."

Weekly expects those impacts to hit beginning "in the 2027-2028 school year where we start to see a gap between the world in which Measure C had passed versus not," he said. Among the

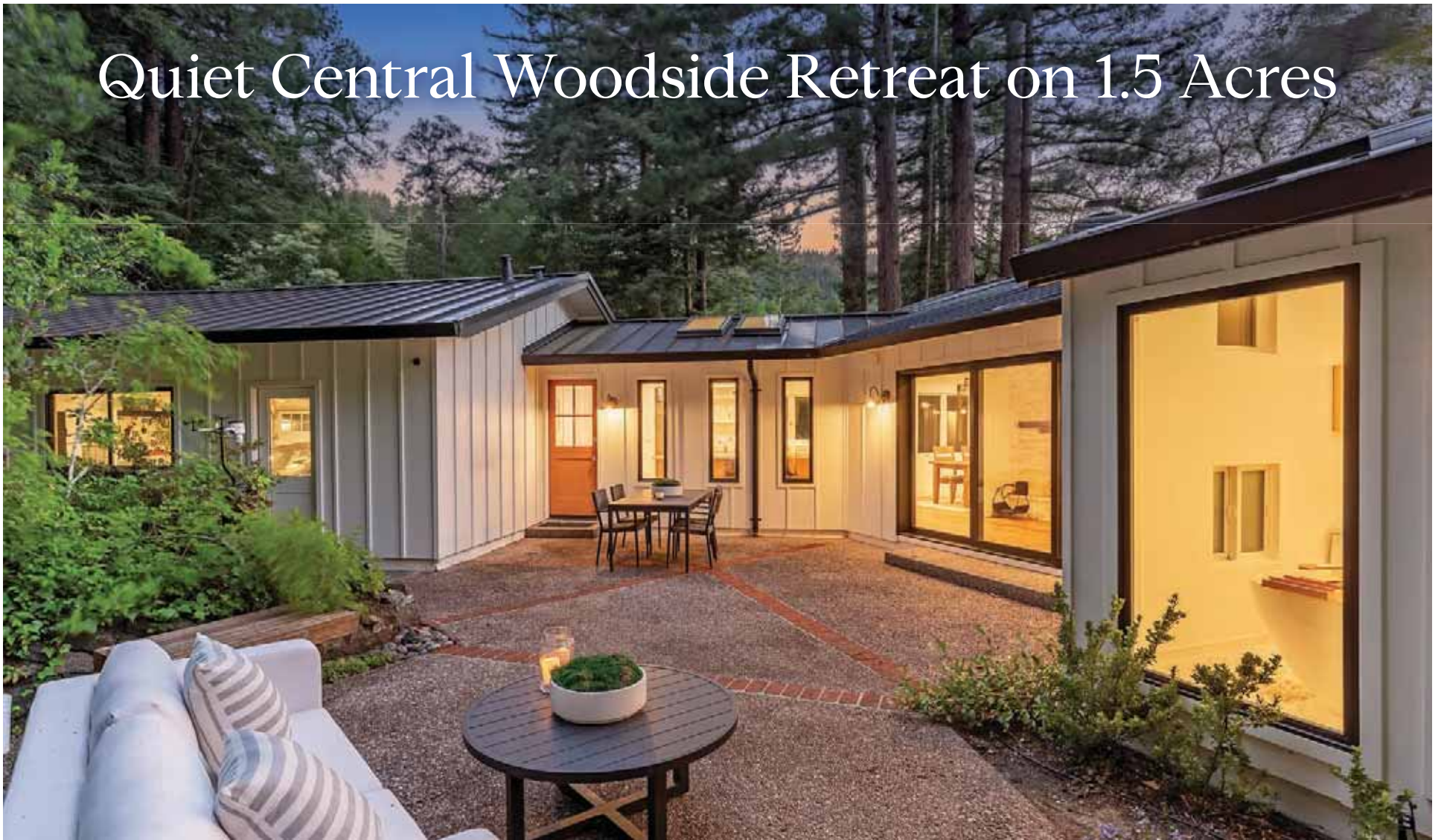
concerns, "recruiting teachers into vacancies from departures and retirements is going to get more challenging."

Supporters saw the measure as a way to provide competitive compensation to attract and retain highly qualified instructors, counselors and other school staff. They also argued that because of the Bay Area's steep cost of living, the Redwood City district is at risk of losing exceptional educators to more affordable communities or better-paying school districts.

"Obviously, there's more we are going to need to do mid-to long-term to right-size the district to operate efficiently," Weekly said. The district will also have to "focus our spending on efforts most likely

See **PARCEL TAX**, page 17

Quiet Central Woodside Retreat on 1.5 Acres



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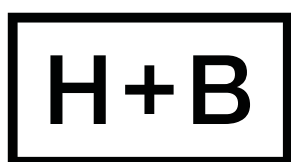
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NOTICE OF INTENTION TO CIRCULATE RECALL PETITION

TO THE HONORABLE Rich Ginn : Pursuant to Section 11020, California Elections Code, the undersigned registered qualified voters of SEQUOIA UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT, TRUSTEE AREA C, located in SAN MATEO COUNTY, in the State of California, hereby give notice that we are the proponents of a recall petition and that we intend to seek your recall and removal from the office of BOARD of TRUSTEES of the SEQUOIA UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT. The grounds for the recall are as follows:

School board trustees have a clear responsibility

under California School Boards Association guidelines: to provide oversight, set direction, and hold the superintendent accountable.

Trustee Ginn has failed to provide effective oversight of the Superintendent, including a lack of accountability for decisions that have adversely affected students, staff, and community trust.

Trustee Ginn supported and participated in the process leading to the closure of TIDE Academy, which we believe did not comply with required public deliberation laws, including applicable open meeting requirements.

In addition, local taxpayers approved and allocated funds for the development of TIDE Academy, and Trustee Ginn has failed to uphold the intent of that investment.

Under his tenure, the district has faced ongoing litigations that reflect a failure to establish and enforce effective policies and sound governance practices.

Trustee Ginn has not fulfilled his responsibility to represent the interests and priorities of the community. We seek his recall to restore transparency, accountability, and sound judgment to the Sequoia Union High School District Board.

The printed names, signatures, and residence addresses of the proponents are as follows:

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE
1. ANDRÉ LUCAS CATTA	2198 SHARON DR. MENLO PARK, CA 94025	<i>André Lucas Catta</i>
2. DAVID ELLIOTT	2000 EDGEMOND RD. REDWOOD CITY, CA 94062	<i>David Elliott</i>
3. JENNA ELIOT	2000 EDGEMOND RD. REDWOOD CITY, CA 94062	<i>Jenna Eliot</i>
4. PO SZANTS	2151 Sharon Rd. Menlo Park, CA 94025	<i>Po Szants</i>
5. Katharina Wang	935 Siskiyun Dr. Menlo Park, CA 94025	<i>Katharina Wang</i>
6. Rachel Maclary	1513 American Way Menlo Park, CA 94025	<i>Rachel Maclary</i>
7. DAVID MESSIMORE	2037 SHARON RD MENLO PARK CA 94025	<i>David Messimore</i>
8. Christianne Mori	825 Sharon Park Dr. Menlo Park CA 94025	<i>Christianne Mori</i>
9. JORGE BOKBOLLA	825 Sharon Park Dr. Menlo Park, CA 94025	<i>Jorge Bokbolla</i>
10. REBECCA REYNOLDS	144 EL NIDO RD. PORTOLA VALLEY, CA 94028	<i>Rebecca Reynolds</i>
11. TheODORE Hippie	241 LA MESA DR, Portola Valley, CA 94028	<i>Theodore Hippie</i>
12. Jennifer Hippie	241 LA MESA DR. Portola Valley, CA 94028	<i>Jennifer Hippie</i>

The printed names, signatures, and residence addresses of the proponents are as follows:

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE
13. Nicky J. Olasco	1196 Los Trancos Rd Portola Valley, CA 94028	<i>Nicky J. Olasco</i>
14. Prerana Sengupta	1307 Aramada Ct, Redwood RWC, CA 94062	<i>Prerana Sengupta</i>
15. Lara Chamos	2071 Cedar Ave, Menlo Park, CA 94025	<i>Lara Chamos</i>
16. Mark Chamness	2071 Cedar Ave, Menlo Park, CA 94025	<i>Mark Chamness</i>
17. Ella Chamness	2071 Cedar Ave, Menlo Park, CA 94025	<i>Ella Chamness</i>
18. Irene Sun	2011 Cedar Avenue, Menlo Park CA 94025	<i>Irene Sun</i>
19. ASHLEY (KEN) PAREKH	2011 OAKLEY AVENUE, MENLO PARK CA 94025	<i>Ashley Parekh</i>
20. Sonia Parekh	2011 Oakley Ave Menlo Park, CA 94025	<i>Sonia Parekh</i>
21. Mikhail Balachua	2151 Valparaiso Ave Menlo Park CA 94025	<i>Mikhail Balachua</i>
22. Ekaterina Dontsova	2151 Valparaiso Ave Menlo Park CA 94025	<i>Ekaterina Dontsova</i>
23. Sergey Doronichev	2242 Sharon Rd. Menlo Park CA 94025	<i>Sergey Doronichev</i>
24. Karina Doronicheva	2242 Sharon rd, Menlo Park, CA 94025	<i>Karina Doronicheva</i>

The printed names, signatures, and residence addresses of the proponents are as follows:

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE
25. JERRY HEARN	144 EL NIDO ROAD PORTOLA VALLEY, CA 94028	<i>Jerry Hearn</i>
26. CRAIG BREMER	1204 LOS TRANCOS RD PORTOLA VALLEY, CA 94028	<i>Craig Bremer</i>
27. Julia Peters	1195 Los Trancos Rd. Portola Valley, CA 94028	<i>Julia Peters</i>
28. Cameron Smith	1195 Los Trancos Rd. Portola Valley, CA 94028	<i>Cameron Smith</i>
29. David Smernoff	112 Foxwood Rd Tortola Valley, CA 94028	<i>David Smernoff</i>
30. Dr. Jean Schellenberg	108 Foxwood Rd Portola Valley, CA 94028	<i>Dr. Jean Schellenberg</i>
31. Catherine Curtis	2411 Sharon Oaks Dr Menlo Park, CA 94025	<i>Catherine Curtis</i>
32. Terry Spurling	2411 Sharon Oaks Dr Menlo Park, CA 94025	<i>Terry Spurling</i>
33. Tim Spurling	2444 Sharon Oaks Dr Menlo Park, CA 94025	<i>Tim Spurling</i>
34. Christopher Spurling	2411 Sharon Oaks Dr Menlo Park, CA 94025	<i>Christopher Spurling</i>
35. NEEL GLOVER	132 EL NIDO RD. PORTOLA VALLEY, CA 94028	<i>Neel Glover</i>
36. BRITANNY GLOVER	132 EL NIDO RD. PORTOLA VALLEY, CA 94028	<i>Britanny Glover</i>

The original notice and proof of service will be filed with the **San Mateo County Elections Office**. Elections Code section 11023.

(a) Within seven days after the filing of the notice of intention, the officer sought to be recalled may file with the elections official, or in the case of a state officer, the Secretary of State, an answer, in not more than 200 words, to the statement of the proponents. (b) If an answer is filed, the officer shall, within seven days after the filing of the notice of intention, also serve a copy of it, by personal delivery or by certified mail, on one of the proponents named in the notice of intention. (c) The answer shall be signed and shall be accompanied by the printed name and business or residence address of the officer sought to be recalled.

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO CIRCULATE RECALL PETITION

TO THE HONORABLE Mary Beth Thompson : to Section 11020, California Elections Code, the undersigned registered qualified voters of SEQUOIA UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT, TRUSTEE AREA B, located in SAN MATEO COUNTY, in the State of California, hereby give notice that we are the proponents of a recall petition and that we intend to seek your recall and removal from the office of BOARD of TRUSTEES of the SEQUOIA UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT. The grounds for the recall are as follows:

School board trustees have a clear responsibility

under California School Boards Association guidelines: to provide oversight, set direction, and hold the superintendent accountable.

Trustee Thompson has failed to provide effective oversight of the Superintendent, including a lack of accountability for decisions that have adversely affected students, staff, and community trust.

Trustee Thompson supported and participated in the process leading to the closure of TIDE Academy, which we believe did not comply with required public deliberation laws, including applicable open meeting requirements.

In addition, local taxpayers approved and allocated funds for the development of TIDE Academy, and Trustee Thompson has failed to uphold the intent of that investment.

Under her tenure, the district has faced ongoing litigations that reflect a failure to establish and enforce effective policies and sound governance practices.

Trustee Thompson has not fulfilled her responsibility to represent the interests and priorities of the community. We seek her recall to restore transparency, accountability, and sound judgment to the Sequoia Union High School District Board.

The printed names, signatures, and residence addresses of the proponents are as follows:

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE
1. SANDRA LAVINO	750 Terrace Rd SAN CARLOS, CA 94070	<i>Sandra Lavino</i>
2. RICHARD CLAYTON	750 TERRACE RD SAN CARLOS, CA 94070	<i>Richard Clayton</i>
3. LUIS DIAZ	424 18th St REDWOOD CITY, CA 94062	<i>Luis Diaz</i>
4. Alpa Singhani	740 Terrace Rd San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>Alpa Singhani</i>
5. Alexey Toubis	736 Dartmouth Ave San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>Alexey Toubis</i>
6. Nataliya Toubis-Shifrin	736 Dartmouth Ave San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>Nataliya Toubis-Shifrin</i>
7. Karen Whang	730 Terrace Road San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>Karen Whang</i>
8. BIANCA ZENIK	420 Terrace Rd. San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>Bianca Zenik</i>
9. Rima Kanguni	2668 THORN HILL RD San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>Rima Kanguni</i>
10. Aneesh Kulkarni	2668 Thorn Hill Dr San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>Aneesh Kulkarni</i>
11. MARIA SHPAKOVA	376 Ridge Rd. San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>Maria Shpakova</i>
12. Lada Lykova	376 Ridge Road San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>Lada Lykova</i>

The printed names, signatures, and residence addresses of the proponents are as follows:

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE
13. SERGEY YUSHIN	703 CRESTVIEW DRIVE SAN CARLOS, CA 94070	<i>Sergey Yushin</i>
14. DAVID LEE	40 La Barthe Ln San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>David Lee</i>
15. Chris Cartwright	24 Woodsworth Ave Redwood City, CA 94062	<i>Chris Cartwright</i>
16. Kathryn Obama	24 Woodsworth Ave Redwood City, CA 94062	<i>Kathryn Obama</i>
17. KEVINETH RICCI	227 HARRISON AVE APT 5 REDWOOD CITY CA 94062	<i>Kevineth Ricci</i>
18. Diane Wakeham	465 Grand Street Redwood City, CA 94062	<i>Diane Wakeham</i>
19. Lund Ricci	503 Lincoln Avenue Redwood City 94061	<i>Lund Ricci</i>
20. Anna Taub	224 Ruby Avenue San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>Anna Taub</i>
21. Adam Taub	224 Ruby Avenue San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>Adam Taub</i>
22. Talia Gibson	739 Dartmouth Ave San Carlos CA 94070	<i>Talia Gibson</i>
23. Robert Gibson	739 Dartmouth Ave San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>Robert Gibson</i>
24. Daniel K. Chuang	730 Terrace Rd San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>Daniel K. Chuang</i>

The printed names, signatures, and residence addresses of the proponents are as follows:

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE
25. Gregory Zelnik	620 TERRACE RD San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>Gregory Zelnik</i>
26. Konstantin Shtryk	376 Ridge Rd San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>Konstantin Shtryk</i>
27. Zabel Marcus	933 Lydia Way San Carlos 94070	<i>Zabel Marcus</i>
28. Micah Yairi	79 Hilltop Dr. San Carlos, CA 94070	<i>Micah Yairi</i>
29. Yvonne Birchwood	465 Grand Street Redwood City CA 94062	<i>Yvonne Birchwood</i>
30. Jennifer Malnick	1424 Hopkins Ave RWC CA 94070	<i>Jennifer Malnick</i>
31. MARK BERNOTER	1424 Hopkins Ave RWC 94070	<i>Mark Bernoter</i>
32. Svetlana Steuck	15 Iris St RWC 94062	<i>Svetlana Steuck</i>
33. Gregory Steuck	15 Iris St RWC 94062	<i>Gregory Steuck</i>
34. Inna Petrova	15 Iris St RWC 94062	<i>Inna Petrova</i>
35.		
36.		

The original notice and proof of service will be filed with the **San Mateo County Elections Office**. Elections Code section 11023.

(a) Within seven days after the filing of the notice of intention, the officer sought to be recalled may file with the elections official, or in the case of a state officer, the Secretary of State, an answer, in not more than 200 words, to the statement of the proponents. (b) If an answer is filed, the officer shall, within seven days after the filing of the notice of intention, also serve a copy of it, by personal delivery or by certified mail, on one of the proponents named in the notice of intention. (c) The answer shall be signed and shall be accompanied by the printed name and business or residence address of the officer sought to be recalled.

SANTA CRUZ AVE.

continued from page 5

Santa Cruz Avenue. The projects there have been few and far between,” Councilmember Drew Combs said at the June 23 meeting.

The council unanimously approved a scaled-back version of the proposal recommended by the Planning Commission. Under the changes, spas, salons and similar personal service businesses will now be allowed to operate on the ground floor without a conditional use permit; previously, those uses were generally restricted to upper floors.

Other newly permitted uses will still require discretionary approval. Businesses classified as small-scale recreation, including gyms and arcades, may now apply for use permits to open on Santa Cruz Avenue after previously being prohibited. Those permits must be reviewed by the Planning Commission, which retains authority to approve or deny individual projects.

The council also agreed to allow financial institutions to seek permits to open along Santa Cruz Avenue, but added caps. Banks and similar uses will be limited to a total of 30,000 square feet on the street, with no individual business exceeding 5,000 square feet. Existing financial institutions already account for roughly 28,000 square feet.

The council kept tighter restrictions on massage businesses, limiting them to areas outside the downtown core and requiring a permit.

Beyond Santa Cruz Avenue, the changes loosen rules across the broader downtown and El Camino Real plan areas. Most types of spas and wellness services will now be

allowed without a conditional permit after the council reclassified newer aesthetic services that were previously grouped with “restricted” uses. Many existing businesses had been allowed to operate only because they predated the 2012 plan and were grandfathered in.

The council also approved allowing limited office use in the rear portions of ground-floor retail spaces, subject to Planning Commission approval and payment of community benefit fees. The change is intended to make large retail spaces more viable by allowing tenants to reduce their storefront footprint while activating underused back areas.

Windy Hill Ventures, which recently renovated 870 Santa Cruz Ave., said the flexibility is needed to fill large, expensive spaces and encourage investment downtown. As the project applicant, the company is responsible for covering the city’s staff costs associated with processing the proposal.

Records obtained through a Public Records Act request show Windy Hill paid the city at least \$57,658 in staff time between November 2024, when the application was submitted, and the end of March 2025. The city did not provide billing records beyond that date.

The city did not disclose staff billing rates and did not provide a justification for withholding them in response to a Public Records Act request.

The downtown changes go into effect immediately. ■

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



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EQUAL HOUSING OPPORTUNITY

NOTICE OF INTENTION TO CIRCULATE RECALL PETITION

TO THE HONORABLE Dr. Maria E. Cruz : Pursuant to Section 11020, California Elections Code, the undersigned registered qualified voters of SEQUOIA UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT, TRUSTEE AREA E, located in SAN MATEO COUNTY, in the State of California, hereby give notice that we are the proponents of a recall petition and that we intend to seek your recall and removal from the office of BOARD of TRUSTEES of the SEQUOIA UNION HIGH SCHOOL DISTRICT. The grounds for the recall are as follows:

School board trustees have a clear responsibility

under California School Boards Association guidelines: to provide oversight, set direction, and hold the superintendent accountable.

Trustee Cruz has failed to provide effective oversight of the Superintendent, including a lack of accountability for decisions that have adversely affected students, staff, and community trust.

Trustee Cruz supported and participated in the process leading to the closure of TIDE Academy, which we believe did not comply with required public deliberation laws, including applicable open meeting requirements.

In addition, local taxpayers approved and allocated funds for the development of TIDE Academy, and Trustee Cruz has failed to uphold the intent of that investment.

Under her tenure, the district has faced ongoing litigations that reflect a failure to establish and enforce effective policies and sound governance practices.

Trustee Cruz has not fulfilled her responsibility to represent the interests and priorities of the community. We seek her recall to restore transparency, accountability, and sound judgment to the Sequoia Union High School District Board.

The printed names, signatures, and residence addresses of the proponents are as follows:

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE
1. SHIZUAN TSAO	513 Sandozwood St, Menlo Park, CA 94025	
2. LI CHANG TSAO	513 Sandozwood St, Menlo Park, CA 94025	
3. AMITA VASUDEVA	51 SANDLEWOOD ST MENLO PARK, CA 94025	
4. JAYANTA K. DEY	511 SANDLEWOOD ST MENLO PARK, CA 94025	
5. Anthony Jordan Camisa	1264 Windermere Ave Menlo Park, CA 94025	
6. MARICHELLE TOMAS	1364 Windermere Ave Menlo Park, CA 94025	
7. James Cebrian	520 Sandwood St Menlo Park, CA 94025	
8. Jacqueline Cebrian	520 Sandwood St Menlo Park, CA 94025	
9. Miling Contreras	555 Hamilton Ave Menlo Park, CA 94025	
10. Ruybenito Contreras	555 Hamilton Ave Menlo Park, CA 94025	
11. SLEOUND SHELTEREAS	145 CROMBARY ST MENLO PARK, CA 94025	
12. Christina Keegan	1016 Dodge St. Redwood City, CA	

The printed names, signatures, and residence addresses of the proponents are as follows:

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE
13. Andromede Gordon	1028 Laurel Ave East Palo Alto, CA 94303	
14. Zephyr Gordon	1028 Laurel Ave East Palo Alto, CA 94303	
15. Palo Gordon	1028 Laurel Ave East Palo Alto, CA 94303	
16. Brittany Weldon	1025 16th Ave Redwood City, CA 94063	
17. Grant Walker	1025 16th Ave Redwood City, CA 94063	
18. Patricia L. Struthers	1115 17th Ave Redwood City, CA 94063	
19. Kwame N. Eason	920 Tinsley St. East Palo Alto, CA 94303	
20. Sue Ann Eason	920 Tinsley St. East Palo Alto, CA 94303	
21. Mayara Silveira	891 Tea St East Palo Alto, CA 94303	
22. Marcus Rawlaph	938 Baines Street East Palo Alto, CA, 94303	
23. Stacy Arevalo	1765 E Bayshore Rd #204 East Palo Alto, CA 94303	
24. Kendra Randolph	738 Baines Street East Palo Alto, CA 94303	

The printed names, signatures, and residence addresses of the proponents are as follows:

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE
25. Mark Arevalo	1765 E Bayshore Rd, Unit 204 East Palo Alto, CA 94303	
26. Maria Camerina	1015 Bradley Way East Palo Alto, CA 94303	
27. Walker Kellogg II	1009 BRADLEY WAY EAST PALO ALTO, CA 94303	
28. Casey Kellogg	1009 Bradley Way East Palo Alto, CA 94303	
29. Antonio Garzar	1032 Laurel Ave East Palo Alto, CA 94303	
30. Alexander Garzar	1032 Laurel Ave EAST PALO ALTO, CA 94303	
31. Nayeli Garzar	1032 Laurel Ave East Palo Alto, CA 94303	
32. Jenny Youll	3611 Page St. Redwood City, CA 94063	
33. Shanti M Perkins	6 Shorebreeze Ct East Palo Alto, CA 94303	
34. Anahai Harris	6 Shorebreeze Ct East Palo Alto, CA 94303	
35. Thracia Whitel	1115 Hasen Avenue Redwood City, CA 94063	
36. Yusefio Garzar	1168 Saratoga Ave. E Palo Alto, CA 94303	

The original notice and proof of service will be filed with the **San Mateo County Elections Office**. Elections Code section 11023.

(a) Within seven days after the filing of the notice of intention, the officer sought to be recalled may file with the elections official, or in the case of a state officer, the Secretary of State, an answer, in not more than 200 words, to the statement of the proponents. (b) If an answer is filed, the officer shall, within seven days after the filing of the notice of intention, also serve a copy of it, by personal delivery or by certified mail, on one of the proponents named in the notice of intention. (c) The answer shall be signed and shall be accompanied by the printed name and business or residence address of the officer sought to be recalled.



Photos by Seeger Gray

Left: Tour participant Fred Ulrich looks into a bin of rags, a category of waste including wipes, during a tour of Silicon Valley Clean Water's wastewater treatment facility in Redwood City on June 17. Right: Tour participants look down from the mezzanine of the receiving lift station. Below: Silicon Valley Clean Water authority manager Matt Zucca leads a tour on a walkway between aeration basins.



WASTEWATER

continued from page 1

pandemic, but did not have a formal program with a set route. As of this month, tours are open to the public monthly.

While SVCW serves over 300,000 customers in Belmont, San Carlos, Redwood City and cities in the West Bay Sanitary District (Menlo Park, Atherton, Woodside, Portola Valley, and parts of East Palo Alto), many longtime residents know little about a “substantial expense on the sewer bill” — wastewater treatment at SVCW — said

Zucca, who was previously the assistant director of the City of Palo Alto's utilities department. That includes his own wife. When he applied to work at SVCW last year, she, who has lived in the Bay Area her entire life, asked him why he wanted to commute all the way to Sunnyvale from their home in Belmont. “No, no,” he told her, “it's in Redwood Shores.”

“We're able to live in this area, in the Peninsula, with this level of population density, and a relatively healthy Bay, because of what this plant does,” Zucca said. “Starting to understand

that nexus is important, and advances the understanding of what this plant does. You can't do that without tours and getting the public engaged.”

Zucca said another goal is to allow residents to feel a sense of scale that can only come from viewing the facility's large machines in person.

Rui Pierre, Chikaba's son, said he enjoyed being able to see the enormous structures. The incoming high school freshman said his favorite apparatus was the aeration basins, expansive tanks where operators add microbes and oxygen to the wastewater to break down debris and consume organic matter.

Fred Ulrich said he wanted to come on the tour to be able to witness the facility's operations for himself.

“I like to understand how things work,” the Burlingame resident said. “I can digest all of this information, but I just like to see this kind of stuff.”

Zucca said that providing pathways for public engagement could help secure investments to revamp the facility's infrastructure. SVCW has already made a number of expensive renovations, one being a \$580 million RESCU program that included redoing the tunnel in the receiving lift station. To comply with the nutrient permit passed in 2023, which regulates the levels of nitrogen and phosphorus the facility can leave in treated water that's discharged into the Bay, Zucca said SVCW expects to need “a significant

capital investment” of about \$320 million.

“In the absence of a tour and a public engagement, they just see a cost,” Zucca said. “So we're trying to provide a counterweight to the, ‘If I'm spending \$1,000 or whatever it is a year on sewer bills, what am I getting for it?’”

Tours take place every third Wednesday of the month from 10 a.m. to noon. The facility is located at 1400 Radio Road in Redwood City. To schedule a tour, go to svcw.org/what-we-do/facilities or call 650-591-7121 or email tours@svcw.org. ■

Email Editorial Intern Sydney Feldman at sfeldman@almanacnews.com.



WEST BAY SANITARY DISTRICT NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING

NOTICE IS GIVEN pursuant to Sections 5473, et. seq. of the California Health and Safety Code that the District Board of West Bay Sanitary District has, by general regulation, elected to collect its charges for sewer services for FY 2026-2027 on the tax roll in the same manner as general taxes and will cause to be filed with its Secretary a written report containing a description of each parcel of real property receiving sanitary sewer service from the District and the amount of the charge for each parcel.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that on Wednesday evening, July 8, 2026 at the hour of 7:00 p.m. at the meeting room located at the District's offices, located at 500 Laurel Street, Menlo Park, CA or by Zoom: <https://us06web.zoom.us/j/87312181441?pwd=6h81Ss0YkTFO5zzuHgObGFknTbEhqB.1> Meeting ID: 873 1218 1441 Passcode: 559090

The District Board will conduct a Public Hearing to hear and consider all protests and objections, if any, to the report.

Anyone wishing to address the District Board concerning these matters may do so in writing at or before the date of the Public Hearing or may be heard at the time of the Board's meeting.

By: /s/ Sergio Ramirez
Sergio Ramirez
General Manager

Dated: May 27, 2026

HOUSING PROJECT

continued from page 1

density bonus for new housing projects.

Ledbetter sought updates on project

Public records obtained by The Almanac show former Town Manager Jason Ledbetter sharing information about the Jefferson project to select town residents after the release of his 14-page whistleblower report in February, in which he alleged that council members delayed housing projects, made racist statements and created a hostile work environment.

“They are also attempting to hide a builder’s remedy project at 4224 Jefferson,” he wrote in an email to a community member.

Records indicate that Ledbetter and his predecessor, former Town Manager Kevin Bryant, members of the Town Council, Planning Director Sage Schaan, Town Attorney Jean Savaree, Deputy Town Clerk Julie Paping and former Public Works Director Yazdan Emrani were aware of Eilenberg’s project.

Emails also show Ledbetter seeking updates from Schaan about the status of the builder’s remedy project the day before he publicly released his report on Feb. 19. Ledbetter was immediately placed on paid leave after

the report came out and was fired on April 30 after the town’s independent investigation found the majority of his allegations were not substantiated.

Cardinale said because the town has not received a completed application, it does not necessitate the town to hold a public meeting or disclose the project to the public.

Dispute over application process

Under state law, a builder’s remedy project must submit a subsequent application within 180 days of the preliminary application. However, multiple email exchanges between Eilenberg and the town show over a year-long dispute on whether the developer’s application is truly deemed “incomplete.”

On June 22, Cardinale said the town has not received a complete development application and a formal proposal has not been submitted.

Eilenberg’s initial applications were submitted in October and again in December 2024. Under SB 330, this allowed him until late June 2025 to submit a complete development application including various permits and approvals from local fire and county health departments.

However, the town deemed the application incomplete in July 2025. Even after resubmitting, the town continued to issue

incomplete notices in November and December of last year. Cardinale said the applicant was notified in April that their application remained incomplete.

“The problem is that it seems like the town continues imposing things into the process that both make no sense practically and are unsupported legally,” wrote Eilenberg in a Dec. 26 email after another incomplete application.

Due to issues with lack of a response from the town and continued difficulties determining the application as incomplete, Eilenberg has warned town staff of the risk they could face with legal fees, if action is not taken promptly.

As of now, Woodside’s town staff are unsure of the challenges that the project may pose to the area or the likelihood that the project will move forward. However, Cardinale shared that staff have identified the lack of available sewer services is a potential concern and has discussed the issue with the developer.

Town staff have continued to meet with the applicant “over the last several months to discuss the lack of available sewer service and the size of the proposed project,” said Cardinale. ■

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

PARCEL TAX

continued from page 10

to lead to increased student achievement, especially those that can help ensure that all our students are fully English literate by the end of third grade.”

He noted that the district, in recent years, “has engaged with the public and staff to work on structured budget cuts and spending discipline to reduce administrative overhead while minimizing impacts on classrooms, freeing up dollars we can use for instruction.”

Over the past two years, the district has implemented ongoing budget reductions and cost savings totaling about \$13 million.

Before the district decided to put Measure C on the ballot, a grassroots parent group was exploring a community-initiated parcel tax proposal as an alternative to address the district’s funding crunch.

The group backed off from the citizen initiative when district officials approved going for Measure C but now could revive that effort.

Conversations will continue “about how best to support our schools,” said Shade, also

a member of the group. “That could include exploring a future citizen-led initiative, pursuing partnerships with foundations and community organizations, or identifying other creative funding opportunities. I don’t think anyone has definitive answers yet, but I do know this is an incredibly resourceful community.”

Weekly acknowledged that a citizens’ ballot initiative is appealing in that it requires only a simple majority to pass, whereas the more-traditional district-sponsored measure

needs two-thirds.

“But it’s my understanding that there are additional legal and political complexities given the boundary of our district with pursuing a citizen-led initiative,” he said. However, “I think the will is there in the community to support our schools, and I’d be excited about any medium we could use to offer teachers competitive pay.” ■

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

Employment

Genesys Cloud Services, Inc. seeks a Senior Software Engineer in Menlo Park, CA to develop new features and components for voice network infrastructure. Telecommuting allowed for this position. Salary range: \$161,637 to \$171,637. Send resume to: Miriam.Graeff@genesys.com. Include job code JR110911 in reply. EOE.

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Public Notices

SOLIVANA LONGEVITY LAB
SOLIVANA RESEARCH INSTITUTE
MADE BY SOLIVANA
NATASHA BERNES
SOLIVANA
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304179
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) SOLIVANA LONGEVITY LAB , 2.) SOLIVANA RESEARCH INSTITUTE , 3.) MADE BY SOLIVANA , 4.) NATASHA BERNES , 5.) SOLIVANA , located at 1922 el camino real, Redwood City, CA 94063.
Registered owner(s):
INNER LIGHT WELLNESS LLC
1401 21st street suite r
Sacramento, CA 95811
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 June 16, 2026.
(ALM Jun 26, Jul 3, 10 and 17, 2026)

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on May 27, 2026.
(ALM Jun 5, 12, 19 and 26, 2026)

COLLECTABLE PASTIMES
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-303891
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) COLLECTABLE PASTIMES , located at 870 Coleman Ave, Menlo Park, CA 94025.
Registered owner(s):
RILEY SEAN GORODSKY
870 Coleman Ave
Menlo Park, CA 94025
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 5/15/26.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on May 18, 2026.
(ALM Jun 5, 12, 19 and 26, 2026)

ZETINO TREE SERVICE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304142
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) ZETINO TREE SERVICE , located at 983 GARDEN ST, E PALO ALTO CA 94303.
Registered owner(s):
NEFTALI JACINTO ZETINO
983 Garden St
E 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 06/11/2026.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 11, 2026.
(ALM Jun 19, 26, Jul 3 and 10, 2026)

BAND OF CEOS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304036
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) BAND OF CEOS , located at 358 Albion Avenue, Woodside, CA 94062.
Registered owner(s):
JOHN FRANCIS MARONEY
358 Albion Avenue
Woodside, CA 94062
KERMIT POPE
358 Albion Avenue
Woodside, CA 94062
This business is conducted by: an Unincorporated Assoc. Other Than a Partnership.
Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 01/01/2012.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 03, 2026.
(ALM Jun 12, 19, 26 and Jul 3, 2026)

PEBBLE & PULSE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304030
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) PEBBLE & PULSE , located at 50 Woodside Plaza #447, Redwood City, CA 94061. Mailing Address: 1401 21st Street, Ste R Sacramento, CA 95811
Registered owner(s):
PEBBLE & PULSE LLC
1401 21st Street, Ste R
Sacramento, CA 95811
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 June 02, 2026.
(ALM Jun 19, 26, Jul 3 and 10, 2026)

PJD ENTERPRISES
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-303952
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) PJD ENTERPRISES , located at 215 W Oakwood Blvd, Redwood City, CA 94061.
Registered owner(s):
PAUL DEMERS
215 W Oakwood Blvd
Redwood City CA 94061
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF SAN MATEO
Case No.: 26-CIV-03681
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner: Sally S. Lee filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows:
SALLY S. LEE to SALLY SHIMADA-LEE
THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.
NOTICE OF HEARING: 07/15/26, 9:00AM, Civil Department of the Superior Court of California, County of San Mateo County located at 400 County Center, Redwood City, CA 94063.
A copy of this ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county:
ALMANAC
Date: 05/25/26
Stephanie G. Garratt
JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
(ALM Jun 5, 12, 19 and 26, 2026)

The Almanac is adjudicated to publish in San Mateo County.

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

The deadline is Sunday at 11:59 p.m. Visit AlmanacNews.com/legal_notices/

We know music therapy works for autistic kids. Why aren't we funding it?

By Parker Smith

GUEST OPINION

A few miles from where I go to school, Palo Alto's Magical Bridge Playground was built on a simple premise: Kids of all abilities deserve a place designed for them, and a community willing to think creatively about access can build something extraordinary. I've spent the last semester of school studying a problem the Peninsula is well-positioned to solve. Music therapy is an affordable intervention for autistic children with strong evidence behind it, yet it remains largely inaccessible, not because it doesn't work, but because of how we choose to pay for it.

I'm a senior at Menlo School in Atherton, and for my independent research capstone project, I wrote a research paper and built an economic model of access to music therapy for

autistic children. Here is the core finding:

A 12-week course of music therapy costs roughly \$4,500 per student for three sessions per week. Using conservative assumptions throughout, every \$1 invested in music therapy generates roughly \$20 in measurable societal benefits. For a child completing a 12-week course, that amounts to nearly \$78,965 in savings through reduced special education spending, lower long-term adult care costs and parental productivity recovered when a child gains communication, behavior and self-regulation skills. Even if I'm being overly optimistic and discounting the benefits by more than half, the floor is near an 8-to-1 return. There are very few public investments anywhere that perform like this.

So why is music therapy almost absent from public funding and insurance coverage?

It isn't the evidence. The reason is structural. A more intensive and considerably more expensive alternative reached the market first, secured insurance mandates, and built the infrastructure through which funding now flows. Music therapy, despite delivering comparable outcomes in social and behavioral skills at a fraction of the cost, never gained traction.

The families living this reality don't experience it as an abstraction. On the Peninsula, where the cost of raising a child with significant support needs is already staggering, parents are routinely told that insurance will cover the more expensive intervention. The lower-cost option that might serve their child just as well is often left uncovered, putting it out of

pocket and out of reach.

This is fixable, and it doesn't require discovering anything new. It requires a billing code and a policy decision.

First, California's legislature and insurance regulators can move to require coverage for credentialed music therapy delivered to children with autism, the way coverage was eventually extended to other established interventions. Second, local districts and regional centers serving San Mateo and Santa Clara counties can pilot music therapy as a covered service and

publish the outcome, turning the Peninsula into a proof of concept.

I'm 17, and I don't have to write an insurance policy. But I learned something writing this paper that I think applies well beyond this issue. I can demonstrate the gap, but I cannot close it. That part takes people deciding that the gap is real. ■

Parker Smith is a senior at Menlo School in Atherton, where his independent research focused on the economics of autism intervention funding.

From City Hall politics and the schools to transportation and other pressing issues, the Almanac aims to keep readers informed about their community. But we also want to hear from you.

Tell us what's on your mind by sending your letters to letters@AlmanacNews.com. Or snail-mail them to: The Almanac, 2345 Yale St., 1st floor, Palo Alto, CA 94306.

Letters should be no longer than 300 words.

Questions? Email editor@AlmanacNews.com, or call 650-223-6537.



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Cheers to 250 years

A GUIDE TO FOURTH OF JULY EVENTS ON THE PENINSULA AND BEYOND

By Ellis Yang

The Fourth of July is poised to arrive with greater fanfare this year as the United States commemorates its 250th anniversary. Cities and local groups will mark the historic milestone with longstanding traditions and a few new attractions.

Celebrations across the Peninsula will offer something for both broad audiences and those with more particular interests.

Palo Alto's Chili Cook Off will mark a milestone of its own, as the city will hold the 40th annual event. Music lovers can enjoy live performances ranging from the San Francisco Symphony's annual Fireworks Spectacular to independent bands at Winters Tavern in Pacifica. History enthusiasts can take a step back in time at the San Mateo County History Museum, while visitors seeking a more modern spectacle can watch illuminated drones bedazzle the night sky in Sunnyvale.

From youth rodeo competitions to waterfront festivities, the Fourth of July is arriving with no shortage of ways to celebrate.

Peninsula

Mountain View

Fourth of July Fireworks Spectacular

The San Francisco Symphony returns to Shoreline Amphitheatre for its annual Fourth of July Fireworks Spectacular, featuring "Summer of 1969: The Soundtrack of a Generation." Audiences can expect hits including "Proud Mary," "Here Comes the Sun," "Blackbird" and "Purple Haze." Ted Sperling will conduct the concert, which features guest vocalists Morgan James, Bryonha Marie and Noah J. Ricketts. The night ends with a fireworks display. Festivities begin at 5 p.m. with family-friendly activities,

children's entertainment, American food favorites and frozen treats.

July 4, 7 p.m., at Shoreline Amphitheatre, 1 Amphitheatre Parkway, Mountain View. Tickets are \$29-\$200. [livenation.com](https://www.livenation.com).

Shoreline Lake Fireworks Viewing

Visitors looking to escape the crowds can watch Mountain View's fireworks display from an unusual vantage point: the waters of Shoreline Lake. The Boathouse offers reservation-only kayak, canoe, pedal boat and rowboat rentals that allow guests to view the show from the middle of the lake. Rentals include a barbecue dinner served from 6 to 8 p.m., with boarding beginning at 8:30 p.m.

July 4, 8:30-10:15 p.m. (dinner from 6 to 8 p.m.) at the Boathouse and American Bistro, 3160 N. Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View. Reservations are \$135-\$235 and can be made at tinyurl.com/ShorelineLakeFourth.

TACO Independence Day Concert

The Terrible Adult Chamber Orchestra (TACO) will celebrate the Fourth of July with a free outdoor concert featuring 10 pieces by American composers. The performance will also spotlight guest vocalist Perri So, a Palo Alto middle school student. Audience members are encouraged to bring folding chairs or a blanket.

July 5, 4-6 p.m. at the Outdoor Park Stage behind Mountain View Center for Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. [tacosv.org](https://www.tacosv.org).

Los Altos

Glorious 4th Independence Day Celebration

Residents can celebrate Independence Day at Shoup Park with



Natalia Nazarova

The finish line of the Menlo Park Fourth of July community parade was decorated with balloons, creating a colorful entrance to the festival at Burgess Park for the 2025 event. Visitors to the festival this year can enjoy performances by Circus Bella and a community picnic.

live music, games and family-friendly activities. Food will also be available for purchase throughout the event.

July 4, 10 a.m.-2 p.m., at Shoup Park, 400 University Ave., Los Altos. [ca-losaltos.civicplus.com](https://www.ca-losaltos.civicplus.com).

Los Altos First Friday

Los Altos First Friday will kick off Fourth of July festivities a day early with its patriotic-themed "Red, White, and Boom" celebration on July 3. The free monthly event transforms downtown Los Altos into a lively outdoor music festival with 16 bands performing at shops and restaurants.

July 3, 6-9 p.m., Main and State streets, Los Altos. [losaltosfirstfriday.fun](https://www.losaltosfirstfriday.fun).

Los Altos Hills

Los Altos Hills Fourth of July parade

Los Altos Hills will celebrate Independence Day with its annual community parade along Fremont Road, beginning at the Los Altos Hills Town Hall and ending at the Gardner Bullis School. Refreshing beverages and watermelon snacks are provided for attendees.

July 4, gather at 9 a.m., parade begins at 10 a.m. at Los Altos Town Hall, 26379 Fremont Road, Los Altos Hills. [losaltoshills.ca.gov](https://www.losaltoshills.ca.gov).

Palo Alto

4th of July Chili Cook Off and Summer Festival

The 40th annual 4th of July Chili Cook Off and Summer Festival returns with chili tastings, food trucks, live entertainment and family-friendly activities.

Attendees can sample free chili from competing teams as contestants vie for awards including: Best Overall Chili, Best Vegetarian, People's Choice and Best Booth. The festival will also include food trucks, live entertainment, games and inflatables for children, as well as beer and margaritas for adults. A sensory-friendly tent will be available throughout the event, offering a low-stimulation space with crafts, headphones and other comfort items.

July 4, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., at Mitchell Park, 600 E. Meadow Drive, Palo Alto. tinyurl.com/PA40thChiliCookOff.

Menlo Park

4th of July Community Parade, Picnic and Circus

Decorated bicycles, wagons

See **FOURTH OF JULY**, page 21

Stanford Jazz Festival brings centennials, string quartets and stars

The 54th annual festival features a summer of celebrating both jazz masters and bold new ideas

By Heather Zimmerman

A little more than half a century into its existence, the Stanford Jazz Festival maintains a solid foundation in the history of jazz and continues building on it with artists who take jazz in new directions. It makes particular sense for a festival that has learning at its core.

The Stanford Jazz Festival is the public-facing performance arm of the Stanford Jazz Workshop, which provides educational programming for young people. Many musicians on hand to teach classes for the summer also perform at the festival. And as time goes on, musicians who were once workshop students return to teach and perform, such as Menlo Park-raised Grammy-winning pianist Taylor Eigsti, Christina Galisatus, and Sasha Berliner.

This year's festival runs through July 31, featuring tributes to some of the early giants of jazz and performances by current masters and up-and-coming stars. As has become a tradition, the festival kicked off early last weekend with the

popular "Indian Jazz Journey," featuring vocalist Mahesh Kale and tenor saxophonist George Brooks.

Opening weekend of the festival features a sold-out June 26 show with jazz luminary Branford Marsalis and a June 27 show with pianist and composer Billy Childs. Sunday, June 28, brings two performances with the annual family-focused Early Bird Jazz show with Dr. David Hart and the Zookeepers, and a concert with something you don't hear every day in jazz: a string quartet. Brazilian vocalist Luciana Souza will team with Brazilian guitarist Marcel Camargo and a string quartet to perform classics from Brazil and original songs.

We spoke with Stanford Jazz Workshop Executive Director Cory Combs about what to expect at the 54th annual festival. This conversation has been edited for length and clarity.

The Almanac: What's new at the festival this year?

Cory Combs: We have a lot of shows from performers that have not been with us before. Branford Marsalis is opening up for us. He's been at the



Courtesy Kim Fox

Grammy Award-winning vocalist Luciana Souza performs June 28 with a string quartet as part of her New Moon project.

workshop before, but this is the first time he's headlining the festival for us, and L.A. pianist Billy Childs is coming. He was just shortlisted for the Pulitzer Prize as a composer, so we're

very excited about that. There's a really cool vocalist named Michael Mayo, who is a young singer who has developed a big following through his innovative approach to layering his own vocals. He just released a new recording.

Then we have our tent-poles that come back each year and do a fantastic show, and that's artists like Taylor Eigsti and Anat Cohen.

This year we have some themed concerts that are celebrating centennials or developing the theme of an existing artist, and that's the Miles Davis Centennial celebration; we're celebrating the saxophonist Jimmy Heath; Duke Ellington is getting a tribute, and then great bassist Marcus Shelby is doing a tribute to the music of Charlie Mingus, and so he's going to interpret that exciting songbook.

We have some really exciting Cuban artists, as well, so we're covering that geographical region too.

The Almanac: The centennials and other tribute concerts highlight jazz heritage, but then you also have some newer, non-traditional takes, like Christina Galisatus playing Joni Mitchell and Luciana Souza with a string quartet. What do you look for in choosing that mix of heritage and more non-traditional shows?

Cory Combs: I work with a great partner here at the organization, Steven Lugerner, who's our director of educational and festival programming. He's a wonderful musician himself and leads a band. Through our experience in programming and of course, building community here in the Bay Area and beyond, with so many great musicians, we have always enjoyed looking at the blank slate and coming up with some of these broader ideas of what is in the jazz ecosystem right now that we could celebrate, and as an education institute, lean into to say, 'this is this is an important figure, this is an important celebration.'

So that's where we came up with the idea of the centennial celebration, but then we also go to the artist to say 'What are you presenting that might be unique for us that you aren't doing all the time or you haven't done yet?' That's where we got to Christina Galisatus and her Joni Mitchell project. Similarly with Luciana, we talked to her about coming with just a straight duo, and they pitched to us, 'How about the string quartet?'

That's the kind of attitude that we take to it, that we have an idea of what might be good in the venue or with our audience, and then always leave room for the performer to (offer their own angle). We have a really great audience that I think over the course of the time has learned to trust us in our curation, so we can take some chances with that.

The Almanac: How does the workshop's educational foundation shape the festival?

Cory Combs: That's another piece of it, where it's very exciting to have this period where we're not only looking at the festival but we're looking at the jazz camp and jazz institute, in terms of the faculty, like who hasn't been with us maybe for a while, who do we know we want to have come back, and in that mix of that group of people who (can perform at) the festival as well.

Generally speaking, we go with the strength of the educator first, and then secondarily knowing that they're going to do an amazing festival concert, rather than the other way around.

The Almanac: What do you hope audiences take away from this year's festival?

Cory Combs: I always hope that people see the depth of creativity that these artists continually push forward. I mean, jazz musicians, in my experience, are forever developing their craft, and so I think each one of these shows will highlight that.

Then also we try to strengthen the Bay Area ecosystem by making sure that our festival is centered around local (artists) as well, and that's something that throughout my work has always been important to (have a mix of national touring artists) but also a significant percentage of local talent to come and do the same level that you would see from any touring artist or from any region — New York, whatever, that people think is the highest level — we're showcasing that, and they're coming from San Francisco, Palo Alto, Berkeley, Oakland, and they're all right in our backyard. ■

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

The Stanford Jazz Festival runs through July 31 at various Stanford University venues. Ticket prices vary by show. For more information, visit stanfordjazz.org/stanford-jazz-festival.

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FOURTH OF JULY

continued from page 19

and strollers will take to Alma Street as part of Menlo Park's Fourth of July celebration. Participants can gather at the Arrillaga Family Gymnasium parking lot before joining the annual parade. Following the parade, Circus Bella will present two all-ages performances of its new show "AH HA!" featuring acrobats, aerialists, jugglers and clowns. A community picnic will be held between the performances at 1 p.m., and food trucks will be available throughout the event.

July 4, 11 a.m.-3 p.m., at Burgess Park, 501 Laurel St., Menlo Park, tinyurl.com/MenloParkFourth2026.

Woodside

Woodside Junior Rodeo

The annual Woodside Junior Rodeo brings classic Western fun to the Peninsula, with young riders competing in traditional rodeo events alongside family-friendly attractions. Kids and teens ages 6-18 can participate in events such as roping, steer wrestling, barrel racing and pole bending, while visitors can enjoy pony rides, a petting zoo, a mechanical bull, local vendors and a barbecue. A pre-rodeo dinner dance takes place July 3.

July 3, 6 p.m. pre-rodeo dinner; tickets will be sold at the door.

Rodeo is July 4, 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Tickets are \$20 for adults, \$15 for children under 18 and free for kids under 5. Both the dinner and rodeo take place at Mounted Patrol of San Mateo County, 521 Kings Mountain Road, Woodside. mpsmc.org/rodeo.

Redwood City

An Old-Fashioned Fourth

Taking a more historical approach to the holiday, the San Mateo County History Museum is celebrating Independence Day with Victorian-era themed activities and crafts. Visitors can make paper pinwheels, hand-decorate flags and participate in other family-friendly activities inspired

by Fourth of July celebrations of the past.

July 4, 10 a.m.-4 p.m., at San Mateo County History Museum, 2200 Broadway, Redwood City, CA, Admission is \$4-\$6 and free for Museum members. tinyurl.com/OldFashioned4thSMC.

4th of July Party

Celebrate on the waterfront at the Sequoia Yacht Club's annual Fourth of July party, which combines sailboat races, food, live music and community festivities along the Redwood City shoreline. The event features the club's traditional El Toro dinghy race, along with grilling and pie-making contests that bring members and spectators together for friendly competition.

July 4, 3 p.m., at Sequoia Yacht Club, 400 Seaport Court, Redwood City. sequoiayc.org/calendar.

Chalk Full of Fun

For two days, professional chalk artists and community members will fill Redwood City's Courthouse Square with chalk murals inspired by this year's theme, "Oh Beautiful," which highlights America's parks and artistic tradition. Participants can register for 3-by-3 foot or 5-by-5 foot drawing spaces. Art supplies, shade umbrellas and refreshments will be provided, and artists of all ages and skill levels are welcome. 100 total pre-registration spaces are available for public chalking.

July 3-4, 8 a.m.-6 p.m., at Courthouse Square, 2200 Broadway, Redwood City. rwcpaf.org/chalk-full-of-fun.

Sunnyvale

4th of July Festival

Families can spend the Fourth of July enjoying amusement rides, carnival games and live entertainment at this annual festival in downtown Sunnyvale. The event features a 72-foot Ferris wheel, a 100-foot slide, fire truck displays, children's activities and performances on the Main Stage and Kid's Stage. The festivities will begin with a community



Courtesy Half Moon Bay Beautification Committee

Half Moon Bay's Ol' Fashioned 4th of July Parade includes decorated vehicles, such as this dune buggy, as well as marching bands and community groups.

bike parade departing from the Sunnyvale Public Library at 9 a.m.

July 4, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. in downtown Sunnyvale (S. Murphy Avenue between E. Washington and W. McKinley avenues). sunnyvaledowntown.org

Sunnyvale Drone Show

At Baylands Park's Great Meadow, the city of Sunnyvale will celebrate Independence Day with a drone light show featuring illuminated shapes and patterns in the night sky. Festivities begin at 7 p.m. with music from a live DJ. Free parking opens at 6:30 p.m., and visitors are encouraged to bring a flashlight or headlamp for the walk back after the event.

July 4, 6:30 p.m. parking opens; 7 p.m. DJ music; 9:15 p.m. drone show; Great Meadow at Baylands Park, 999 E. Caribbean Drive, Sunnyvale, sunnyvale.ca.gov.

Coastside

Half Moon Bay

Half Moon Bay Ol' Fashioned 4th of July Parade & Festival

Coastside's Independence Day celebration returns for its 55th

year with a full day of festivities in downtown Half Moon Bay. The tradition begins with a pancake breakfast hosted by the Half Moon Bay Lions Club, followed by the Ol' Fashioned Fourth of July Parade along Main Street featuring community groups, local organizations and this year's grand marshal. Visitors can also enjoy the I.D.E.S Fourth of July Festival, which offers food and entertainment throughout the day.

July 4, Pancake breakfast is 8-11:30 a.m. Parade begins at noon and lasts approximately 90 minutes. Festival is 10 a.m.-4 p.m., at Portuguese Culture Center, 724 Kelly Ave., Half Moon Bay, hmbfourthofjuly.com.

Pacifica

Independence Day Music Festival

For music lovers seeking an alternative to traditional Fourth of July celebrations, Winters Tavern brings an afternoon and evening of live music to Pacifica. The lineup features a range of California bands spanning genres from hardcore punk and metal to alternative rock.

July 4, after 1 p.m., at Winters Tavern,

1522 Francisco Blvd., Pacifica. winterstavern.com.

Pacifica Rocket Run

Pacifica's annual Rocket Run offers an active start to the Fourth of July, inviting runners of all ages and experience levels to take part in a 5-mile race beginning at the Pacifica Community Center. Participants will compete in age-group divisions ranging from 13 and under to 80 and over, with medals awarded to the top six finishers in each category. The first 75 registered runners will receive a commemorative Rocket Run T-shirt.

July 4, check in 8-8:45 a.m., run starts at 9 a.m. at the Pacifica Community Center, 540 Crespi Drive, Pacifica. \$25 each for early registration (ends July 3 at 8 a.m.), \$30 for race day registration. Register in person at 540 Crespi Drive or online at tinyurl.com/nhd2cd75. ■

Email Editorial Intern Ellis Yang at eyang@embarcaderomedia.org.

Find more Fourth of July celebrations, including South Bay events, at almanacnews.com/arts-culture.



Devin Roberts

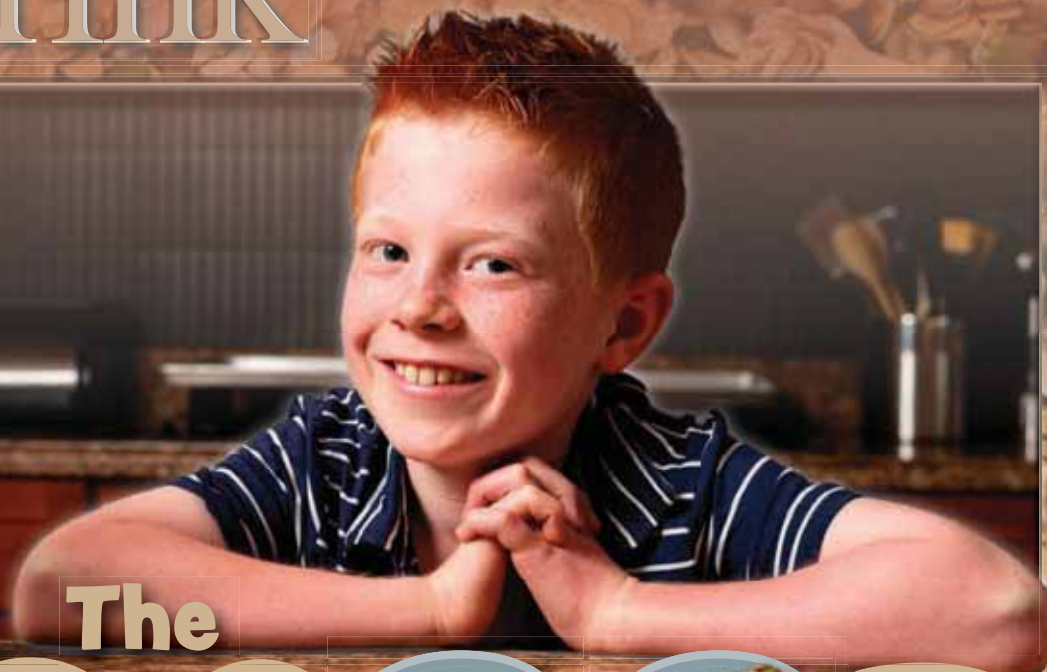
Judges taste chili at the 4th of July Chili Cook Off and Summer Festival at Mitchell Park in Palo Alto in 2024. This year will mark the event's 40th anniversary.

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Food & Drink



The SCOP on Ethan's Granola



Redwood City 9-year-old's brand is growing

Story by Karla Kane
Photos by Seeger Gray

Move over, school bake sales and neighborhood lemonade stands: Redwood City's Ethan Vitus is running his own homemade food brand while still an elementary school student.

For Ethan, a love of making breakfast has led to an adventure in entrepreneurship that includes a recent expansion to a local market. The 9-year-old "kidpreneur" and North Star Academy student has been producing and selling

Ethan's Granola for the past year and is now also stocking it at Dehoff's Market.

Ethan was already a big fan of granola (because it's sweet and crunchy, he said) when, as a 7-year-old, he found a make-your-own granola recipe in a cookbook at the Clifford School library. The cookbook, Ethan said, didn't dictate what ingredients to use, but rather offered guidance on ratios and preparation tips, leaving the flavor choices open. Eventually, he came up with a winning recipe of his own.

He honed in on his favorite mix-ins

— cranberries, blueberries and walnuts — perfected the sweetness level by experimenting with maple syrup, added in pumpkin seeds and coconut flakes and spiced things up with cinnamon and cardamom. That zesty burst of flavors and textures is what sets his granola apart from the crowd.

"It's a lot more than just oats," his mom Michelle Vitus said.

After plenty of taste testing and giving granola to friends and teachers, "everyone loved it so much I wanted to become a granola business," Ethan said in a recent interview.

At home, Ethan was becoming quite the breakfast chef, preparing waffles, pancakes and French toast, Michelle said, and had also expressed interest in starting a company. At the time, he hadn't found a particular passion for sports or other hobbies, so she was happy to encourage him in his cooking and business pursuit, seeing the granola experiment as a perfect convergence of his interests.

"I viewed it as an extracurricular activity. It gave him a chance to build confidence, resilience and follow-through," she said.

Ethan and Michelle went through food handler's training and obtained a cottage food operations permit from San Mateo County, which allows them

to sell directly to consumers. They've since leveled up with a Class B permit to sell products in stores as well.

In addition to his original granola blend, Ethan's Granola also offers a special dark cherry and chocolate flavor with pecans and a hint of vanilla around the winter holidays. He's interested in coming up with more varieties in the future and has contemplated expanding production to include granola bars.

"All of the baking we do together," Michelle noted, but it's Ethan's project first and foremost. "From posting on Nextdoor to sending customer emails, he's involved every step of the way."

He launched his business by sharing his background and product on social media and word began to spread — a slow process that built over time thanks to rave reviews and recommendations from those who ordered.

"He's had so much community

'It's the perfect degree of sweetness; it's just a winning recipe (Ethan) created.'

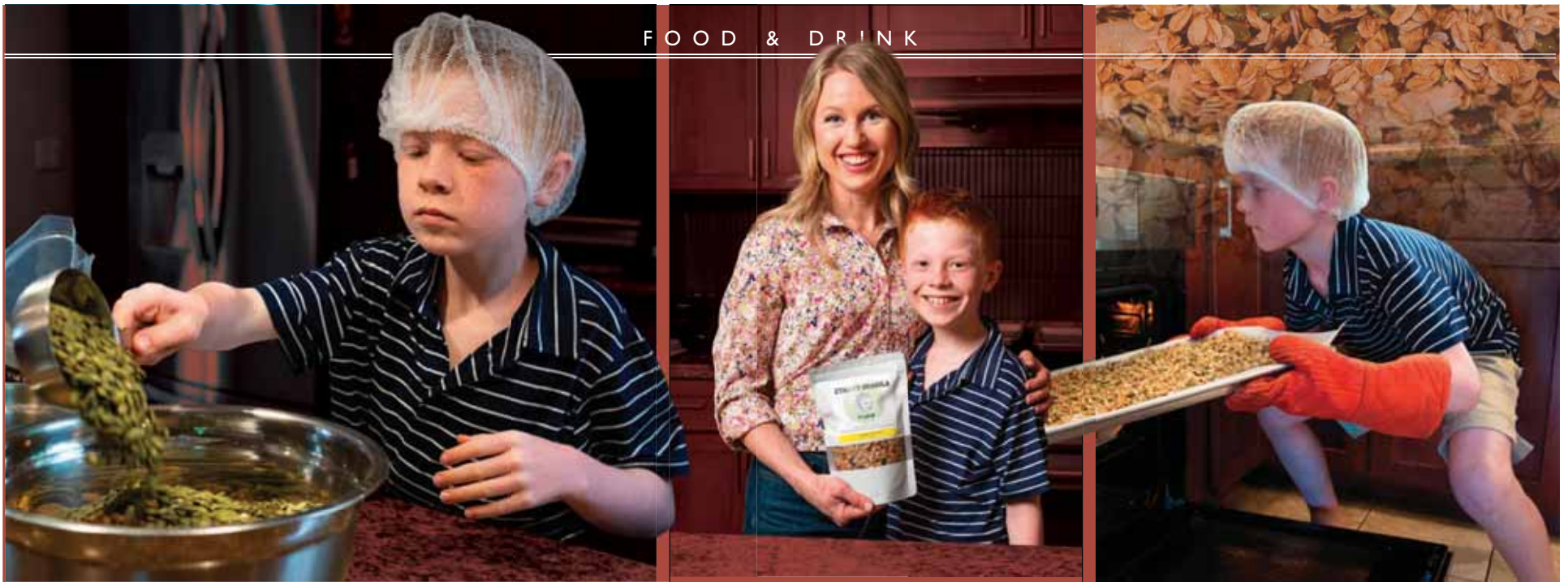
CHRIS DEHOFF,
DEHOFF'S MARKET PRESIDENT



Above: Ethan Vitus puts an Ethan's Granola label on an empty bag at his home in Redwood City. Top: Ethan Vitus, 9, sits for a portrait with bags of Ethan's Granola at his home in Redwood City.

Ethan's Granola, ethansgranola.square.site;
Instagram: @ethansgranolaco.

Dehoff's Market (formerly named Key Market), 1063 Upton St., Redwood City.
Open 7 a.m. to 9 p.m. daily;
dehoffskeymarket.com,
Instagram: @dehoffskeymarkets.



From left: Ethan Vitus, pours seeds into a bowl while making a batch of Ethan's Granola. Ethan Vitus and his mother, Michelle Vitus. Ethan Vitus puts a baking tray with granola into an oven while making a batch of Ethan's Granola with his mother.

support and that's really meant a lot to him," Michelle said. "The Redwood City/San Carlos community has been amazing to him."

Michelle estimated it takes about two hours and 45 minutes to produce each "kid-made, with love" batch, which involves prep time, cooking, stirring and an hour of cooling. A 12-ounce bag costs \$11 via the Ethan's Granola website, while a four-pack is \$40.

He's participated in some pop-up market events and decided this year it was time to expand.

"I reached out to (Dehoff's Market president) Chris Dehoff for advice and gave him a free bag of granola," Ethan said of how he connected with the venerable local market.

Dehoff responded right away, inviting him for a meeting. Ethan headed to the office to meet with Dehoff who, after sharing some wisdom on how the process works and how other local vendors had found success, told him, "I would

like to be your first grocery store," Michelle recalled.

"He had a list of questions ready for me about what I thought it would take to get a product launched and to make it successful, and what we were looking for when we looked for new items," Dehoff said of his initial meeting with Ethan. "He took wonderful notes on our conversation. It was very impressive how he approached that first meeting."

Ethan's Granola has been on the shelves at the market for a few weeks (priced at \$10.99 per bag) and had an official launch — with Ethan serving samples — in the store May 30.

"Right when you open the bag you can see the quality of it," Dehoff said of the product. "It's the perfect degree of sweetness; it's just a winning recipe he created."

Dehoff's has long been supportive of local independent businesses and stocks other Peninsula brands, including products from Emerald Hills Cafe &

Roastery, Caramella Dolci Toffee, Palo Alto Baking Co., La Honda Winery, Alpha Acid Brewing Company and Devil's Canyon Brewing Company.

"We love to get local items that aren't everywhere," Dehoff said.

Dehoff was also impressed with how many fans the brand had already accumulated thanks to savvy social media marketing and responsive customer service. "He had a lot of people enjoying his granola already," he said.

And while Dehoff's is the first reseller, it may not be the last: Another local market has encouraged Ethan to come by, Michelle said. He's also talked with a co-packer (a third-party company that handles packaging for brands) about what it might look like if production were to expand beyond what he can support on his own. And Ethan is thinking big. "Whole Foods!" he said, when asked about a future goal.

As a parent, Michelle sees the business as a great hands-on educational

experience for her son.

"From my perspective, it's an amazing learning opportunity for him to see that entrepreneurship is within reach," she said.

And as for Ethan, he's been thrilled to see folks ordering and helping spread the word.

"I like that people want to support me and buy my granola," he said. ■

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

Dig into food news. Follow the Peninsula Foodist on Instagram @peninsulafoodist and subscribe to the newsletter at AlmanacNews.com/peninsula-foodist to get insights on the latest openings and closings, learn what the Foodist is excited about eating, read exclusive interviews and keep up on the trends affecting local restaurants.

Left Bank Brasserie permanently closes after nearly three decades in Menlo Park

Employees were only alerted to the closure Monday morning, June 22

By **Adrienne Mitchel**

After 28 years in downtown Menlo Park, Left Bank Brasserie closed its doors Tuesday evening.

The 150-seat French restaurant is part of Vine Hospitality, which also operates LB Steak, Meso Modern Mediterranean and Petite Left Bank — all of which announced permanent closures on social media Monday, June 22.

"We are incredibly grateful for every meal shared, every toast raised, and every memory created with us," the company posted to the Left Bank Brasserie Instagram. "From the bottom of our hearts, thank you for being part of the Left Bank family. We will miss you dearly."

A manager at Left Bank Brasserie Menlo Park, who

requested to keep her name private, said she was told of the closure during a meeting Monday morning.

"We didn't really get much detail," she said. "People weren't really asking questions. It was a melancholy call."

She said the news was particularly shocking because "they hired a lot of new management recently." She herself was hired just a few months back, she said.

The Left Bank website still reads that it's "celebrating 30 years," noting that its name comes from "Paris's famous Left Bank along the Seine, a historic hub for artists and creatives." Left Bank is known for classic French dishes, including escargots, duck liver mousse, steak frites and more. Bistro Vida, which also opened in 1998, is now the only French restaurant operating in

downtown Menlo Park.

Left Bank Brasserie was first founded in Larkspur in 1994 by the late Ed Levine and chef Roland Passot. The restaurant expanded to Menlo Park in 1998, then Santana Row in 2003. The group also owns LB Steak and Meso Modern Mediterranean on Santana Row, as well as LB Steak in San Ramon and Petite Left Bank in Tiburon. An LB Steak restaurant in downtown Menlo Park, at the corner of Santa Cruz Avenue and University Drive, closed in 2018.

Last year, Vine Hospitality closed Italian American restaurant Rollati Ristorante, just two years after opening in downtown San Jose. ■

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



Veronica Weber

Looking down from the mezzanine, servers at Left Bank restaurant ready the dining room for dinner service.

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