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AUG. 12 6PM

FREE performance of the
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PAGE 4

AUGUST 7, 2026 | VOL. 61 NO. 48



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The Almanac celebrates 60 years of local news

PAGE 14

the Country Almanac
Wednesday, September 8, 1965
Serving South San Mateo County's Foothill Area
Vol. 1, No. 1
Everything's Ready For School, Susie
This year's opening of school will be the most memorable ever for 32 children in Woodside, 75 in Portola Valley and 175 in Los Gatos. It's the year they start school as students.

INSIDE

VIEWPOINT **22** | ARTS **23** | FOOD **26**

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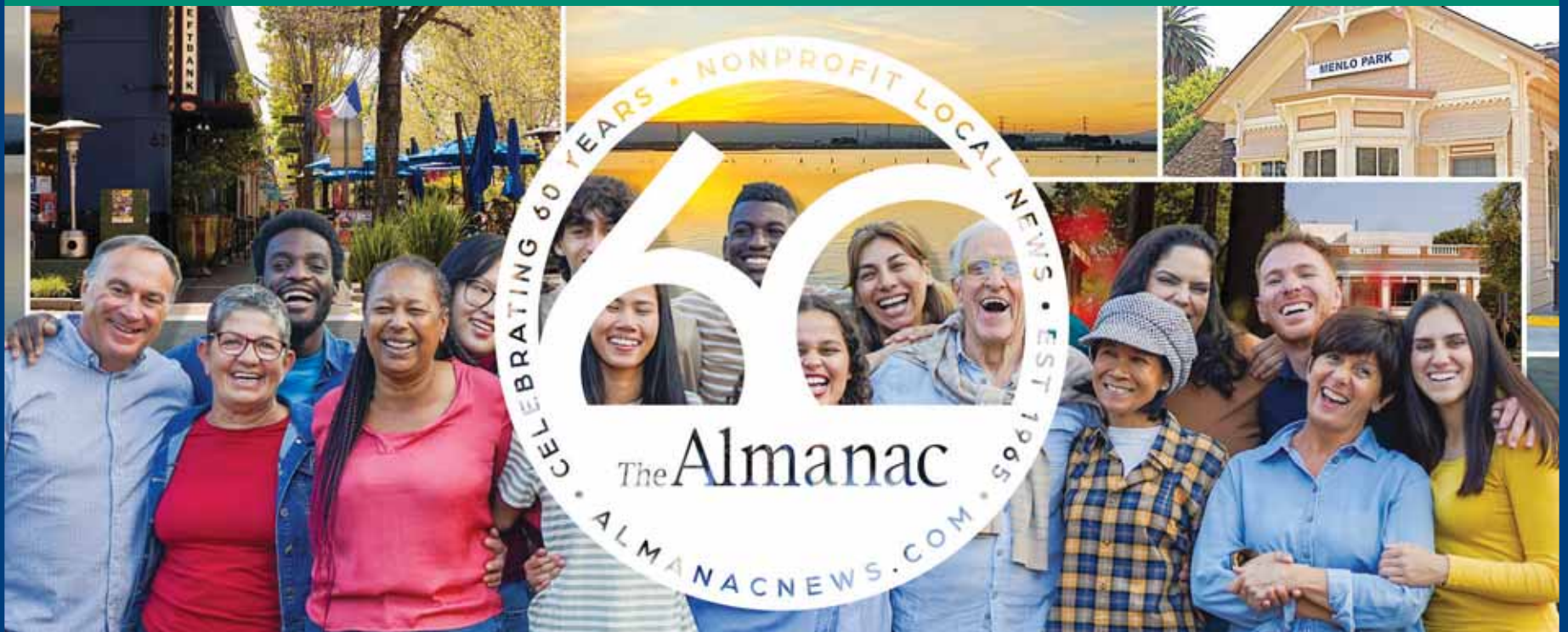
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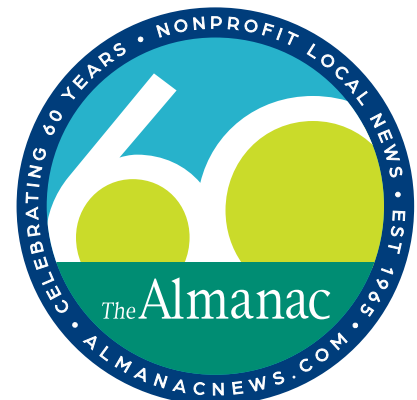


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Courtesy N17

N17 released updated renderings of its proposal for a large multi-use development at 80 Willow Road in Menlo Park, at the former Sunset Magazine campus.

State backs controversial skyscraper proposal at old Sunset Magazine campus in Menlo Park

By Neil Gonzales and Arden Margulis

A multi-use skyscraper proposal in Menlo Park has scored a big boost after California Attorney General Rob Bonta sent a letter to the city alleging that it violated state housing laws to prevent the controversial project from advancing.

Citing findings in the notice,

the project's developer has threatened to sue the city.

Since 2023, the developer N17 has been pursuing the towering, multi-building mixed-use community on the former Sunset Magazine headquarters at 80 Willow Road in the Linfield Oaks neighborhood. City leaders and residents have fought it at every turn, contending, among other reasons, that the project is way

out of scale and character for the area.

But in a 10-page letter to the city dated July 29, Bonta expressed concern that Menlo Park "has not handled the application in accordance with the Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act of 2022," also known as Assembly Bill 2011.

See **SKYSCRAPER**, page 19

Ex-San Mateo County college chancellor gets jail for perjury, tax fraud

By Arden Margulis

On July 31, Ronald Galatolo was sentenced to eight months in county jail after he was convicted of eight felonies for falsifying financial disclosures and tax filings and failing to properly report income and gifts stemming from his role as the San Mateo County Community College District chancellor.

Superior Court Judge Leland Davis III said he had "extreme difficulties" believing that

Galatolo was remorseful at the sentencing. The San Mateo County District Attorney's Office had sought prison time for Galatolo while his attorney, Charles Smith III, asked for probation.

In addition to eight months in jail, Galatolo will be required to complete two years of probation and complete 100 hours of community service. Davis ordered the community service be performed in a Latino community. "I'm sure you know why," the judge added.

Following sentencing, Smith told members of the press that he believed it was likely a reference to allegations made by a friend of Galatolo's ex-wife who said that Galatolo made a comment about Mexican students not paying tuition. That testimony was excluded from evidence during the trial.

Galatolo, who was facing a maximum sentence of seven years and four months in prison, was taken into custody

See **GALATOLO**, page 20

Too many horses? Woodside's stable rules come under scrutiny

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

When Munish Manrao and his family moved into a home on Glenrag Way in Woodside, they brought their palomino horse, Bling. Two years later, they brought a second horse, Billie, onto the 0.45-acre property, which has about 8,000 square feet of equestrian space. And that's where Manrao ran into trouble.

Woodside's municipal code requires at least 1 acre of land for two horses. It's a rule that local equestrians say is antiquated, but that Manrao's next-door neighbor wants to see enforced.

A stable exception for Manrao was approved by the town's Planning Commission in July, but thanks to an appeal, it will soon be facing the Town Council for a final decision.

Manrao said he learned that Woodside's 1-acre rule aimed to prevent horses from overgrazing when they were kept in open spaces and would kick up dirt on hillsides, making areas prone to landslides. These days, the majority of horses are fed hay and kept in stables.

"As long as (horses) have adequate space, cleanliness, ventilation, the overall size of the property should not make that much difference," said Nancy Atkinson, a member of the Livestock and Equine Heritage Committee.

Manrao said the recent approval of his stable exception, which would allow up to four horses per acre, could set a precedent for other Woodside equestrians seeking to build backyard barns on smaller properties. John Clark, his neighbor who filed the appeal, believes that this exception goes against the town's guidelines and argues that town staff should be held accountable for enforcing them.

Clark also pointed out that stable permits are not transferable. Manrao said that he wasn't aware of this rule and had no issues when he obtained his first permit by filing a name change on the previous owner's renewal. He has continued to renew the permit under his name for 10 years, ever since he bought the property in 2015.

Every horse is required to have a permit in Woodside. Manrao said he didn't know that he had to immediately obtain a permit for his second horse until Clark alerted the town staff about Billie, at which point he applied for a stable exception. Manrao explained that he was going to wait until the permit had to be renewed to change the number of horses from one to two.

When Manrao was contacted by the town about having an unpermitted horse, he was also

See **STABLE RULES**, page 20



Michael Molcsan

A San Mateo County bailiff places handcuffs on Ronald Galatolo following his sentencing in Redwood City on July 31.

New state law paves way for 30-unit townhome development in Atherton

Glenwood Avenue project taps SB79, which allows multifamily housing near transit stops

By Arden Margulis

Atherton, a town known for single-family homes on spacious lots, could soon see a proposed 30-unit townhome development. A Cupertino-based developer submitted a preliminary application that takes advantage of a new state law that allows denser housing near transit.

On July 9, AlphaX RE Capital Inc. filed an application under Senate Bill 79 to replace a single-family home on a 1-acre lot at 110 Glenwood Ave. with five townhome buildings totaling 30 units, with six of them designated affordable units. The proposed buildings would be three stories and up to 45 feet tall.

SB 79, which took effect July 1, requires cities to allow multifamily housing near transit stations. In Atherton, sites within a quarter-mile of a transit stop can build housing up to 75 feet



Courtesy town of Atherton

AlphaX RE Capital submitted a preliminary application for a 30-unit townhome development at 110 Glenwood Ave. in Atherton, near Nativity School. Renderings show what the five-unit buildings may look like.

tall, up to 120 units per acre and with building space equal to 3.5 times the lot size.

While the Atherton Caltrain station has been closed for years and does not qualify under the law, seven parcels in Atherton are within a quarter-mile of the Menlo Park Caltrain station's pedestrian access.

The Glenwood Avenue site sits at the corner of Glenwood and Laurel Street, near Nativity School, in a neighborhood of single-family homes.

Of the six affordable units, three would be restricted to households earning less than 50% of the area median income (AMI), and three would be reserved for households earning between 80% and 120% of AMI, according to the preliminary application. In 2026, the AMI for a family of four is \$200,800.

Town officials said the application is in the early stages of review.

According to its website,

AlphaX RE Capital is a Bay Area real estate investment firm that builds and manages properties. The firm says it manages more than \$500 million in assets and has built more than 1,000 units. The Glenwood property is owned by Eraline LLC, which shares a registered address with AlphaX.

AlphaX did not respond to a request for comment. ■

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

San Mateo County college district asks voters to extend bond measure in November

By Sydney Feldman

This November, San Mateo County voters will be asked to extend an existing \$848 million bond to support improvements to

60-year-old facilities at the county's three community college campuses.

The San Mateo County Community College District's measure does not increase taxes — it only extends the

existing rate. Currently the district estimates the cost to property owners is \$10.50 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation, with the potential to reach \$18 per \$100,000 of assessed valuation, according to the district's tax resolution statement. The tax rate extension would remain in effect through the fiscal year ending in 2049.

The district is eyeing improvements to aging infrastructure such as roofs and flooring, plumbing systems and lighting at all three campuses. It is also hoping to pursue a number of campus-specific projects, including updating the 50-year-old fine arts facility at Cañada College in Woodside and adding a new athletic center to Skyline College in San Bruno.

County voters have previously supported three of the general obligation bond measures put forth by the district, the most recent being \$388 million Measure H in 2014.

At a meeting on July 29, public commenters encouraged the community college board to focus on modernization over reconstruction to preserve historic architecture. Josh Weinberg, a student at the College of San Mateo,

pointed to the neo-formalist architecture of the campus buildings, some of which were designed by prominent architect John Carl Warnecke. One of the most well-known examples of neo-formalism is Lincoln Center in New York City.

"I urge you to look at renovation ... great architecture can transcend generations and age," Weinberg said.

Board members said that they would include those considerations in their construction plans.

"We will prioritize modernization over reconstruction at every turn, and I support the idea that we honor the existing architecture," said Chancellor Melissa Moreno.

District-commissioned polls conducted over the last year suggest voters are in favor of a bond extension, with the most recent numbers showing support at around 65%, 10 points above the required 55% to pass.

The board of trustees voted unanimously to put the bond extension measure on the Nov. 3 general election ballot. ■

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

TOWN OF WOODSIDE 2955 Woodside Road Woodside, CA 94062

PUBLIC NOTICE OF ADOPTION ORDINANCE 2026-650

ORDINANCE OF THE TOWN COUNCIL OF THE TOWN OF WOODSIDE AMENDING MUNICIPAL CODE CHAPTERS 151 (SITE DEVELOPMENT/DRIVEWAY) 153 (ZONING) TO UPDATE REGULATIONS FOR ACCESSORY DWELLING UNITS (ADUS) TO ALLOW ADDITIONAL FLEXIBILITY FOR THE CONSTRUCTION OF ADUS, SUCH AS AMENDING REQUIREMENTS FOR SECOND DRIVEWAYS, DEVELOPMENT WITHIN BASIC SETBACKS, FLOOR AREA EXCEPTIONS, INCREASE IN THE NUMBER OF ADUS ALLOWED ON LOTS LESS THAN ONE ACRE, AND OTHER UPDATES NECESSARY TO BE CONSISTENT WITH CURRENT STATE LAW; AND AN UPDATE TO PAVED AREA AND SURFACE COVERAGE EXCEPTIONS RELATED TO THE INSTALLATION OF SURFACE COVERAGE AT ADUS AND OTHER BUILDINGS FOR INCREASED FIRE SAFETY.

This Ordinance was introduced on the 23rd day of June, 2026, and was passed and adopted by the Town Council on the 28th day of July, 2026, by the following vote:

AYES, COUNCILMEMBERS	Aburish, Brown, Goeld, Wall, and Mayor Dombkowski
NOES	None
ABSENT	None
ABSTAIN	None

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The Almanac
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Sobrato fast-tracks 316 apartments in Menlo Park Gateway project

By Neil Gonzales

The Sobrato Organization is aiming to break ground on 316 apartment units in Menlo Park sooner rather than later amid improving conditions in the Bay Area rental-housing market.

The 316 apartments in a five-story building are part of a planned redevelopment of vacant land in a fast-evolving part of the Bayfront area near Meta's headquarters. The project by the Mountain View-based developer also features 116 for-sale townhomes in three-story buildings for a total of 432 dwellings.

On July 27, the Menlo Park Planning Commission unanimously approved revisions to the project known as 123 Independence Dr., allowing among other adjustments for Sobrato to proceed with the apartment and townhome components on potentially different phases or timelines.

"The market conditions are benefiting apartment projects to move forward right now," Caroline Layden, senior development manager for Sobrato, told the commission during the meeting.

According to a multifamily market report by real estate firm Marcus & Millichap, rent growth in the San Francisco metropolitan area is forecast to reach 5.2% this year, bringing the average monthly rent to \$3,270. That would be the second-highest rate among major markets nationwide, driven by gains of roughly 6% in San Francisco and 4% in San Mateo County.

In comparison, "the townhome market varies almost day to day, depending both on local and macroeconomic conditions," Layden told commissioners. The revisions to the plan "just give us that extra level of flexibility and certainty for a townhome developer to come in and feel confident in the execution of the project."

She noted that Sobrato originally intended to partner with a townhome developer for that part of the project.

"We don't have that capability in-house really to do that," she said of townhome construction. A townhome developer is "able to provide a much better experience in that delivery both for the community and the ultimate residents of the project."

As also previously planned, she said, Sobrato is collaborating with the nonprofit housing organization Habitat for Humanity to build 18 affordable townhomes.

According to a staff report,



Courtesy city of Menlo Park

A rendering of the Sobrato Organization's development plans for 123 Independence Dr. in Menlo Park.

56 units on the apartment side would be affordable. The project would also include about 2,000 square feet of ground-floor commercial space and a public paseo, or pedestrian pathway.

Among the plan changes that Sobrato requested was to do the paseo in phases with some temporary elements until the complete build-out over time, the report said.

"This is an important project," Commissioner Katie Ferrick said before she and her colleagues voted for the project revisions. Ferrick said she's pleased there are continuing efforts "to make sure that these 432 multifamily dwelling units are happening."

Sobrato still needs other approvals to start actual construction, and if appealed, the project would go before the Menlo Park City Council.

The project has been in the planning process since 2023 and is in an area experiencing a lot of new residential and commercial activity. Nearby are the 483-unit multifamily development Lume, formerly known as Menlo Uptown, and the office-and-hotel campus Menlo Gateway, where cloud-computing company Snowflake has made its headquarters.

During public comments, Dawn Aveggio expressed neighborhood concerns about ongoing construction impacts, although she does endorse the Sobrato project.

"While I understand and support the thoughtful development, I am concerned about the requested revisions to allow infinite project phasing that could significantly extend the impacts without providing neighbor property owners with adequate provisions or certainty," said Aveggio, who owns property close by on Jefferson Drive.

"To date, our property has already been affected by the construction-related activities," she said. "If the city is allowing extended or infinite phasing schedule, there should also be some clear timelines, enforceable

completion requirements and accountability measures to ensure that the temporary conditions do not become permanent burdens on our neighboring properties."

Neighbors can reach out to Sobrato — including the on-site superintendent and Layden herself — regarding any issue they have, she said. They "are happy to set up a meeting and walk the site and make sure we're addressing any concerns. We definitely want to be good neighbors."

Sobrato knows "that there's a fair amount of construction in addition to our project in the neighborhood," Layden also said. "So we completely understand frustration with just general construction traffic, including roadway work."

Sobrato spokesperson Lisa Giblin told The Almanac in an email that the apartment construction is expected to start in the fourth quarter of this year, pending permit approvals, and finish in the first half of 2029.

"The project also includes roughly 3.1 acres of open space with about 1.1 acres publicly accessible to Menlo Park residents and Bayfront neighbors not only project residents," Giblin said. "The development reflects Sobrato's commitment to long-term community investment, addressing the Bay Area's structural housing shortage where the need is most acute." ■

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LEHUA GREENMAN



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REAL ESTATE Q&A

by Monica Corman



How Will Insurance Be Affected By the Fires?

Dear Monica: Will the fires, smoke and heat we are seeing in the West and the rest of the world mean we won't be able to find affordable homeowner's insurance? Judy S.

Dear Judy: There are many fires in California this year already, some of which started this week. Active fires are in varying degrees of containment, and the worst fire season is still ahead this Fall. Last year's Los Angeles fires showed that large urban areas can also burn with catastrophic and costly results.

It's not known how insurance companies will react. Some will leave the state as they have in the past, and it is certain that rates will go up. Global warming is a long-term issue, and long-term strategies are needed to live with this reality. Insurance is only one part of this.

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Two candidates enter race for open seats on Woodside Town Council

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

Two candidates have qualified to run for Woodside Town Council open seats in the November election: Planning Commissioner Lyle Weaver for District 2 and Circulation Committee member Dan Druker for District 3.

Incumbents Brian Dombkowski and Dick Brown both said they plan to exit from the Town Council when their terms end. Their replacements could have their hands full, as difficult decisions about the Town Center Area Plan update and the state-mandated housing element are on the horizon.

Lyle Weaver

Weaver and his family have lived in Woodside for 24 years, and he's spent 10 years volunteering with the Alpine Little League, local scouting groups and has volunteered on Valley Presbyterian Church's financial audit team.

Now that his kids are in high school and college, Weaver said he's putting his volunteerism into civic affairs. Weaver has been on the Woodside Planning

Commission for four years and served as its chair for a two-year term. He also represents District 2 on the Town Center Area Plan Citizen Advisory Committee.

Weaver said he hopes to contribute his decision-making skills to the Town Council as it prepares to update the Town Center Area Plan, which outlines policies and standards for the area, and to meet growing demands for more housing from the state. Weaver said his engineering background in medical devices gave him the experience to make decisions under physical and regulatory constraints.

"We do have some hard decisions that we're going to have to face over the next few years, and I think I can contribute to that by being a person that has a lot of experience in collaborative decision-making," he said.

Weaver said he foresees traffic circulation, deciding where to locate new housing and adapting to the growth of the Bay Area as being crucial challenges that will need to be addressed in the update of the Town Center Area Plan.

Woodside is having a hard



Courtesy Lyle Weaver and Dan Druker

Woodside Planning Commissioner Lyle Weaver, left, and Circulation Committee member Dan Druker.

time attracting young families due to its unaffordability, Weaver said. He's noticed that enrollment at Woodside Elementary has been trending down as fewer families with young children move into town.

"Having alternative forms of housing that would have a lower price point would provide an opportunity both for younger couples with children and also for seniors that maybe don't want to have the burden of having a larger property," he said.

While on the Planning Commission, Weaver said he's worked with municipal codes, variances and making recommendations for the housing element. He said he is proud of

being able to work with a team that addresses matters before the commission in a "calm, collegial and straightforward manner." "It is always better to be proactive rather than reactive," he said.

For District 2, which includes neighborhoods near Kings Mountain Road and a small portion of Emerald Lake Hills, he aims to address various infrastructure improvement projects that have been long stalled including drainage and bridge repairs. Weaver said he also wants to prioritize improvements to the walking path along the south side of Woodside Road between Woodside Elementary and Kings Mountain Road.

"We have a bridge on Kings Mountain Road that was identified 15 years ago as being in need of long-term infrastructure improvements, and that hasn't happened yet," said Weaver. "I think it would be good to see Woodside have a long-term prioritized list of infrastructure improvements that the town would work on."

Information on Weaver's campaign is at weaver-for-woodside-town-council.org.

Dan Druker

Druker is a Bay Area native who has lived in Los Altos Hills, Palo Alto and Woodside. Currently, the father of five lives in the Woodside Heights neighborhood.

Druker is active in his local homeowners association and serves on the Circulation Committee and Town Center Area Plan Citizen Advisory Committee. It was through his role in the HOA that he began to step into public service, representing Woodside residents and engaging with state agencies such as Caltrans on local projects, he said.

Druker said he's been active in the ongoing work to increase safety near the intersection of Highways 84 and 35, beautify Woodside Road and improve pedestrian and bike safety on Woodside Road near the Interstate 280 exit.

"My motivation is entirely about public service, giving back to the community and helping people," Druker said. "I really love Woodside and I find public service to be really rewarding and valuable."

See **WOODSIDE COUNCIL**, page 20

Trade Traffic for Waterfront Living

Less than an hour from the East Bay, Delta Coves is attracting Bay Area homebuyers seeking a waterfront lifestyle surrounded by open space and natural beauty. Located on Bethel Island at the gateway to more than 1,000 miles of California Delta waterways, the private community features a swimmable lagoon, private boat docks and resort-style amenities. Homes by Blue Mountain Communities and Davidson Communities range from approximately 1,600 to more than 4,000 square feet, with prices from the \$500s to the \$2 millions. Residents enjoy boating, paddleboarding, fishing, fitness facilities, social events and year-round recreation on and around the water.



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Edward M. Hamilton Jr.

February 14, 1934 – July 13, 2026

Edward M. Hamilton Jr. — “Ed” — passed away on July 13, 2026, in Redwood City, California. He was 92.

Born February 14, 1934, in San Francisco, California, Ed was the son of Edward M. Hamilton and Marion Goodfellow Hamilton. He graduated from Town School for Boys in San Francisco, then Thatcher School in Ojai, California, and later Stanford University, and served two years in the Army Reserves in Omaha, Nebraska. He went on to work for Wells Fargo and Ford Motor Company before starting his own commercial dry cleaning business, which grew to three locations at its peak. After selling the business, he found time to volunteer with the Boys Club of America, before eventually joining his wife, Terry, in selling residential real estate.

Ed raised his family in Atherton before later moving to Redwood City, where he and Terry lived for over 20 years. He was a member of the Society of California Pioneers, and for many years belonged to both the Menlo Circus Club and Menlo Country Club, where he could regularly be found either on the tennis court, the golf course, or at the table for a game of dominoes or bridge. Ed was blessed with a remarkable memory and a keen mind — outstanding with names, faces, and historical facts — a trait those who knew him well came to count on and admire.

Ed was an avid Bay Area sports fan through and through. He was a die-hard “Old Faithful” 49ers fan and a season ticket holder at Kezar Stadium back in the day, as well as a devoted Giants fan and an eager follower of Stanford Cardinal football closer to home.

Ed was preceded in death by Terry, his wife of nearly 66 years, and his daughter Lindsay. He is survived by his children, Leslie (Jim), Ian (Kim), Doug (Dori) along with 10 grandchildren, 17 great-grandchildren, and cousins Jean, Winston, and Geoffrey.

To the very end, Ed stayed curious about the people he loved — always asking after the latest news in the lives of his grandchildren and great-grandchildren, ready for the next update. An enthusiastic reader, he kept his mind sharp and his curiosity wide open. And true to form, he never stopped entertaining those around him — often delighting his care team and family with his humor and an array of voices and characters he’d been perfecting for decades. Ed brought warmth and laughter wherever he went, right up until the end.

In lieu of gifts or flowers, please consider giving a donation to the St. Francis Center of Redwood City — an organization with a rich history helping the least of these in our community. Thank you!

PAID OBITUARY

Stanford drops Flock cameras amid national backlash

University to switch to system that does not allow third-party searches

By Gennady Sheyner

Stanford University has terminated its contract with Flock Safety, a company whose license plate cameras have prompted backlash from privacy advocates across the nation.

The university announced on Aug. 4 that it has ended its agreement with Flock and has replaced the Flock system with one that does not allow data to be accessible by any third party, according to the Stanford Report, a university publication. In making the switch, Stanford is joining a growing number of jurisdictions that have either ditched Flock in recent months or have added new restrictions.

In many instances, city leaders were surprised to learn that the license plate data that was captured by Flock cameras was used by other agencies in violation of local policies. As this publication has previously reported, hundreds of out-of-state agencies had searched Palo Alto’s license plate data because of a nationwide search feature, which Flock disabled for Palo Alto in October 2024 and for all of California in March 2025. State law has made it illegal to share license plate data with out-of-state or federal agencies since 2016.

Mountain View opted to terminate its contract with Flock in February, after the Mountain View Voice reported about widespread data breaches, while San

Jose added new limits on data storage. East Palo Alto opted earlier this year to renew its contract with Flock, defying critics who contended that the data may be used for immigration enforcement. Palo Alto has agreed to do an audit before it considers its future partnership with the company, and the results are expected to be presented to the City Council later this year.

In Sacramento, lawmakers are considering legislation by Sen. Sabrina Cervantes that would add safeguards to Flock data, including a 30-day limit for storing license plate data unless it involves a search for missing people, according to CalMatters. The bill would also ban law enforcement agencies from entering into contracts with camera companies that federal and out-of-state police can search by default.

Other states are also seeing growing resistance to Flock’s surveillance technology. In Winona, Minn., people recently cut down all eight of the department’s Flock cameras, according to the local newspaper, Winona Post. In Dallas, Texas, police reported that about 25 Flock cameras had been vandalized, according to NBV DFW. And in North Carolina, a county commissioner barred dozens of Flock cameras from citing their concerns at a recent meeting, 404 Media reported.

Stanford is replacing its Flock system with a Genetec Cloudrunner system, which will collect still images of vehicle information at campus entrances, according to the Stanford Report. The data will be stored in a cloud server for less than an hour, where it will not be accessible by any third party.

According to the university, the data would then be automatically transferred to a server that Stanford controls and the data will be permanently deleted from the cloud.

The university, which contracts with the Santa Clara County Sheriff’s Office for public safety services, began using license plate cameras in 2024 as a tool to investigate crimes. According to the university, the cameras have assisted the Department of Public Safety with numerous investigations. They have led to arrests of one serial thief who stole property from multiple offices and another serial thief who stole packages from various areas of campus. Chief Laura Wilson from Stanford Department of Public Safety called the cameras “an important investigative tool.”

The university stated that it does not provide other law enforcement agencies or third parties with access to its license plate reader camera system. However, Palo Alto’s network audit of Flock data shows that the university police conducted dozens of searches in a database that included Palo Alto’s cameras as recently as the end of June.

Patrick Dunkley, the university’s vice provost for institutional equity, access and community, noted that the new system, unlike Flock, is “designed to use within a single institution.”

“Flock is built as a shared network with the capability for data to move beyond a single institution, even if that’s not how we chose to use it,” Dunkley said in a statement to this publication.

He said the university is not aware of any third-party access to its data.

“The new system does not have third-party access built into the architecture,” Dunkley said. “It’s a tool for Stanford’s Department of Public Safety to investigate specific incidents on our campus, not a system that could be connected to a broader network.” ■

Staff Writer Riley Cooke contributed to this report.

Email Gennady Sheyner at gsheyner@almanacnews.com.

Gerard (Jerry) George McCormick

Gerard (Jerry) George McCormick passed away peacefully at his home, lovingly surrounded by family and friends, in Menlo Park, CA on Tuesday, July 14th, 2026. Survived by his devoted wife of 62 years, Rosie E. McCormick (née Yoshifuji), his daughter Erin Eggleton (Keith), and his son Cullen McCormick. Gerard was born to William V. & Kathleen B. McCormick in Philadelphia, PA on May 6, 1940, the youngest of eleven children. As a devoted grandfather, Gerard (Jerry) is sadly missed by his grandchildren Charlie, Maggie, and Annie. Jerry leaves behind a legacy of love and devotion with his extended family who reside in the US and Ireland. May his soul rest easy in the arms of the Lord. The love and laughter he shared will be carried closely in our hearts.



PAID OBITUARY



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Injured rider and horse face long recovery after Woodside hit-and-run

By Jennifer Yoshikoshi

A month after Redwood City resident Uriel Chavez was injured in a hit-and-run incident while riding horseback on Woodside Road, he and his horse, Regidor, are still recovering from their injuries. Neither of them will be able to ride for months.

Chavez was on his way to the Horse Park at Woodside around 6:45 p.m. on July 1 when a white SUV collided with his horse at the intersection of Woodside Road and Hacienda Drive, knocking both of them down.

Chavez, who is renting a barn in Woodside, said he had been taking the same route to the horse park for years and had never had an accident while riding in the bike lane.

"We probably got struck at 40 mph, and when I rolled down the hill, I thought, 'I'm dead.' Like it was pretty much over for me," he said.

Chavez recalls getting thrown off of his horse, landing on the hood of the car and falling down the hill to the right of the road with his horse, who landed on top of him. Regidor, an Andalusian stallion, later ran down Woodside

Road and was stopped by residents in the area.

The accident injured Chavez's back, leaving a 12-inch scar from a cut he sustained during the fall. Since then, he said he's experienced chronic pain in his lower back, knees, ankles, elbows and neck.

Regidor had visible wounds on his hind legs after the collision and while his cuts have healed, the horse's internal injuries are still causing pain in his neck, chest, knees and hind legs.

Kristina Chancholo, founder of EquiKneads, which provides physical therapy for horses, is treating Regidor for his injuries. She said the horse has lost weight and muscles despite being hand-walked twice a day. She said other horses she's rehabilitated don't usually lose muscle unless there is more to their injuries.

"The horse is not moving normally. He usually has energy and he's very spunky, and he jumps around, and he's just really not (doing that)," said Chancholo. "I don't see Uriel riding him for probably six months."

Chavez is worried that his horse will have to retire once he recovers from his injuries and will never return to his normal self, he said.

Regidor also might no longer be safe to ride, if he's traumatized by cars and develops bad habits, Chavez said.

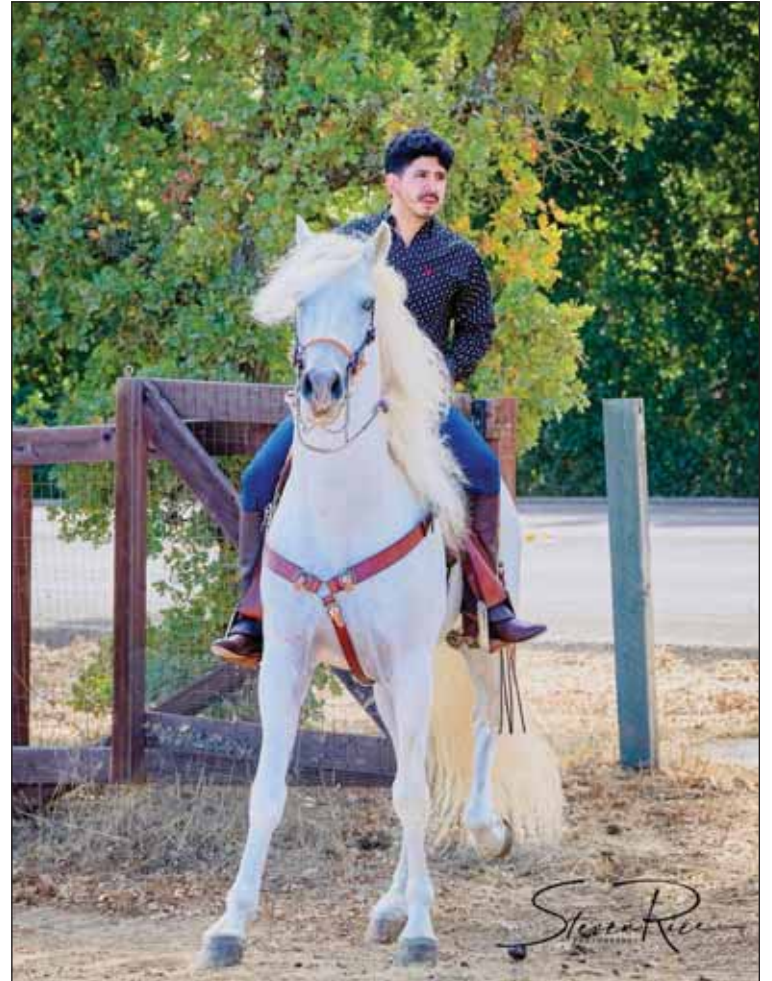
"It's a lot to worry about and a lot of expenses at this moment," he said. "I can't even do what I love anymore. I can't even ride for another two to three months."

Since the accident, Chavez said he feels wary about being out on the road. He thinks the vegetation in the area should be cut down to increase the visibility of the bike lane for drivers and that police should be monitoring the area better.

"The road's not safe. People are irresponsible," Chavez said. "It's a horse area, so people should be careful. If I had been biking that day, the driver would have killed me for sure."

Investigators have identified the vehicle and a possible suspect, according to the San Mateo County Sheriff's Office. The case has been forwarded to the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office which will weigh whether to press charges. ■

Email Staff Writer
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Courtesy Uriel Chavez

Uriel Chavez riding his horse prior to the hit-and-run in Woodside that injured them both.

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A homegrown history

The Almanac's first 60 years, according to its staff

By Almanac News staff

On Sept. 8, 1965, the first issue of the Country Almanac appeared in mailboxes all over Portola Valley and Woodside.

The paper was the creation of three Portola Valley women who thought local issues were not getting enough attention from the daily papers of that day, including the Palo Alto Times and the Redwood City Tribune.

A Portola Valley school bond measure had been defeated. Supporters blamed, in part, the lack of coverage in the dailies.

Three young mothers filled the void. Jean Heflin, a member of the Portola Valley Conservation Committee, introduced Betty Fry, who had business experience, to Hedy Boissevain, a former women's page editor for the Palo Alto Times.

After the trio gathered for an April lunch in a eucalyptus grove on the Stanford campus, their idea for a community newspaper took off. The founders held more meetings, made plans, networked and enlisted the support, including financial backing, of others in the community.

'We knew we'd arrived when we were made marshals of the Woodside May Day Parade.'

BETTY FRY, ALMANAC CO-FOUNDER

That four-page first issue featured a big picture of Susie Brown getting ready for her first day of kindergarten.

For the first months, the paper was put out on the founders' kitchen counters and dining room tables, spilling into garages. Their teenage kids enlisted their friends to help tie and address piles of papers. "It was fun," Fry recalled.

Jane Coladarci, who

later became a mainstay of The Almanac's advertising department, recalls subscribing to the paper when it launched for \$2 a year.

By 1966, the paper had moved to an office under the Woodside post office. Later, it occupied the old Spanish-style telephone exchange building at the corner of Woodside and Cañada roads in Woodside from 1974 until it moved to Menlo Park in 1985.

Those first four-page issues featured a major article, at least one big picture, school and church notes, a bulletin board and a column by a local writer.

Advertising got a big boost in 1971 when Mardell Ward, former editor of the Menlo Park Recorder, took over advertising, a position she held for 18 years. Coladarci, who turned up on the doorstep one day in 1974, became the powerhouse of the advertising department until she retired in 2004.

"I loved it," said Coladarci, who started as a receptionist. "I answered the phone, took care of the mail and subscriptions, did the shopping, went to the bank, took dictation from Betty Fry and did accounts receivable."

She was good at it, but had other talents. Ward suggested she try out advertising.

"Well, they turned me loose with no instruction, no territory, but I was determined to make a go of it," Coladarci said. "I went after anything from Mountain View to Burlingame."

She met with success and was given a full-time sales job, which she held for 25 years.

"We started getting support," Fry said for a 2005 Almanac article. "We knew we'd arrived when we were made marshals of the Woodside May Day Parade."

Starting in 1969, the paper hired more local reporters, including Marion Softky, Marjorie Mader and Jane Knoerle. Pam Jones, who came in 1975 as the first full-time employee in the news department, recalled: "I've had city officials tell me they had to

read The Almanac to find out what went on at a meeting."

"The Hedy-Betty years were very special," Marion Softky wrote in a 2011 obituary on Betty Fry. "I could not imagine a better pair of bosses. Betty, in particular, ran a tight but pleasant ship. She was very sharp, very thorough and very efficient. I am immensely grateful to both of them for starting me on a career that has been of great personal satisfaction, and I hope public service."

Softky died late that same year. As the 1970s waned, so did the commitment of the editor, Boissevain, and the publisher, Fry. Boissevain's husband, Al, had retired and wanted to grow wine grapes in the Gold Country; Fry didn't want to run the paper alone.

Mort and Elaine Levine, who had built a chain of 16 local papers in Santa Clara County, proved ideal buyers. They had sold their chain, and then found they weren't ready to retire.

The Levines modernized and expanded the Country Almanac. By 1985, they bought the dying Menlo Park Recorder, expanded circulation to cover Menlo Park and Atherton, and moved offices from Woodside to downtown Menlo Park.

The Levines also modernized production. By the time the paper was sold again in 1993, reporters wrote on Mac computers, soon to be PCs.

As the 1990s surged in, the Levines got ready to retire again. This time they sold the paper to Embarcadero Publishing Company, which was founded in 1979 to publish the Palo Alto Weekly.

"The Almanac was a good comprehensive community paper that people valued," Mort Levine said. "It was a totally satisfying time in our lives."

In a sense, the purchase of The Almanac by Embarcadero Publishing represented the closing of a circle.

Palo Alto Weekly publisher Bill Johnson grew up in the Frys' neighborhood in Portola Valley. "To have the mother of a friend



Embarcadero Media file photo

The first issue of the Country Almanac published on Sept. 8, 1965.

start a newspaper and have it succeed was one of my inspirations for a career in journalism," he said.

The new management under Publisher Tom Gibboney brought in more modern computers, coordinated advertising and production systems, and put out new publications. And the paper dropped "Country" from its name to become The Almanac.

Over the years, one of The Almanac's best-known staffers was staff photographer Carol Ivie, who started taking pictures for The Almanac in 1976 and continued, literally, until the day she died on June 5, 2005. She often photographed the children of parents she had photographed when they were kids. Ivie once got knocked over taking pictures at a football game and ended up in the emergency room.

In 1995, The Almanac moved

from 855 Oak Grove Ave. in downtown Menlo Park to larger quarters in a new building at 3525 Alameda de las Pulgas in West Menlo Park, where it spent 15 years next to Lutticken's deli.

In the last week of December 2010, The Almanac staff moved to the new Embarcadero Media building on Cambridge Avenue in Palo Alto, joining the staffers of sister papers the Palo Alto Weekly and the Mountain View Voice in its third-floor newsroom.

By 2015, The Almanac had published 2,600 issues, and over the course of those first 50 years, evolved into much more than a weekly paper. Its news team at the time, headed by longtime Editor Richard Hine and Associate Editor Renee Batti, spent at least as much time reporting for online and the

See **HISTORY**, page 18

Celebrate 60 years of The Almanac with us

The Almanac is closing out its 60th year as the Midpeninsula's trusted source for local news with a celebration! Join us at Fremont Park in Menlo Park for a fun evening listening to great music on Wednesday, Aug. 12. The Sun Kings, a fab Beatles tribute band, takes the stage at 6 p.m.

With support from the city of Menlo Park and Mark Zuckerberg and Priscilla Chan, The

Almanac is co-sponsoring this last summer concert of the season. Bring a picnic and a blanket or some lawn chairs to the park, located at the corner of Santa Cruz Avenue and Menlo Drive in downtown Menlo Park. When you're there, be sure to stop by our booth to meet the staff and win prizes, including limited edition 60th anniversary gear.



Embarcadero Media file photo

Betty Fry, left, and Hedy Boissevain at the Country Almanac.

From typewriters to the internet, longtime Almanac editor recalls changing times

Richard Hine led newsroom with integrity and affection for 30 years

By Rebecca Wallace

One Friday night in the early 1950s, Richard Hine sat in his Ohio dining room, gazing at a blank piece of paper. Pencil in hand, he picked up an issue of the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"I drew on the blank paper an alternative layout for the pictures, captions, headlines and stories," Hine later recalled. "How did I know that I was rehearsing for The Almanac, where I did this on Friday nights for nearly 30 years."

Around the same time, Hine, who was about 12, bought a toy printing press so he could cover his neighborhood's news. The Coit Road Post, all four pages of it, was born.

"One of my biggest stories was when a big snowstorm arrived, and I blasted a Page One banner headline, something like BLIZZARD HITS COIT ROAD," he said.

Community news is in Richard Hine's blood. When The Almanac hired him in 1988, the staff gained not only a top journalist but a leader and mentor who would shape countless careers — and shape the paper for decades to come.

In honor of The Almanac's 60th anniversary, a reporter spoke with Hine and his cohorts about his career as The Almanac's



Embarcadero Media file photo

When Richard Hine joined The Almanac as editor in 1988, typewriters were still the norm.

longest serving editor, which ended with his retirement in 2018. From typewriters to tech bros, Little League to high-speed rail, Hine has seen it all.

From copy boy to newsroom leader

Anyone who spent time in The Almanac newsroom with Hine could expect to hear a Cleveland Press anecdote. His connection with the paper went back to his toddlerhood.

"When I was 2 years old and my mom was in the hospital and the caretaker wasn't paying attention, I wandered away from home," he recalled. "The police were called and I was found at a home about a block away. A picture of me appeared at the top of Page 3 of that day's Press."

When he got older, Hine became a copy boy at The Press, under legendary editor Louie Seltzer. Seltzer was known for covering "every inch of the community." Hine took that approach to heart.

After graduating from Ohio University in journalism, he served in the Air Force in San Antonio, where he was head of the news service for base newspapers. On weekends, he covered stories for the San Antonio Express. Memorable interviews included Senate candidate George H.W. Bush and Texas Gov. John Connally, his arm still in a sling from the bullet wounds he received when President John F. Kennedy was assassinated.

Later, Hine wrote for the Dayton Daily News and Business Week before turning to corporate communications. But journalism called, and in 1983 he became editor of the San Francisco legal

newspaper The Recorder. He moved to The Almanac five years later.

'Run it through the typewriter again'

When Hine joined The Almanac, typewriters were still the norm. It wasn't for another few years that publisher and owner Mort Levine bought a bunch of Macs ("I think he went to a swap meet") and computerized the newsroom.

Hine found the Internet revolution fascinating. Still, he would famously complain that newsrooms were too quiet without the collegial clattering of typewriters.

He even waxed nostalgic about an early device with a particular quirk: If you quit a file, it would automatically erase everything below the cursor. Once, Hine had to rewrite a whole story from scratch in 15 minutes. But then, he said: "The second version I wrote was far better. Sometimes you want to throw away the first version of a story and then sit down again and think, 'What's really important?'"

That perspective served Hine well, and in turn served his writers well. Sean Howell, the Menlo Park beat reporter from 2008 to 2010, found Hine to be a fantastic mentor.

"What made Richard such a great editor was his ability to convey in just a few words how a story should be rewritten," Howell said. "He would home in on a structural issue that needed to be fixed or something you hadn't explained well, and the issues he put his finger on would unlock a better article."

"My favorite Richardism was

'run it through the typewriter again' — his way of conveying that an article wasn't working and that he trusted you to fix it."

Hine and his writers covered news large and small. He could find a story in the dullest press release or driest school board meeting. Reporters once teased him for turning a roadside pile of mulch into an entertaining photo caption.

Major news broke on his watch, of course. In 1989, the Loma Prieta earthquake struck when he was driving home to watch the World Series. For a weekly newspaper in those days, there was no way to swiftly report about the quake's local impact. "We had an entire week to write our stories," Hine said with a laugh.

A top local story in 2005 was the closure — and rocky reopening — of Kepler's Books & Magazines. Rory Brown, the Menlo Park reporter at the time, said he loved working under Hine's guidance.

"I was such a young reporter, and I felt very supported. Richard was so willing to give the time and effort to make sure I got this right, but also the confidence-boosting words of experience," he said.

Brown also extensively covered the efforts to bring high-speed rail to the area. There, Hine played a key role: He asked Brown to justify why each story was necessary.

"Richard was really good about going back to: 'Why do people care? What's different about this train story from the last train story?'" Brown said. "His expectations were really high, but also the willingness to trust his reporters."

From cover to cover

For Hine, high expectations go hand-in-hand with high standards. He has respect not only for the community, but for the role of journalism in the community.

That was clear to news editor Renee Batti, who worked with Hine for 27 years before retiring. The two of them made a powerful team, focused on details and deadlines, but quick to laugh together.

"Do you remember how he spoke so often, and with such high affection, about his early days training with professionals who insisted on high standards and integrity?" Batti said. "Those high journalistic standards were embedded in him, and when difficult decisions had to be made, his careful deliberation and concern for making the right call were apparent."

"Another observation I can offer after all those years of working with him: He cared deeply about the community The Almanac served. And that really mattered."

Hine also had affection for the staffers who made the paper what it was. Over the years, he worked closely with journalists who had been around for decades, including writers Marion Softky, Jane Knoerle and Marjorie Mader, and photographer Carol Ivie, all of whom were familiar faces throughout Almanac country. It's a painful part of the paper's lore that the very day that photographer Carol Ivie died in 2005, she had been on a photo assignment. "They were really out in the community," Hine said.

"When I met people, they would routinely say that they read the paper from cover to cover," he said. "I remember one guy saying, 'If I had to cancel the New York Times or The Almanac, I can't decide which one.'"

The Almanac is also the place where Hine met his wife, Jennifer Brown Hine, who worked in real estate advertising. Today, the pair are happily retired in Southern California.

But Hine still keeps up with The Almanac, and counts a number of his former reporters among his friends. When there's breaking news in West Menlo Park or Lindenwood or Ladera, that first text pinging on their phone just may be from their former editor, eager to talk about the story. ■

Rebecca Wallace is a contributing writer and former Almanac reporter.



Courtesy newspapers.com

The Almanac's longtime editor Richard Hine first made the news at the tender age of 2.

Reflecting on six decades of The Almanac

Reporters visit the Portola Valley Heritage Room

Story by Arden Margulis
Photos by Seeger Gray

On the eve of the end of The Almanac's 60th year of covering this remarkable community, our journalists traveled to the Portola Valley Library to look back at our past and help inform our future.

In the Portola Valley Library's Heritage Room sits a nearly complete run of The Almanac's newspapers, from the first issue published on Sept. 8, 1965 until 2003, when the newspapers stopped being bound into weighty tomes and stories were archived online. What began as a hand-assembled labor of love on the kitchen tables of three Portola Valley women has since blossomed into the newspaper of record for southern San Mateo County.

Today, The Almanac is powered by three San Mateo County natives: Editor Andrea Gemmet and reporters Jennifer Yoshikoshi and Arden Margulis.

The first time Gemmet was mentioned in the paper she now leads was 1990, in an article about scholarships received by members of Woodside High School's graduating class. Hired as a reporter after college, her first major byline was for an article about a Menlo Park resident who died in the crash of TWA flight 800 to Paris in the July 24, 1996 edition.

Beyond chronicling our own history, old editions provided a local perspective on some of the defining moments in American and world history. In the

aftermath of the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks, The Almanac spoke with the family of Portola Valley resident Andy Garcia, killed in the crash of United Flight 93 when passengers fought back against the hijackers. As the community mourned, Menlo Park's Ace Hardware sold out of American flags, and local residents volunteered to travel to New York to help search the rubble.

We also profiled Russian immigrants who found refuge at Ladera Community Church following the collapse of the Soviet Union. "People took to us so kindly, we couldn't imagine it could happen," Mikhail "Mischa" Kaluzhinsky told The Almanac about the Ladera community at the time. "The people are more wonderful than the California fresh fruits and vegetables."

Alongside the tragedies and triumphs, old editions of The Almanac preserve the everyday lives of the people who call this community home. They record where Menlo-Atherton High School students gathered for lunch in 1984, how local leaders confronted rising poverty among women and countless other stories that otherwise might not have made it into the historical record.

Familiar faces appeared throughout the decades. Portola Valley resident Andrew Browne was featured recalling his experience witnessing the bombing of Pearl Harbor when he was 14 years old. Now 98, Browne was profiled in May of this year along with photos of his weekly



From left: Almanac summer intern Sydney Feldman, Editor Andrea Gemmet and reporters Arden Margulis and Jennifer Yoshikoshi look through The Almanac's archives at the Portola Valley Library in Portola Valley on July 27.

vigil for tolerance on Alpine Road.

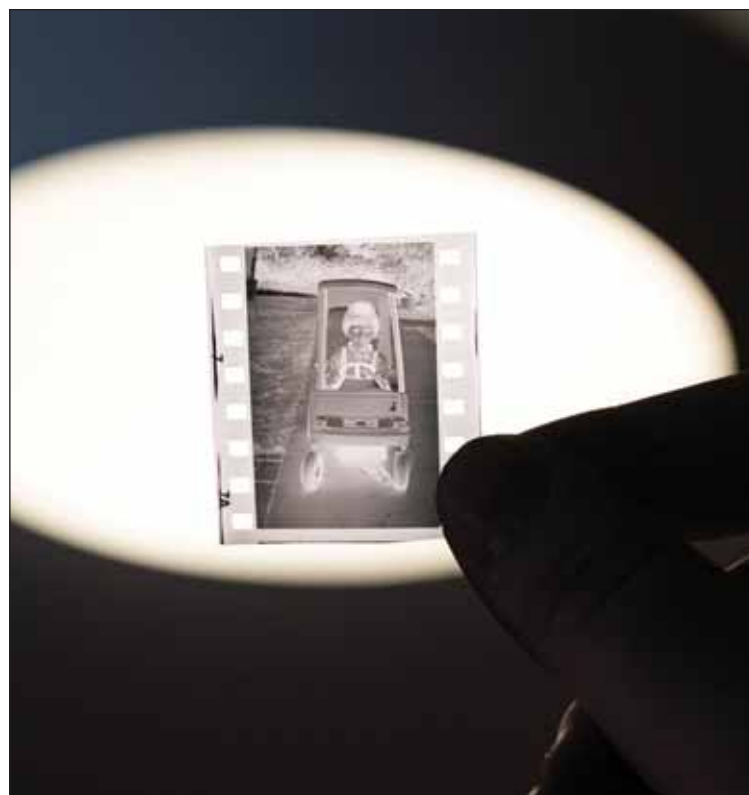
In a 1997 issue, we told readers about Ali El Safy opening his first restaurant, Bistro La Luna. Nowadays, El Safy, the owner of Bistro Vida and Bar Loretta, is well-known as an energetic advocate for downtown Menlo Park.

Together, our pages tell the story of 60 years of life on the Midpeninsula. We intend to keep telling those stories because 60 years from now, someone will pull a 2026 edition from a library shelf, flip through its pages and discover what life looked like in our communities today. ■

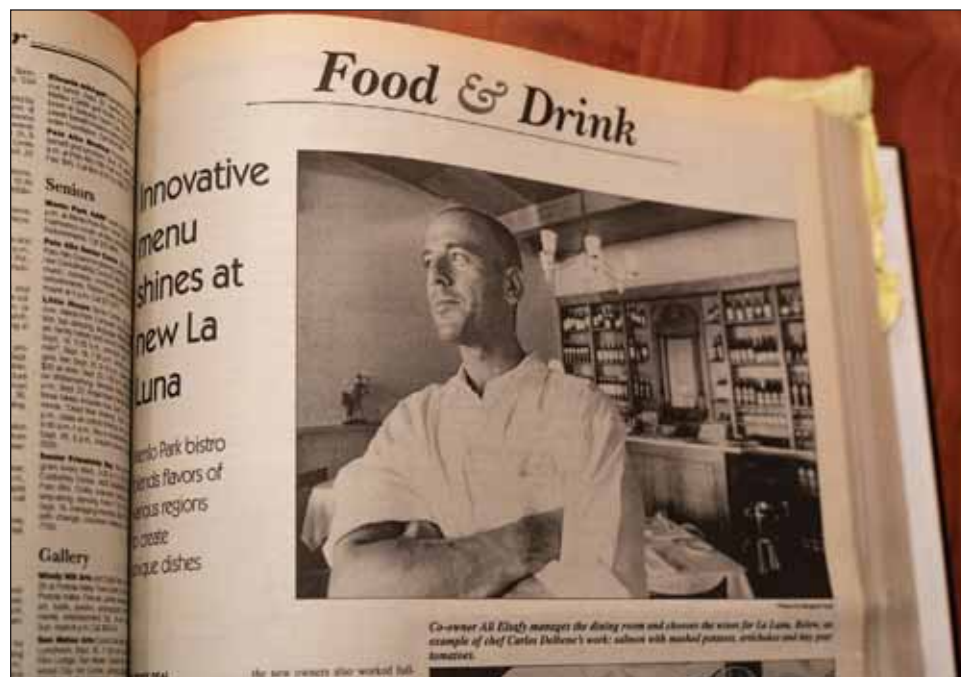
Email Staff Writer Arden Margulis at amargulis@almanacnews.com.

About the cover:

Photo courtesy Menlo Park Historical Association. Photo illustration by Shannon Corey.



Almanac reporter Arden Margulis holds up a photo negative taken by Marjorie Mader.

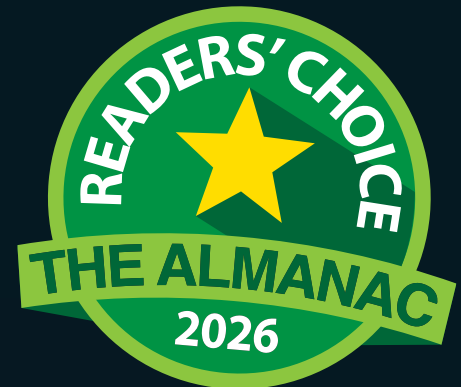


A picture of Ali El Safy in 1997, left, and the Sept. 19, 2001, edition of The Almanac in The Almanac's archives at the Portola Valley Library.



BEST AUTO REPAIR

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Portola Valley Garage

4170 Alpine Road, Portola Valley 650-851-7442



pvgarage.com





HISTORY

continued from page 14

daily email Express, as they did for the weekly paper.

“In 1989, the Loma Prieta earthquake struck the day after we went to press,” Hine recalled. “We had a whole week to develop stories and take pictures. Today, we’d be updating stories and photos around the clock.”

That was certainly the case in early 2020, when the COVID-19 pandemic hit and the country went into an unprecedented lockdown. With only a skeleton crew coming into the office,

most of The Almanac’s staff worked from home to provide readers news they could use about the deadly virus.

As businesses struggled and advertisers pulled back, The Almanac’s parent company restructured and laid off staff. Mountain View Voice Editor Andrea Gemmet, a former Almanac reporter, took over The Almanac newsroom and served as editor of both publications.

“Everyone was working non-stop to deliver vital information as well as chronicle the profound impacts the pandemic was having on every facet of life in our

‘To have the mother of a friend start a newspaper and have it succeed was one of my inspirations for a career in journalism.’

BILL JOHNSON,
PALO ALTO WEEKLY PUBLISHER

community,” Gemmet said. “To boost morale, the staff held virtual happy hours over Zoom.”

In 2021, a new sister publication launched, the online-only

Redwood City Pulse, led by Editor Michelle Iracheta. Almanac and Pulse staff collaborate to cover news in San Mateo County, allowing both publications to serve their readers with expanded news coverage.

The 2020s brought more significant changes for The Almanac and its parent organization. Embarcadero founder Johnson retired from day-to-day operations in 2023, with new CEO Adam Dawes overseeing the modernization of the company’s online platforms and its transition to a nonprofit. The Embarcadero Media Foundation

This history of The Almanac is largely based on accounts by the late longtime staffer Marion Softky, who wrote thousands of articles for The Almanac over 40 years.

launched in 2025, acknowledging both the increasingly challenging business model for local journalism and the wellspring of support from loyal readers.

Today, as The Almanac’s 60th year draws to a close, Gemmet and reporters Arden Margulis and Jennifer Yoshikoshi make up the full-time news staff. ■

Public Notices

ROBINSON & COMPANY REAL ESTATE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304442
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) ROBINSON & COMPANY REAL ESTATE , located at 3603 Alameda de las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025.
Registered owner(s):
ROBINSON FINANCIAL CORPORATION
3603 Alameda de las Pulgas
Menlo Park, CA 94025
State of Incorporation/Organization: CA
This business is conducted by: a Corporation.
Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 07/01/2026.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 14, 2026.
(ALM Jul 31, Aug 7, 14 and 21, 2026)

JML FIDUCIARY SERVICES
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304521
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) JML FIDUCIARY SERVICES , located at 240 MAIN STREET SUITE B, HALF MOON BAY, CA 94019. Mailing Address: PO BOX 1797 Boulder Creek, CA 95006
Registered owner(s):
JULIE M LOCOCO
240 MAIN STREET SUITE B
HALF MOON BAY, CA 94019
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 22, 2026.
(ALM Jul 31, Aug 7, 14 and 21, 2026)

PROSPERA BUILDER
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304509
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) PROSPERA BUILDER , located at 318 REDWOOD AVE APT F, REDWOOD CITY, CA 94061. Mailing Address: 3875 Bohannon Drive #4031, Menlo Park, CA 94026
Registered owner(s):
ERVIN JEOVANNY DISCUA
318 REDWOOD AVE APT F
REDWOOD CITY, CA 94061
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 22, 2026.
(ALM Jul 31, Aug 7, 14 and 21, 2026)

SANGNGSTYLIST
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304335
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) SANGNGSTYLIST , located at 1148 Crane

St., Menlo Park, CA 94025. Mailing Address: PO Box 613042 San Jose, CA 95161
Registered owner(s):
SANG KIM NGUYEN
PO Box 613042
San Jose, CA 95161
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 11/20/2021.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 03, 2026.
(ALM Jul 17, 24, 31 and Aug 7, 2026)

REALTY ALPHA SERVICES
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304486
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) REALTY ALPHA SERVICES , located at 7 41st Ave #106, San Mateo, CA 94403.
Registered owner(s):
BEHZAD BOROUMAND
7 41st Ave #106
San Mateo, CA 94403
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 06/30/2026.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 20, 2026.
(ALM Jul 31, Aug 7, 14 and 21, 2026)

NOEL COURT APARTMENTS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304492
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) NOEL COURT APARTMENTS , located at 1101 Noel Drive, Menlo Park, CA 94025. Mailing Address: 4370 Alpine Rd., #201 Portola Valley, CA 94028
Registered owner(s):
TIMOTHY M. BLAINE
4370 Alpine Rd., #201
Portola Valley, CA 94028
KATHLEEN T. FRIEDRICH
4370 Alpine Rd., #201
Portola Valley, CA 94028
This business is conducted by: a Married Couple.
Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 07/12/2010.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 21, 2026.
(ALM Jul 31, Aug 7, 14 and 21, 2026)

EDUARDO AUTO DETAIL & REPAIR
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304556
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) EDUARDO AUTO DETAIL & REPAIR , located at 232 WISTERIA DR, EAST PALO ALTO, CA 94303.
Registered owner(s):
EDUARDO J HENRIQUEZ RECINOS
232 WISTERIA DR

EAST PALO ALTO, CA 94303
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 07/01/2026.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 28, 2026.
(ALM Aug 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2026)

ANN WALTON BOOKS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304535
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) ANN WALTON BOOKS , located at 235 Medio Avenue, Half Moon Bay, CA 94019.
Registered owner(s):
VICTORIA ANN ATWELL
235 Medio Avenue
Half Moon Bay, CA 94019
State of Incorporation/Organization: CA
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on November 4 , 2025.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 24, 2026.
(ALM Aug 7, 14, 21 and 28, 2026)

THE PINES APARTMENTS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304520
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) THE PINES APARTMENTS , located at 3455-65-85 Alameda De Las Pulgas, Menlo Park, CA 94025. Mailing Address: 4370 Alpine Road #201 Portola Valley, CA 94028
Registered owner(s):
H TERRENCE BLAINE
4370 Alpine Road #201
Portola Valley, CA 94028
MARGARET H BLAINE
4370 Alpine Road #201
Portola Valley, CA 94028
TIMOTHY M BLAINE
4370 ALPINE ROAD #201
Portola Valley, CA 94028
This business is conducted by: Copartners.
Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 12/01/1975.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 22, 2026.
(ALM Jul 31, Aug 7, 14 and 21, 2026)

LIDA HAIR STUDIO
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304420
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) LIDA HAIR STUDIO , located at 812 Santa Cruz Ave, Menlo Park, CA 94025.
Registered owner(s):
SHAHRBANOU ZAHMATKESH
812 Santa Cruz Ave
Menlo Park, CA 94025
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant has not yet begun to transact

business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 13, 2026.
(ALM Jul 31, Aug 7, 14 and 21, 2026)

HOMEGLow HOUSE CLEANING
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304308
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) HOMEGLow HOUSE CLEANING , located at 3212 Rolison Road, APT 3, Redwood City, CA 94063.
Registered owner(s):
MIRIAM MICHELLE RODRIGUEZ ESPINOZA
3212 Rolison Road, APT 3
Redwood City, CA 94063
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on June 30, 2026.
(ALM Jul 31, Aug 7, 14 and 21, 2026)

TONGO FITNESS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304436
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) TONGO FITNESS , located at 1312 Academy Avenue, Belmont, CA 94002.
Registered owner(s):
HANNAH TONGO
1312 Academy Avenue
Belmont, CA 94002
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 5/1/2026.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 14, 2026.
(ALM Jul 24, 31, Aug 7 and 14, 2026)

REYES BUILDING SOLUTIONS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304453
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) REYES BUILDING SOLUTIONS , located at 430 Valley Dr, Brisbane, CA 94005 .
Registered owner(s):
ALEXJANDRO G REYES
430 Valley Dr
Brisbane, CA 94005
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 15, 2026.
(ALM Jul 24, 31, Aug 7 and 14, 2026)

LMP CONSTRUCTION
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO.: M-304374
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
1.) LMP CONSTRUCTION , located at 722 WARRINGTON AVE, REDWOOD CITY CA 94063.
Registered owner(s):
LEONEL MIRANDA-ONTIVEROS
722 WARRINGTON AVE
REDWOOD CITY CA 94063
This business is conducted by: an Individual.
Registrant has begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 01/15/2026.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of San Mateo County on July 08, 2026.
(ALM Jul 17, 24, 31 and Aug 7, 2026)

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-05219
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner: Sydney MacKenzie Lehman filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: SYDNEY MACKENZIE LEHMAN to SYDNEY LEHMAN DEVILLA
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: 9/10/2026, 9:00am, Civil Division of the Superior Court of California, County of San Mateo 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: 7/6/2026
Stephanie G. Garratt
JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
(ALM Jul 17, 24, 31 and Aug 7, 2026)

The Almanac is adjudicated to publish in San Mateo County.

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

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

The deadline is Sunday at 11:59 p.m.

SKYSCRAPER

continued from page 5

Bonta in his letter did not explicitly order Menlo Park to let the proposal move forward but admonished the city for the alleged violations, including improperly adding reasons to justify its initial determination that the project was not eligible for streamlined approval under AB 2011.

N17 founder Oisín Heneghan welcomed Bonta's notice.

"The attorney general has made clear that Menlo Park cannot continue moving the goalposts or requiring a housing applicant to bankroll the city's own resistance to approving housing," Heneghan said in a news release. "The state has now rejected every remaining legal basis the city asserted for denying streamlined approval."

In an email to The Almanac, Heneghan said, "We are actively working with the city on finalizing the project approvals."

He did not elaborate on that statement when asked whether the city indicated to him a willingness to move the project forward.

Menlo Park is reviewing Bonta's notice.

"The city is evaluating the opinions expressed in the AG

notice regarding the manner in which the AG believes the city should handle the development application for the 80 Willow project," Menlo Park said in a statement. "The city will continue to evaluate the application and the AG's notice."

The project would feature 665 new homes, including 100 affordable units, as well as retail and office space, a sports club, a hotel, a preschool, a public plaza and other amenities.

The project's tallest building could reach 458 feet, according to information from the city website.

Bonta's notice to Menlo Park was first reported Monday, Aug. 3, by the San Francisco Chronicle.

The Almanac obtained copies of the notice through a state Public Records Act request and from Heneghan.

In his notice, Bonta pointed out that the developer submitted a revised application for streamlined approval to address the city's initial determination that the project was inconsistent with certain aspects of AB 2011's site and development standards for mixed-income housing.

Menlo Park was still unsatisfied with the resubmittal as it cited additional inconsistencies, the notice said, but AB 2011 prohibits the city from making new

findings not identified previously.

The city also violated the state Housing Accountability Act (HAA) by failing to give the project the protections afforded to it under a state provision called builder's remedy, the notice said.

Builder's remedy allows developers to bypass local land-use rules when cities fail to garner state approval for their long-range housing plan. Menlo Park had yet to gain state certification for its housing plan when N17 first proposed the development now dubbed Willow Park.

In addition, Bonta alleged in his notice that Menlo Park violated HAA by wrongfully requiring the developer to pay for the city's legal costs involving the review process.

"To date, Menlo Park has billed the applicant \$302,938 for legal fees alone," the developer said in its news release.

In the wake of Bonta's notice, the developer through a lawyer notified Menlo Park of its intent to file a lawsuit to force the city to move the project along.

"The city's unlawful actions are summarized in" Bonta's notice, attorney David Blackwell said in an Aug. 3 letter to Menlo Park.

Citing Bonta's findings, Blackwell in his letter contended that the city must approve the project within 90 days from the

date of the notice — or by Oct. 27. The city is also obligated to refund the developer the legal costs related to the project's review, he said.

The City Council is scheduled to discuss the potential lawsuit in a closed session Wednesday, Aug. 5.

In his August newsletter to the community, Councilmember Drew Combs addressed Bonta's notice.

"The attorney general's letter marks a new phase in a process that had largely stalled because of the developer's refusal to fund an environmental review under the California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA)," Combs wrote. "It is also worth noting that the project is proposed for an environmentally sensitive site along San Francisco Creek and would require the demolition of the historically significant former Sunset Magazine headquarters."

Bonta's notice does not compel Menlo Park to clear the project, Combs also said.

"The attorney general's letter is not a binding legal ruling," Combs said. "In fact, the letter does not clearly identify what specific process or outcome the attorney general believes the city should pursue. Is the state actually suggesting that the city approve

a project of this scale without any additional analysis? That is an important question, and one that deserves greater clarity."

He added, "Even with that clarity, however, the attorney general's opinion does not dictate the ultimate outcome or eliminate the city's ability to pursue any legal or procedural remedies that are available."

Patti Fry, a former planning commissioner and longtime resident who opposes the project, criticized Bonta's take.

"I find it bizarre that the state AG is taking the city to task for wanting to protect our community by evaluating the project's environmental impacts," Fry said in an email to this publication. "AG Bonta casts a blind eye to the fact that with no environmental impact report this developer may not attempt any mitigation whatsoever for the myriad impacts on the creek area, street congestion citywide, noise and light impacts on nearby homes, the ability of this small suburban town to provide big-city services and infrastructure to such an enormous project, etc." ■

Email Contributing Writer

Neil Gonzales at

ngonzales92@yahoo.com and

Staff Writer Arden Margulis at amargulis@almanacnews.com.

OBITUARIES

Local residents who died recently include:

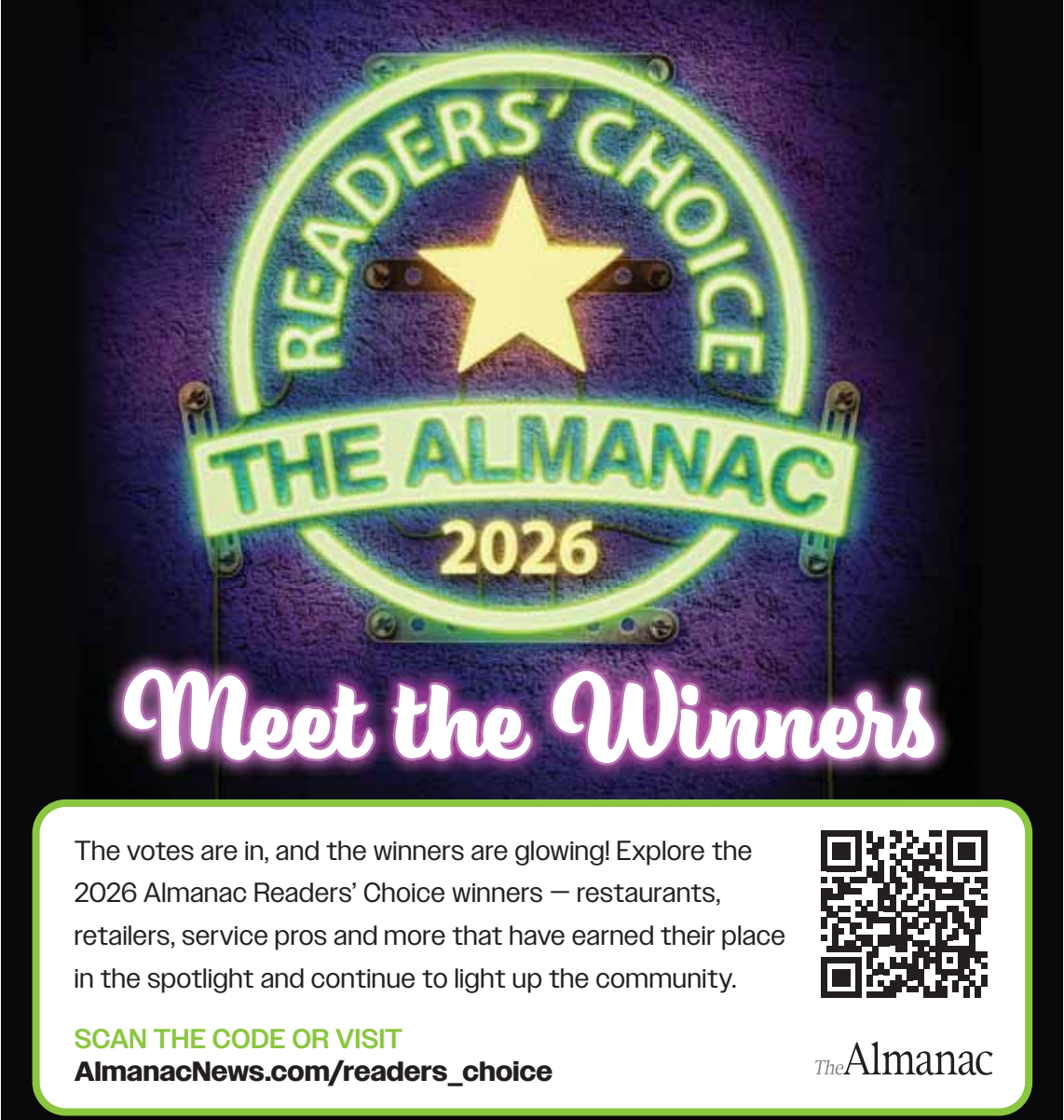
Joy Swift, 93, a Palo Alto resident who was born in Oklahoma, who moved to San Francisco at 18, who found a community at the 17th Street Church of Christ, who worked in sales and personnel and who was a talented fiber and fabric artist, who helped found the Palo Alto Church of Christ, who taught at the Sierra Bible Camp, who led the Southbay Storytellers and Listeners group, and who firmly believed that everyone needed at least three hugs a day, died on July 14, 2026.

James Regel, 83, a Menlo Park resident who was born in Spokane, Washington, who graduated from Woodside High School, who received a master's degree in business from UC Berkeley and who then attended Officer Candidate School, where he was commissioned as an officer in the U.S. Navy, who served aboard the U.S.S. Hancock, an aircraft carrier, in the South Pacific during the Vietnam War, who then began a career in technology, bringing his expertise to Veralink, Rolm, IBM and other companies, who supported Israel and global Christian ministries, and who loved watching sports and playing tennis and golf, died on July 14, 2026.

Gail Gavello, 84, a Menlo Park resident who was a member of the Junior League, Peninsula Volunteers and the Kiwanis Club, who was involved in her family's real estate business, which developed and managed properties throughout California and who made trips to Torino, Italy, as part of her research into her family roots, died on July 20, 2026.

George Norbeck, 89, a Woodside resident who was born in South Dakota, who received his medical degree from University of Minnesota and master's degree at UCLA, who proudly served in the U.S. Air Force and in the Air National Guard, who served as a psychiatrist at the Palo Alto Veterans Affairs Medical Center, who was recognized as a Distinguished Fellow of the American Psychiatric Association for his contributions to psychiatry, who joined the San Mateo Mounted Patrol and who loved singing in choirs and performing in musical theater, died on July 24, 2026.

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



The votes are in, and the winners are glowing! Explore the 2026 Almanac Readers' Choice winners — restaurants, retailers, service pros and more that have earned their place in the spotlight and continue to light up the community.

SCAN THE CODE OR VISIT
AlmanacNews.com/readers_choice

The Almanac

STABLE RULES

continued from page 5

told that he would need to file for a stable exception, which is reviewed by the Livestock Committee and Planning Commission, a process that can take weeks or months.

Neighbors and friends of the Glencrag home's previous owner said at the Planning Commission meeting on July 15 that the property had always boarded two horses prior to Manrao moving in. Nextdoor neighbor Clark, however, disputed that claim.

"If there's already horses allowed on the property, that number of horses should be allowed to stay on the property," Atkinson told *The Almanac*.

"To all of a sudden eliminate one is definitely not fair," said Aleta Reed, a friend of the previous owner at the Planning Commission meeting.

Clark said he is concerned that the town is not following its own rules, allowing for residents to bypass proper permitting



Michael Molcsan

Munish Manrao sits on his fence with his palomino quarter horse on his property on Glencrag Way in Woodside on July 20.

processes due to historical use. With his appeal to the Town Council, he hopes to encourage staff to take the appropriate actions to officially change the code to address the number of horses allowed on lots of less than 1-acre.

"Don't break the law, change it," said Clark, who explained that if the Town Council denies

his appeal, "every 0.45 acre lot in Woodside would be eligible for two horses." His complaint is that "the process wasn't done right."

During the meeting, Planning Commissioner Daron Evans suggested that rules should be changed if Woodside's goal is to be an equestrian community. Evans also spoke during the

Town Council meeting on July 28, alerting the council members of an upcoming discussion on the issue, following Clark's recent appeal.

Commissioner Matt Garr added that the antiquated 1-acre stable rule seems inconsistent with the general plan, which "aims to preserve, maintain and enhance Woodside as a small and unique, rural town," and outlines a goal to promote and protect the town's equestrian heritage.

"It's a bit off that, in an equestrian community, we've set a more restrictive standard for equestrian facilities than others," Garr said. "We have more rights for our garages than a barn."

Manrao said that if the Town Council grants Clark's appeal, it would be detrimental to all backyard barns in Woodside. He said the existing code for two horses per acre cannot be the only reason to deny his or any other exception.

"(It) cannot be the only argument against keeping two horses.

You have to point to the stable sizes, the paddocks," Manrao said. "Because you can have 10 acres and have a horse shoved in the corner somewhere."

Manrao said that, as he faces another review of his exception, he keeps his teenage daughter Sarah's future in mind. Sarah is active in the equestrian community as a member of this year's Woodside Junior Rodeo Royalty Court and a volunteer for Day of the Horse. Manrao said he hopes the town can change its codes to allow for stable permits to be transferable, making it easier for future generations to maintain horses on the property.

"I want to make it so I can transfer our horse permit to her, and she can continue to have two horses as she gets older, she can do that with her children, and so forth, as long as the overall conditions don't change," Manrao said. ■

Email Staff Writer
Jennifer Yoshikoshi at

jyoshikoshi@almanacnews.com.

GALATOLO

continued from page 5

immediately after the hearing.

Davis said during the hearing that he felt Galatolo was not taking responsibility for his actions. Referring to a presentencing statement Galatolo wrote where he said he should have been more "diligent," Davis said, "The word you are looking for is honest, not diligent."

"I have to say sir, there were no feelings behind your words," Davis told Galatolo.

After a trial lasting more than 40 days, a jury convicted Galatolo of four counts of

falsifying tax documents and four counts of perjury. The jury deadlocked on 18 other felony counts and found him not guilty of one felony count of perjury.

Galatolo was chancellor of the San Mateo County Community College District from 2001 to 2019, during which time he oversaw Cañada College in Woodside, Skyline College in San Bruno and the College of San Mateo.

During the trial, prosecutors alleged that he took kickbacks from district contractors and went on luxury trips without disclosing them.

Some of the charges also stem from allegations involving his personal tax returns, including claiming a donation made by the college on his personal taxes.

San Mateo County District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe decided not to retry Galatolo on the deadlocked felony charges in March. Prior to Friday's sentencing hearing, Davis denied a motion from Galatolo seeking a new trial and to reduce the charges against him to misdemeanors. ■

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



Michael Molcsan

Defendant Ronald Galatolo wipes his eyes during his sentencing.

CRIME BRIEFS

Driver charged in Menlo Park break-in

A Redwood City teenager was charged with residential burglary after allegedly serving as the "getaway driver" for two people who broke into a car in the underground parking garage of the Country Sharon Apartments in Menlo Park on Aug. 3.

Shortly after midnight, an off-duty Atherton police officer called 911 to report two hooded individuals running from the garage after a car alarm was triggered, San Mateo County District Attorney Steve Wagstaffe said. The officer also reported seeing a dark SUV leaving the area.

While canvassing the neighborhood, Menlo Park police officers found an SUV matching that description in the nearby Safeway parking lot. Officers spoke with the driver, Julio Alexis Talavera Saavedra, 18, who consented to a search of the vehicle, Wagstaffe said. Police found burglary tools and an Autel device, which can be used to unlock cars without triggering an alarm.

Talavera Saavedra told officers he had driven two people to the apartments to break into cars and that the pair had fled on foot after the alarm

sounded, according to Wagstaffe. Police cited and released him at the scene; the two other suspects remain at large.

Later that afternoon, Talavera Saavedra was charged with felony residential burglary and misdemeanor possession of burglary tools. Because the garage is attached to the apartment building, California law treats the break-in as a residential burglary rather than a vehicular burglary, which carries a much lighter possible sentence, Wagstaffe said.

Talavera Saavedra is scheduled to be arraigned on Sept. 3. He faces a maximum sentence of six years and six months in state prison.

Kendra's Spa burglary

Kendra's Spa at 1135 Chestnut St. in Menlo Park was broken into around 5:30 a.m. on July 24, owner Kendra Dinh said in an email to *The Almanac*.

The suspects only got away with an empty cash box. Dinh said that the would-be thieves broke through the door to enter the spa.

"What a shock to start the day, right?" Dinh added.

— Arden Margulis

WOODSIDE COUNCIL

continued from page 8

Representing District 3 on the Town Center Area Plan Committee, Druker and other members are responsible for guiding the process to develop a 25-year vision for Town Center.

"People want Town Center to be a valuable and attractive local resource," he said. "They want it to retain the rural and equestrian feel that it has today. They want more reasons to go there."

He added that the area lacks public spaces, broader retail services, workout studios, quick-service restaurants and ice cream shops, all places that would foster stronger community building in the heart of the town.

As the town faces state requirements to build 328 new housing units by 2031, Druker said he feels positive about Woodside reaching its target. He believes that the town could build housing in collaboration with Woodside Elementary, Woodside Fire Protection District and Menlo Country Club.

"There's a lot of opportunity to work with those employers and drive more housing to really make sure we continue to meet that housing element quota," Druker said. "I think we have lots of ways to get there that are going to be intelligent and stay in character with the town's rural feel and our equine heritage."

Druker does not yet have a campaign website. ■

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Woodside's ethics decision raises questions about accountability

‘Personnel matter.’ That was the label. Two words, last item on the agenda, last meeting before summer recess on July 28.

Nothing in it told a resident that the Woodside Town Council was about to resolve the only sustained finding against a sitting councilmember for disclosing a colleague's confidential closed-session concerns in an investigation that took four months and used considerable public money.

Residents figured it out anyway. They read the packet, they wrote letters, and, to the Town Council's credit, the item was moved from last to third. The letters worked.

But consider what it means that they were necessary. One councilmember said from the dais that when she picked up her packet, “no reasonable person would have any clue what the agenda item was meant to be about,” and called it a glaring failure of transparency. When a sitting member says that about her own agenda, that is not a drafting error.

GUEST OPINION

When the item came, Mayor Pro Tempore Paul Goeld recused himself — but not before reading aloud a letter apologizing for his lapse in judgment and asking that no further action be required. Then he left. Residents spoke. Special counsel Richard Bolanos of Liebert Cassidy Whitmore, retained through the town's liability insurance carrier — which also identified and authorized the investigator — delivered the recommendation: Accept the apology, and require ethics training.

The public reaction was immediate and it was not close. A 35-year resident said a slap on the wrist and a little training would never have survived in private industry. A former councilmember asked for a written censure and that Goeld not be handed the gavel in December, warning that elevating him would tell residents that our standards are situational. Another said plainly that people

with business before the town are afraid to speak.

Then several of us asked a simple question: What was tonight for? Were we being told a recommendation had been made, or that it had already been accepted? Nobody on the dais could answer clearly. Counsel eventually explained the item existed to present steps the Town Council had already determined to take. A councilmember replied that this was not her understanding and that it would have been nice to see it on the agenda. The mayor moved to close discussion.

And so it fell to Councilmember Jenn Wall to bring order to a proceeding the council itself could not describe. Wall is not a bystander. She is the person whose confidence was breached. What Goeld disclosed to then-Town Manager Jason Ledbetter were her closed-session concerns about whether that hiring had been run on merit — raised in the one forum built to protect exactly that candor. She then spent four months as

a subject of the complaint that followed, and was cleared. At last Tuesday's council meeting, she had to argue, in real time and without the report she had requested in advance, that an apology was not a sufficient answer to an admitted ethics violation — to colleagues who had themselves been named in the investigation, with one of them, Mayor Brian Dombkowski, presiding.

Wall and a colleague made and seconded a motion for further action. The mayor and Councilmember Dick Brown stated they accepted the apology. The recommendation stood: training.

Look at that arithmetic. The mayor was a subject of the same investigation — cleared, and still a subject — and he presided, and his position carried. The professional advice before the council came from a firm appointed under the protocols of an insurer whose role includes managing the town's legal risk and potential liability. Nobody elected the insurance company. The councilmember whose

confidentiality was breached had no comparable support, and her motion for further action failed.

I don't think anyone acted in bad faith. That is the point. A structure assembled to manage the town's liability produced what such a structure produces, and the two members who tried for a different result were outnumbered by a chair with a stake in the outcome.

Publish the full investigative report once litigation resolves. Say who set the investigation's scope, and why residents' questions were not in it. Bring corrective action back on a date certain, labeled in language a resident can read. And the next time this council discusses one of its own, the presiding officer should not be someone the investigation named.

Residents moved this item once already. That was the easy part. The question now is whether two votes on this Town Council can become three. ■

Lexi Reese is a Woodside resident.

LETTERS

Our readers write

Editor,

The eight-month jail sentence imposed on former San Mateo County Community College Chancellor Ron Galatolo has shaken my confidence in our local

judicial system.

A jury convicted Mr. Galatolo of eight felony counts involving perjury and tax fraud. According to published reports, both the San Mateo County District Attorney's Office and the Probation Department recommended a state prison sentence. Judge Leland

Davis instead imposed just eight months in county jail, with the likelihood that Galatolo will serve only about four months.

As a former mayor, I understand that judges have discretion. But discretion must also preserve public confidence in the principle that everyone is equal before the law.

When a prominent public official convicted of multiple felonies, such as Ron Galatolo, receives what I and many, many others view as an exceptionally lenient sentence, ordinary citizens are left asking whether justice is truly blind. A further question is: What oversight exists for judicial sentencing decisions? Who does Judge Davis report to? Are there any mechanisms for reviewing sentencing decisions, even if they are legally within a judge's discretion?

As an African American, I cannot help but wonder whether an ordinary working-class defendant or a person of color convicted of the same offenses would have received the same outcome.

That question alone should concern all of us. Cases like this raise

questions about whether we need an independent review of court policies and procedures.

As a strong proponent of oversight, here is another taxpayer-funded function that taxpayers have little to no say over.

Wake up, San Mateo County; we have work to do. Titles do not make the man, but wow, they really count in our court system!

They fool us into thinking our local judicial system is fair, consistent, and worthy of the public's trust ... but like former U.S. President Ronald Reagan said, “Trust, but verify.” This is and should be a major disappointment to all of us — with or without status.

*Jim Lawrence Former Mayor,
Foster City Chair,
Fixin San Mateo County*

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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.

You can also submit a longer piece of 450 to 600 words for consideration to publish as a guest opinion column.

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

The Almanac

Sacred scenes and infinite sounds

Community School of Music and Arts hosts art reception and concert

By Karla Kane

Vivid paintings, stirring melodies and rhythms, and expressive movement await visitors to the Community School of Music and Arts (CSMA) on Aug. 8. The Mountain View venue is showcasing both visual and performing arts rooted in the cultural heritage of the Indian subcontinent when it hosts a reception and artist talk for the exhibition “Pragati Sharma Mohanty: Kingdoms, Forests & Battles,” followed by the concert “Anantam – From One to Infinity.”

Sunnyvale-based artist Pragati Sharma Mohanty, who has a background in architecture and design, creates exquisitely detailed works that have ties to folk art traditions from India, which she’s been teaching for several decades, including the intricate miniaturist style.

“I have adapted the technique to suit my purpose, telling the ancient stories that originate from the subcontinent,” she said. She’s formed her own “maximalist-miniaturist” style, in layers so dense that “sometimes you won’t be able to tell the foreground from the background,” as she put it.

The CSMA exhibit, which runs through August, is focused on paintings from her mixed-media series exploring scenes from the ancient Hindu epic the Ramayana, full of brave heroes, thrilling adventures and sacred moments. Her process involves painting the backgrounds — lush, leafy landscapes, buildings and all — in vibrantly colored acrylics; drawing the human and animal figures and laser-cutting them out of rice paper, collaging them into the scenes, “then I paint on top of those using traditional miniature techniques of watercolor and egg wash,” she said.

The scenes portrayed are rich with meaning and symbolism as well as color. Mohanty, who draws on her extensive research into the Ramayana to interpret these tales through visual art, hopes viewers will gain new appreciation for the still-resonant themes of courage, sacrifice and wisdom from the millennia-old tale. “Most of my stories are like that — a moral story, a little bit of takeaway from the painting,” she said, giving the example of the painting “Hanuman’s Lesson,” which depicts an episode toward the end of the epic in which the deity Hanuman learns about the eternally cyclical nature of the universe.

Following the reception and artist talk, CSMA is kicking off its free fall community concert series with “Anantam — From One to Infinity,” featuring classical Indian music and dance.

“I’m looking forward to it because it’s such a beautiful connection to the ancient traditions of storytelling,” Mohanty said of how she feels the performing-arts event complements the fine art exhibition.

The word anantam in Sanskrit means infinite, and the performance centers around the concept that “everything begins with one,” dancer, choreographer and educator Gayatri Joshi said. “We start with one cell and then we grow to millions ... a few basic notes can produce countless melodies.”

The concert “explores how the numbers are woven into the fabric of Indian classical dance, music and even spirituality,” she said.

“Any concert is complete when there is live music, there is vocal and there is dance,” according to Joshi. “Those three things are very key elements in any (Indian classical) concert.”



Courtesy Pragati Sharma Mohanty and Community School of Music and Arts

“Shabri’s berries” by Sunnyvale artist Pragati Sharma Mohanty.

Joshi, the co-founder of iGurukul Foundation, specializes in Odissi, one of the eight forms of Indian classical dance, which originated in the temples of the eastern state of Odisha and is known for its graceful postures and poses, inspired by ancient temple carvings. She described it as a blend of masculine and feminine, with strong footwork counterbalanced by soft and lyrical upper-body movements. The music, she said, is “the soul of Odissi dance. When you hear it, you will know.” Her dance school holds classes in Santa Clara and the East Bay, and she’ll be bringing a group of her graduate students to perform at CSMA.

Manipuri is another distinctive classical Indian dance form, originating in the northeastern state of Manipur, which blends movement, music, poetry and spirituality, based in the devotional tradition of Vaishnavism. Sanjib Bhattacharya, a renowned Manipuri dancer, choreographer and teacher, with whom Joshi often works, will also be bringing some of his senior students to perform.

The CSMA show will include

vocalist Sangeeta Gosain, sitar player Swapneswar Chakraborty, mardala player Budhanath Swain, vocalist and harmonium player Dilip Acharya and flutist Rudra Prasad Parida.

Joshi said she is very excited to bring such an accomplished group of musicians to Mountain View. Chakraborty, for example, is also a composer, and the performance will likely include two of his original pieces.

The mardala is a traditional two-headed drum with roots in Odisha and the Aug. 8 concert will include a solo by Swain that plays with the theme of numbers. Audiences can also expect a “question and answer” duet on sitar and flute (according to CSMA’s website, “Anantam” marks flutist Parida’s U.S. debut). Joshi said she felt it was fitting to celebrate the fine art of the “Pragati Sharma Mohanty: Kingdoms, Forests & Battles” exhibition alongside the performance of “Anantam — From One to Infinity,” as both express Indian cultural and artistic traditions.

She praised Mohanty’s work and said, referring to her own medium of dance, “What we do

is, we draw the visual art on the stage when we’re moving.”

“Anantam” kicks off CSMA’s fall concert series, the line-up for which also includes performances by Michael Echaniz Trio on Sept. 4, Dr. Gabriela Calderón and Astrid Morales Torres on Sept. 18, Bagwell & Troy on Oct. 9, Naoko Kasai on Oct. 24 and Davin-Levin Duo on Nov. 15. All performances are suitable for ages 7 and up. ■

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

“Pragati Sharma Mohanty: Kingdoms, Forests & Battles” runs through Aug. 31. The artist reception will be held Aug. 8, 6-7:15 p.m.

“Anantam — From One to Infinity” will be performed Aug. 8, 7:30 p.m., at Tateuchi Hall. Both events are free and take place at Community School of Music and Arts, 230 San Antonio Circle, Mountain View. More information is available at arts4all.org/mohr-gallery and arts4all.org/concerts/anantam-from-one-to-infinity.

Stanford professor's memoir captures hard work that makes history, including 'saving baseball'

Labor lawyer and law professor William B. Gould IV looks back on wide-ranging career

By Heather Zimmerman

Many memoirs offer a snapshot of history, but with a wide-ranging career that has touched so many elements of U.S. life: Law, civil rights, politics — even baseball — William B. Gould IV has written a memoir about the hard work that makes history.

A labor lawyer and Stanford University law professor emeritus, Gould tells his family story alongside major career moments in his memoir, “Those Who Travail and Are Heavy Laden: Memoir of a Labor Lawyer,” published in late 2025. The book joins Gould’s 11 other books on topics that include job discrimination against Black workers in labor unions and his work in resolving the 1990s baseball strike. He began teaching at Stanford in 1972.

The tome melds memories and scholarly reflections, tracing Gould’s life and work across the decades. The detailed, deeply sourced book features some chapters that might resonate

most with students of the law. But “Those Who Travail” is also personal and thoughtful, diving first into family history and later sharing stories as Gould and wife Hilda raise their three sons. The book also offers recollections from Gould’s crossing paths with a number of familiar names, including Ruth Bader Ginsburg, President John F. Kennedy and his brother, Robert F. Kennedy (whose groovy 1960s Christmas card is among the unique correspondence and photos reproduced in the book).

A constant, right alongside Gould’s dedication to labor and civil rights, is a love of baseball. His appointment as chairman of the National Labor Relations Board by President Bill Clinton put Gould in his professional capacity right in the middle of his beloved sport.

Some of the most personal moments in the book are early chapters that delve into the Gould family history with warm, loving portraits, particularly of Gould’s father — a caring man who, despite not

loving baseball himself, took his young son to an hours-long doubleheader, and a brilliant man who worked in pioneering research with radar.

But there is also racism that Gould, who is Black, and his family faced, such as from some of Gould’s Stanford colleagues, particularly, but not limited to, his early days on campus, or from his father’s bosses at Western Electric, who fired him after discovering he was Black.

Gould’s great-grandfather, the first William Gould, referred to as WBG in the book, was enslaved in North Carolina. The book recounts how in 1862, WBG, along with seven other men, escaped from Wilmington aboard a boat and were picked up by a Union vessel. WBG settled in Massachusetts and built a life as a community leader.

“Those Who Travail” offers insights into historic moments, and important gains in labor law and civil rights — some of which may again be in peril in the current times.

We spoke with Gould about his

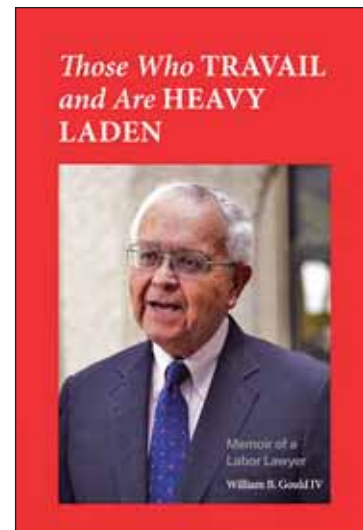
memoir. This conversation has been edited for length.

The Almanac: Why did you decide to write “Those Who Travail?”

Gould: I felt that I had done something over the course of my life in a number of areas that are of interest to the public, acting as a labor arbitrator, a law professor, and someone who’s appeared in court quite frequently on labor matters and job discrimination, as well as sports. I suppose the other factor is that now is the time to do it, since I’ve almost reached the age of 90.

The Almanac: Early in your career, you worked with labor unions but sometimes represented employers. How did that affect your perspective on labor disputes?

Gould: I got a sense of how important it is to keep in mind both the practical concerns of an employer that is looking for returns on its changes and objectives, and attempting to, for instance, promote technological innovations, and the competing concerns of workers who are



Courtesy WPI Press

“Those Who Travail and Are Heavy Laden” is a comprehensive memoir by William B. Gould IV.

looking to better their position in society. ... I think it gave me a broad sense of what labor management relations is about and what labor law should be about.

The Almanac: Your work in labor law in the U.S. highlights

See **MEMOIR**, page 25



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MEMOIR

continued from page 24

how much race and civil rights are entwined with labor. How might the current political environment affect some of the gains that have been made?

Gould: I think that regrettably, some of those gains are being reversed. The Supreme Court's decision allowing for the complete politicization of the administrative agency, the National Labor Relations Board, by virtue of treating those appointees as executive branch individuals who can be dismissed at the discretion of the president if he doesn't like a particular decision that they render, well — that's the antithesis of the reforms that were issued in the Great Depression, when the so-called alphabet agencies, were created, of which the NLRB was the most prominent.

Now of course we have the attack by this administration on Supreme Court decisions, which have not yet been reversed, like *Griggs v. Duke Power*, which I talk about in the book, because *Griggs* was the decision which held that unintentional as well as intentional discrimination could violate the statute because of the exclusionary impact that certain procedures would have

upon Blacks, women, and others who have been historically victimized.

The Almanac: You were involved in some major political moments in the U.S. but also abroad, speaking about democracy in South Africa during apartheid and in Poland during the Solidarity movement. How did those experiences shape your work?

Gould: I've always had the view that law professors can't really teach their subject unless they've been involved in it in a direct way, and I think that period of my life really assisted me as a writer, a professor and someone who would advocate for change.

South Africa for me was both an experience that allowed me to take some of what I had done in the courtroom and in the classroom to audiences that were interested in democracy.

The Carter administration, on whose behalf I did it, thought that, and I thought that we had something to tell people that was useful. Now we have an administration that is trying to wipe away most of the gains in making the country more democratic in the '60s and '70s.

So I look at it today with a fair amount of anguish and melancholy — melancholy about the

steps backwards that have been made, but we were able to do something in that period.

In 1977, Poland arose during the period that I was banned from South Africa, and I went on my own initiative to an international conference conducted by Solidarity ... and as a result of that, made connections and contacts ... even after Solidarity was banned, and I had a great chance to see it both before and after.

The Almanac: You write very poetically about playing sandlot baseball as a child, and baseball is a theme throughout the book. It seemed you were perfectly suited when the Major League Baseball strike happened, and you were chairman of the National Labor Relations Board.

Gould: That was the longest strike, which brought about the first cancellation of the World Series in 1994 since 1904.

We, the National Labor Relations Board, became involved in it in the spring of '95, and I cast the deciding vote as chairman of the Labor Board to support the obtaining of an injunction against the owners for not bargaining in good faith with the players. We voted to proceed to court and obtained an injunction from the judge as she was then — she is now (Supreme Court) Justice Sonia Sotomayor,

and I wrote quite an eloquent opinion supporting our position. And as soon as we obtained that injunction, the players agreed to return to the field, and the owners agreed to accept them, and as a result of that, a comprehensive collective bargaining agreement was negotiated with the parties.

Prior to 1994, there had been strikes and lockouts just about every time the agreement between the parties expired. Well, there were no further strikes or lockouts in the wake of the 1995 intervention by our National Labor Relations Board until 2022 — 30 years later, when the owners locked out the players. But in the interim, there have been no disputes and the industry has increased its revenues tenfold. So in a secondary supportive way, I like to think that our efforts had something to do with promoting this period of peace and prosperity.

The Almanac: You say in the epilogue that your position at Stanford affected your entire career. Why was it so instrumental?

Gould: I describe (in the book) some of the disputes that I had with the various characters on the faculty and I encountered racism both in law school, in my judgment, and amongst the alumni.

But Tom Ehrlich, who was the

dean (of Stanford Law School) at that point and who had a great interest in me from the beginning, really jumped onto my side, and I think greater opportunities existed as a result of being there.

I could teach exactly what I wanted about my labor law course. I think that I developed one of the very first employment discrimination courses that was taught anywhere, and then in the '80s was able to develop sports law courses as well.

I think that Stanford gave me a visibility and opportunity to write in prominent journals and to do the scholarship that is important for a professor to develop, and gave me the time not only to write, but to act as an arbitrator, as I have since the '60s, and to ultimately go into government.

I've had the great fortune to be able to have a life of balance between scholarship and action as a government official, a litigator and an arbitrator. ■

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

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Food & Drink



Namiko Chen

JOC Goods offers detailed and handcrafted bowls, dishes, ceramics, cute kitchen accessories and practical Japanese tools.

Dishing out Japanese culture

A popular Peninsula recipe blogger is bringing time-honored Japanese craftsmanship to American households

By Elaine Wu

Namiko (Nami) Hirasawa Chen and Shen Chen are better known to their online fans as the brains behind the popular website, Just One Cookbook. But the Midpeninsula couple say their plan was more of a personal hobby than a blueprint for global success.

The website was created purely as a place to house Hirasawa's many recipes she learned as a teenager working at her

grandfather's small restaurant in Yokohama, Japan, alongside her mother. She hoped the site would become a resource for her friends and a keepsake for her children as they got older so she could pass the recipes down to them.

Fifteen years later, the website now houses 1,300 recipes and reaches 3 million visitors a month, making it the largest English language Japanese recipe site in the world. Nami and Shen Chen also have their own YouTube channel with more than 500 recipe video tutorials and

more than 1 million subscribers.

"I think Nami's recipes are so popular because they're authentic," Shen Chen said. "They come from someone who grew up in Japan and learned them from her Japanese family. She gives a lot of background, details and step-by-step advice and visuals. The recipes work."

Her organized, visually oriented style of recipe sharing combined with traditional Japanese sensibilities have made complicated dishes seem approachable to so many of her fans. But she

now realizes it was also a necessity due to her dyslexia, which was diagnosed only last year. As a visual learner, it was what always worked for her.

"In Japanese cooking, we believe a meal should delight us before the very first bite," Nami Chen explained. "We call this 'me de taberu,' or 'eating with your eyes.' I like to arrange ingredients in odd numbers, like groups of three or five to make the completed dish seem more balanced. I also leave a little empty space on the plate and

finish with something natural like fresh herbs, grated daikon or a slice of citrus."

With all their beautifully photographed recipes on the site (many of them taken by Shen Chen himself), the couple noticed more and more people started asking where they could find the tableware and kitchen tools used in the photos.

"When I'd make something for the website, people would ask where I got the dishes, bowls and plates we were using, and I would tell them it was all from



Jason Leung

Namiko (Nami) Hirasawa Chen learned to cook at her grandfather's small restaurant in Yokohama, Japan.

Japan," Nami Chen said.

So in late 2024, inspired by Hirasawa's personal passion for traditional Asian dishware and her audience's increasing interest, they launched the website JOC Goods. The website brings to their American readers artisan, small-batch tableware, kitchen utensils and home decor made and designed in regions all over Japan.

They now sell almost 1,500 different items ranging from meticulously detailed and hand-crafted bowls, dishes, ceramics, cute kitchen accessories and practical Japanese tools.

Many of these artisan makers tend to be older, holding on to traditions the younger generation may see as too time-consuming or old-fashioned. Most also lack the marketing or social media presence needed to sustain longer-term relevance in a rapidly changing world.

"I care about the traditions we're losing in Japan and the skilled craftspeople that are disappearing," Nami Chen said. "Even in Japan they use so much disposable plasticware. And it can be expensive to buy something handmade that's more traditional. So I want to help preserve those skills and that artistry."

She personally visits kilns and the makers' workshops whenever she can to get their personal stories and fully appreciate their work firsthand.

"Part of Japanese cuisine is in the presentation. How it looks is so important," Nami Chen said. "That's why I curate so carefully all the tableware that we sell. I pick unique, specific pieces that are hard to get outside of Japan."

Recently, the couple traveled to Japan's bamboo craft capital, Beppu, to source new baskets that will be coming soon to the JOC Goods site. They even met two 90-year-old craftsmen who have been creating bamboo crafts for generations.

It's important for them to see firsthand the skill and pride of these artisans using centuries-old techniques and appreciate their stories. Each and every bamboo basket is hand-shaped and handwoven strand by strand from start to finish. The Japanese use them for their versatility in the kitchen as well as their natural beauty, much like many of the items they source for the website.

"These traditional artisans and makers aren't focused on marketing," she said. "They make small batches of their wares and then go somewhere to sell them. So we have to work really hard to find them at trade shows or events."

This has meant traveling to Japan up to eight times a year for Nami Chen. It's exhausting work, but she has become dedicated to educating her readers



Akane Suzuki

JOC Goods sells artisan, small-batch tableware, kitchen utensils and home decor.

of the meaning behind everything they use and make in the kitchen. She wants her audience to trust the items they order, knowing each one has been personally vetted by her.

Their audience's appreciation for the couple's meticulous attention to detail shows in their continued loyalty and support, and it has inspired the couple to keep sharing their passion for Japanese culture.

"I understand how important it is to preserve and save our Japanese traditions," Nami Chen said. "I've developed trust with my readers, and that's why they come back." ■

Email Contributing Writer Elaine Wu at trueblueconsulting@gmail.com.

JOC Goods, jocgoods.com,
Instagram: @jocgoods.



Shiori Chen

Namiko (Nami) Hirasawa Chen, left, and Shen Chen are behind the websites Just One Cookbook and JOC Goods.

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