Palo Alto faces massive housing mandate

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LET THE HAUNTING BEGIN

LOCALS AREN’T LETTING CORONAVIRUS STOP CREATIVE HALLOWEEN CELEBRATIONS

PAGE 5

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Under proposed regional mandate, Palo Alto would have to allow 10K new residences by 2031
by Gennady Sheyner

Some time in early 2021, city planners throughout the Bay Area will receive a daunting assignment: a mandate to accommodate their cities’ “fair share” of the region’s projected housing growth.

Each of the 101 cities and nine counties that make up the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) will receive a portion of the 441,176 housing units that the California Department of Housing and Community Development has assigned to the Bay Area for the next cycle of the Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA), which will run from 2023 to 2031. The state agency had also determined that 114,442 of these units — or 25.9% of the total — should be designated for those in the “very low” income category.

While the numbers for each city and county won’t be formally adopted until early next year, the Association of Bay Area Governments offered a preview of what’s to come on Oct. 15, when its Executive Board adopted a methodology for doling out the allocations, completing a complex and contentious exercise that began in fall 2019.

The committee, which consists of elected leaders from various ABAG jurisdictions, endorsed by a 24-0 vote the methodology developed by its Housing Methodology Committee. That committee, chaired by Berkeley Mayor Jesse Arreguín, concluded its year of deliberations offered a preview of what’s to come on Oct. 15, when its Executive Board adopted a methodology for doling out the allocations, completing a complex and contentious exercise that began in fall 2019.

To avoid COVID-19 scare, Halloween celebrations take on different look
Residents, cities plan for safe alternatives to traditional trick-or-treating
by Sue Dremann

From virtual Halloween carnivals to neighborhood costume parades to a candy chute to deliver treats hands-free, cities and residents throughout the Midpeninsula are gearing up for the holiday in creative and safer ways amid the COVID-19 pandemic — while still maintaining a festive spirit.

This year will be the pilgrimage of thousands to Palo Alto’s Waverley and Ramona streets for elaborate Halloween carnivals and decorations put on by business and tech executives Laurene Powell Jobs, Larry Page and Marissa Mayer. The city isn’t issuing event permits and no police resources have been assigned to any Halloween events, city spokesperson Meghan Hoggan-Taylor said. Police have also contacted previous Halloween permit event holders regarding the Santa Clara County Public Health Department’s guidelines and the city’s advice about safer forms of celebration, which include small, home-based gatherings, she said.

Some cities and organizations are encouraging people to trade their traditional trick-or-treat activities and parties for scaled-back events. Up to and on Halloween, residents can partake in socially distanced events. Palo Alto will host a Jack-O’-Jaunt pumpkin-carving contest and exhibition on California and University avenues on Oct. 30, 5:30-8 p.m.; Filoli Historic House and Garden’s sold-out Howl at the Moon event features a Halloween scavenger hunt, garden stroll and howl; Menlo Park will have a virtual Halloween Hoopla event; and Mountain View will hold a virtual Halloween parade on Oct. 30.

College Terrace resident Laura Forrest is taking an innovative approach to delivering candy this Halloween: When she sees visitors, she’ll send candy down a contactless chute.

CITY HALL

Commissioners bristle at proposed rules
Guide discouraging media contact called “dictatorial”
by Gennady Sheyner

A new push by the Palo Alto City Council to strengthen its control over the city’s system of boards and commission is facing backlash from some of the volunteers who serve on these advisory bodies and who argued Monday the rules will chill free speech and deter residents from applying.

The council was scheduled to approve on Monday night a proposed handbook for boards and commissions, which includes guidelines that discourage commissioners from talking to the media and require every board to submit a work plan for council approval. The new handbook also specifies that the council can remove any commissioner at any time and for any reason.

While the council delayed adoption of the new handbook until next Monday, Oct. 26, some current and past commissioners argued that it should scrap some of the rules altogether. Architect Randy Popp, a past chair of the Architectural Review Board, told the council Monday that some of the changes, if adopted, would “drastically adjust my perspective regarding the value of serving on a board” and deter him from urging other professionals from participating in the process.

Popp called the rule granting the city council to strengthen its control over the city’s system of boards and commission is facing backlash from some of the volunteers who serve on these advisory bodies and who argued Monday the rules will chill free speech and deter residents from applying.

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LWVC Palo Alto and LWV Santa Clara County Council

Replace money bail system with use of pretrial risk assessment tools.

Would allow businesses to charge consumers more if they choose to

Prop 24 Consumer Data Privacy NO

collect DNA and make minor theft a felony.

Prop 20 would reinstate a “get tough” law enforcement system that

Prop 19 Property Tax Breaks NO

teen-year-olds who will be 18 by the next general election will be

Seventeen-year-olds who will be 18 by the next general election will be

PROP 17 Restore Voting Rights YES

Reverses ban on affirmative action, giving all Californians a fair

Prop 16   Opportunity for All YES

to portions of property taxes.

Will raise $12 billion annually by ensuring all corporate properties pay

DON’T THINK TWICE … When you turn in your completed election

ballot to a drop box in Santa Clara County, you may see just one but two boxes standing side by side. While the sight has raised questions and concerns with some community members, there’s no need to fret. The Registrar of Voters is using old drop boxes and new ones debuting this election season to handle the expected influx of ballots leading up to Nov. 3 at certain locations. Voters can drop off their sealed envelope in either box, which the county registrar promises will be safely retrieved by Registrar of Voters workers and returned to the office to be processed and counted.

The front of the new boxes includes the words “Official Ballot Drop Box” and the Santa Clara County seal that features a rising sun and the words Ballot Drop Off.” The old boxes have “Ballot Drop Off” in large blue text at the front and the county seal in the bottom corner. The county has set up drop boxes in 96 locations across the county including four in Palo Alto at Palo Alto High, the Rinconada Library, City Hall and Mitchell Park Community Center.

THE MAGIC TOUCH … Some parents in Palo Alto and beyond were understandably disappointed earlier this month when the city excluded Magical Bridge from its playgrounds reopening plan. Since Oct. 5, the city moved ahead with reopening all other playgrounds and furniture with signs explaining the new social distancing rules. But while Magical Bridge remains closed, the city announced this week that it plans to reopen the popular Mitchell Park attraction in mid-November, if not sooner. City Manager Ed Shilk Doors said that the city is working on a plan to keep the playground staffed by redploying city employees from other facilities.

There are a few steps that need to get covered in order to both handle reddeployments and to work with volunteers to make sure it’s handled with training and safety protocols in place, and have that facility open as quickly as possible,” Shilk said at the Oct. 13 City Council meeting. The city, he said, has been working on its reopening plan with the Magical Bridge Foundation, a nonprofit that advocates for the establishment of playgrounds accessible to children and adults of all abilities. Shilk added that because other the playgrounds are not staffed by the city, it is up to adults who visit the playgrounds with their children to make sure everyone is playing safely. “We want to ensure the community members are aware that it is everyone’s responsibility to ensure that these play structures and playgrounds are used with a focus on safety and adhering to posted signage rules,” Shilk said.

GOING ALONG FOR THE RIDE … Bike to Work Day has been a highly anticipated annual celebration throughout the Bay Area for years, but the COVID-19 pandemic forced organizers of the popular event originally scheduled for Sept. 24 to reschedule it to Oct. 2 at Bike to Wherever Days celebrated throughout September, with a special one-day event on Sept. 24. Riders were encouraged to ride their bicycles not only to work, but to parks, to run errands, or to other activities. More than 3,600 riders joined across the Bay Area, matching previous years’ numbers, according to the Silicon Valley Bicycle Coalition and Metropolitan Transportation Commission. Despite the poor air quality due to fires and smoke the Bay Area, bicyclists from every Bay Area county participated in the event. Overall, adjusted for population, Santa Clara County had the largest percentage of riders. “Even with the challenges, Bay Area residents got out and showed how important biking is,” MTC Chair Scott Hagerty wrote on the agency’s blog. “It bodes well for biking as an everyday mode for people to get to their destinations, which helps reduce greenhouse gases, while improving physical and mental health.”

This amounts to another step backward.

— Jeff Smith, executive of Santa Clara County, on the reopening of professional sports stadiums. See story on page 8.

Around Town

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ELECTION 2020

Will charter school money influence Santa Clara County school board race?

Charter organizations give big to Grace Mah, while labor and teachers unions support Melissa Baten Caswell

by Elena Kadavy

With Election Day less than two weeks away, outside money is pouring into the Santa Clara County Board of Education Area 1 race, with charter school opponents making large contributions to incumbent Grace Mah.

Charter school political action committees and representatives have contributed more than $200,000 to Mah’s campaign in the last four weeks, many of them large donations that came in after the most recent reporting period. The Charter Public Schools Political Action Committee (PAC) has made two large donations: $75,000 on Sept. 28 and $105,000 on Oct. 13, according to campaign finance reports. Other contributions came from Santa Clara Charter Advocates for Great Public Schools ($5,000) and Champions for Education PAC ($20,000) as well as members of the boards of directors of Rocketship Public Schools, ACE Charter School and Bullis Charter School in Los Altos. Mah’s campaign raised about $80,000 through Sept. 19, bringing her current reported total to about $290,000.

Melissa Baten Caswell — a current Palo Alto school board member who’s running against Mah, who is also a Palo Alto resident — has raised nearly $50,000 from donors who have publicly opposed or criticized Bullis Charter School, whose renewal will come to the board in 2022. Her campaign also received this month about $30,400 in two weeks, many of them large donations that came in after the most recent reporting period. Baten Caswell’s campaign raised about $140,000 as of Sept. 19, bringing her current reported total to about $290,000.

The funding in this race underscores the ongoing anti-charter sentiment on the current county board, though both candidates resist being labeled as pro- or anti-charter. The county board, which currently oversees 21 charter schools, is responsible for authorizing new charter schools and renewing existing ones.

Mah characterized the sizable donations to her campaign as a response to the “financial arms race” produced by Bullis Charter, who raised nearly $90,000 early in the campaign, including from labor unions and teachers unions (both of which are perceived as anti-charter) and the Bullis critics.

Mah said she hasn’t had discussions with the charter school organizations but has seen their support for her campaign as driven by a “threat of the anti-charter school sentiment.” She said she’s been shocked by the amount of money coming into both her own and Baten Caswell’s campaign and thinks there should be limits on fundraising. In her last three campaigns for this seat, she said the most she ever raised was $10,000. In her 2016 campaign, she raised less than $4,000, according to campaign finance reports.

In a statement, Gregory McGinnis, executive director of the California Charter School Association (CCSA) Advocates, which operates the Charter Public Schools PAC, said that the organization backs Mah because of her “proven track record of supporting all students.”

“Experience and stability are especially important during these uncertain times,” he wrote. “Her continued commitment to expanding preschool opportunities, supporting teachers and educational equity has proven to us that she is a much-needed voice on the board.”

The charter school political action committees that support Mah have also made large donations to another Santa Clara County school board member’s reelection campaign: Joseph Di Salvo, who represents Area 4, the majority portion of San Jose Unified, a portion of Oak Grove and corresponding portion of East Side Union High school district. Meanwhile, Di Salvo’s opponent, Ketzel Gomez, has received campaign contributions from labor unions and Business PACs (including Sangeeth Peruri, a former Los Altos school board member and Baten Caswell’s campaign chair).

In an interview, Peruri said Baten Caswell’s team set a fundraising goal early on of $100,000 to $200,000, estimating they would have to spend about $1 to $2 to reach each of the approximately 130,000 voters in Area 1. He defended charter opponents as “localists” based rather than from “out of town special interests.” Baten Caswell has been endorsed by 27 of 30 local school board trustees and all six teachers unions in the Area 1 districts.

Steve Brown, a Los Altos resident and member of a group called “Unintended Consequences” that was critical of Bullis, gave $10,000 to Baten Caswell’s campaign. In an interview, he said he’s convinced that Baten Caswell is better aligned than Mah with his priorities of collaboration, accountability and transparency.

Brown said he’s not against charter schools — in fact, he has donated to some — but is concerned that Bullis is not serving disadvantaged students well and needs to be held accountable.

“They don’t reflect the ethnicity and race of our community, which is part of the intent of the Charter (Schools) Act, and they don’t serve the disadvantaged kids,” Brown said. “With that in mind, I think the role of the county as the chartering organization should help their board understand their obligation to do that.

“If a charter they’ve chartered is not doing a good job,” he said of the county board, “they need to rope them in.”

Peruri said Baten Caswell has publicly stated she has no intention of shutting down Bullis Charter School but that she sees a need for greater oversight, which resonates with him and other vocal critics of the charter school.

“Shutting down BCS does no one any favors. But one thing that she would like to see is better oversight and changes in practices in the renewal that would address and change the demographics,” he said.

Three incumbents on the county school board are up for reelection on Nov. 3. Mah noted that the county school board president, Claudia Rossi, who’s been described as a charter opponent, has endorsed three other charter opponents running against her board colleagues.

Fundraising on both sides of the Area 1 school board race is outsized compared to other local county school board races. In the San Mateo County Board of Education race, incumbent Rod Hisao has raised about $61,500 and challenger Chelsea Bonini close to $21,000, according to campaign finance documents.

Mah, a Republican, also drew criticism last week after sending out a mailer with a complimentary quote from Roh Khandha, D-Fremont, who’s endorsed Baten Caswell, a Democrat, and the image of a kicking donkey that looks like the Democratic donkey logo.

In a press release, the Santa Clara County Democratic Party blasted Mah for the “misleading” mailer and the contributions she’s received from “out-of-town PACs.”

Staff Writer Elena Kadavy can be emailed at ekadavy@pawweekly.com.
Bucking state guidelines, county to keep stadiums, theme parks closed

County executive: State’s decision to allow large venues to reopen is ‘unconscionable’

by Sue Dremann and Ana B. Ibarra

Professional sporting events will not be allowed to have audiences and theme parks will not resume operation anytime soon in Santa Clara County, despite the state’s decision that allows them to reopen, county leaders said on Tuesday afternoon.

Restrictions on theme parks and sports venues will not be relaxed for some time locally, county administrators said, citing the trajectory of rising COVID-19 cases throughout the nation and warnings by federal and state officials that this fall and winter could see a dramatic rise in infection rates.

“We want to make it clear that superspreader events will not be allowed within the county of Santa Clara,” county Executive Jeff Smith said during a press conference in San Jose.

The California Department of Public Health’s new guidance allows professional sporting events at outdoor stadiums and race tracks to resume at 20% capacity in counties in the “orange” tier (indicating a moderate risk level for COVID-19) and at 25% capacity in the “yellow” tier counties (those with a minimal risk). Customers must reside within a 120-mile radius. The guidance applies only to professional sports—not to youth or adult recreational, amateur, semi-pro or collegiate sporting competitions, according to the state.

“The changes in the state’s guidelines regarding professional sports in our opinion is really quite dangerous,” Smith said. “You just do the math. Twenty percent of the number of capacity at Levi’s Stadium means just under 14,000 people could attend a football game there, and if you look around the county and around the region within 150 miles of this county there are areas and communities that have positivity rates of COVID that are in the 8% range. Ours in this county happens to be around 1%.”

He estimated that somewhere between 250 and 1,000 people out of the 14,000 who would attend a football game at Levi’s Stadium would be infected.

“There is no question — this is dangerous. This is the worst thing to be doing at a time when California is beginning to see some light. This amounts to another step backward,” he said.

The state has also allowed theme parks with an overall capacity of less than 15,000 to resume limited operations if their county is in the “orange” tier, with capacity limited to 25% or 500 people, whichever is fewer. The smaller parks may only open outdoor attractions, and visitors must reside in the same county as the park.

County Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody tried to convince the state that reopening the venues where thousands would gather “is a really unwise idea,” Smith said. She was unsuccessful, however.

Speaking for himself and not for the county, Smith said that the state’s new guidance “not only boggles the mind, it is unconscionable.”

Newsom sends vaccine plan to CDC

Coronavirus vaccines approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in coming months will not be distributed in California until a statewide panel of health experts can ensure they meet safety requirements, Gov. Gavin Newsom announced Monday.

While there is no vaccine available yet, California and other states have been gearing up for its eventual distribution. On Oct. 16, California sent a draft of its vaccination plan to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. In the draft, state officials said a scientific safety review work group, made up of immunization and public health experts from agencies and universities across the state, including Stanford University, will help ensure public confidence in vaccine safety, efficacy, and implementation efforts.

Other states also have created committees to review any coming vaccine in response to concerns that the Trump administration might rush the regulatory approval process.

“This vaccine plan will move at the speed of trust,” Newsom said. “You have to have confidence in the efficacy of the vaccine, confidence that we’re not rushing to judgment in terms of its distribution and its accessibility.”

The drug company Pfizer is expected to have one of the first coronavirus vaccines. If its vaccine proves effective, safe and can be consistently manufactured, the company would apply for emergency use authorization in the third week of November, CEO Albert Bourla said in an open letter last week.

But even if the vaccine is ready in this calendar year, Newsom said, the supply is expected to be limited and, just like previously with coronavirus diagnostic testing, people who are considered high risk would be the first in line.

In one projection, Newsom said that about 45 million doses could be ready for nationwide distribution by the end of this year. California would only get a percentage of these, and each person will likely need two doses. Health workers and first responders would be prioritized, followed by people with high risk of becoming severely ill if infected, according to the state’s vaccination plan.

To the rest of Californians: Don’t anticipate getting a vaccine at your local pharmacy anytime this year, Newsom said. •

Staff Writer Sue Dremann can be e-mailed at sdremann@pawweekly.com. CalMatters health reporter Ana Ibarra can be e-mailed at ana@calmatters.org. CalMatters COVID-19 coverage is supported by grants from the Blue Shield of California Foundation, the California Wellness Foundation and the California Health Care Foundation.
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still researching those candidates and measures on the November ballot? The Palo Alto Weekly can help! We’ve compiled an election guide that includes articles, video interviews, endorsements and more. To find it, go to PaloAltoOnline.com and search for “Election Guide 2020.” Included in it are sections on:

Palo Alto City Council: This year’s race for the City Council is a crowded one. Two incumbents are among the 10 candidates vying for four open seats. The list also includes a former mayor, a teacher running for the second time and six newcomers.

Palo Alto Unified School District: Six people are vying for three open seats on the Palo Alto school board. This year’s roster includes two incumbents and four newcomers. Voters will also decide on whether to renew a parcel tax that brings $15.6 million annually to the district.

East Palo Alto City Council: East Palo Alto is a city in transition, and its City Council could see new faces on the dais depending on how results pan out this fall. Three incumbents are looking to keep their seats in the race that has four newcomers. Our coverage includes video interviews.

Ravenswood City School District Board of Trustees: East Palo Alto and eastern Menlo Park voters will also choose between seven candidates looking to make an impact on the K-8 district’s board, which has two open seats. Find video interviews in this section online.

Races, measures across the region, state: Several county, state and federal races will undoubtedly influence decisions made on a local level. In addition, a variety of measures and propositions are on the table.

Voter resources: An unprecedented number of voters are casting their ballots by mail ahead of Nov. 3. Find out how mail-in voting will work this fall, the security measures to ensure election integrity, plus other articles on this election season.

Videos: Hop over to our YouTube channel for nearly two-dozen videos with the candidates for the Palo Alto council and school board and the East Palo Alto council and school board. We’ve compiled a playlist, which includes our recent debates at YouTube.com/paweekly.

Endorsements: The Weekly editorial board has recommended candidates in the Palo Alto City Council and Board of Education races, plus weighed in on local measures and state propositions. Read our reasoning behind the endorsements in this section of the Election Guide 2020.
With the local economy shaken and city revenues on a steep decline, Palo Alto is preparing to reconsider its most ambitious infrastructure project: the new public safety building that is slated to go up in the California Avenue business district.

The city has recently gone out to bid on the project, which has an estimated price tag of $115 million. City Manager Ed Shikada said Monday that the city expects to get the bids back in the coming weeks, giving the council a chance to approve construction work for the project before the end of the year.

The city's infrastructure plan had envisioned breaking ground on the long-awaited project at 250 Sherman Ave. immediately after the city completes construction of the adjacent parking garage at 350 Sherman Ave. Work on the garage is now nearing conclusion.

A bleak budget picture could upend the plan. On Monday night, Shikada and the city's Chief Financial Officer Kiely Nose presented a financial update to the City Council that offered a decidedly mixed and somewhat fuzzy picture of the city's current financial predicament.

There are some hopeful signs. With Santa Clara County easing its business restrictions in recent months, staff have seen sales tax revenues inch back up after a precipitous drop in March, when shelter-at-home orders began. The city budget that the council passed in June estimated $20.5 million in sales tax revenues, a 40% drop from the prior year. Now, staff believe the actual figure could exceed the budgeted revenue by between $2 million and $9 million.

That positive trend, however, is offset by massive losses of hotel revenues. With some hotels shutting down and others seeing their occupancy rates plummet from above 80% before the COVID-19 pandemic to single digits in March, the council had expected to see its hotel revenues drop to $14.9 million, roughly half of what it was in the prior year. But with the health crisis now expected to languish well into 2021, staff’s prior hopes of a steady recovery at the end of the year have largely dissipated. Hotel revenues are now expected to fall short of the budgeted estimate by $11 million in the most dire scenario, or by $5.5 million in a more optimistic one, according to staff.

The city's prognosis, however, is obscured by the virus. A major wildcard is the risk of a “second wave” of COVID-19 cases that would further damage the local economy.

“Ultimately, as we think about what’s happening to our city, both economically and financially, it’s all being driven by the virus, one way or another — and how it’s in control or not, and ultimately the efforts underway in addressing that public health emergency,” Nose said.

The hotel slump could prematurely end Palo Alto’s ongoing building blitz. Following a plan that the council approved in 2014, the city completed the construction of a new fire station at Rinconada Park in March and moved ahead with the 636-space garage in the California Avenue district. Crews also recently broke ground on the new bike bridge over U.S. Highway 101.

The new public safety building, which has been in Palo Alto's planning pipeline for decades, would serve as the new headquarters of the Palo Alto Police Department. Over the years, various councils and citizen commissions had deemed the existing police headquarters, which has been housed in a City Hall wing since 1970, to be cramped, seismically unsafe and noncompliant with accessibility codes.

The Palo Alto City Council is reconsidering the proposed public safety building, pictured here, because of falling revenues.
coverage of removal could have lasting negative impact, even if the reason is a political and professional disagreement.

Michael Alcheck, a member of the Planning and Transportation Commission, similarly requested that the council consider the rule. As the commission’s staunchest advocate for growth, Alcheck has frequently faced criticism from resi-
dents. He has also been subject to conflict-of-interest accusations for failing to disclose his efforts to con-
vert two carports to garages while participating in the commission’s revision of policies that govern
these conversions (the Office of the City Attorney had indicated that his actions did not constitute a conflict).

Alcheck told the council that there may be many valid reasons to remove a commissioner from an advisory board and that there needs to be a clear process for doing so. He also argued, however, that al-
lowing removal of a commissioner without cause, notice or hearing is “very concerning.” The rule, he not-
ed, will allow the council to remove commissioners for political reasons.

“Planning commissioners are appointed by the City Council in
stead of elected by the residents so that their recommendations can be made independent of their popular-
ity,” Alcheck said. “Over the past decade, our political bodies have become subject to great polariza-
tion and partisanship and we must not ignore the real threat that com-
misions may be removed solely in an effort to stifle diverse perspec-
tives in our community.”

Others pushed back against the change, commenting that the media communications and encourage
commissioners to direct inquiries to reporters from the city’s chief
communications officer.

Patricia Regher, who serves on the Human Relations Commission, criticized the council’s proposals to restrict commissioners’ power to speak freely to the press and to grant itself the power to remove any volunteer without cause.

“I think that’s a horrible way to manage someone,” she said.

Regerh suggested the new rule on not speaking to the media in-
duced on this topic, “Why a gag order on the First Amendment
rights of volunteers. Her former commission colleague, Steven Lee,
shared the view and requested in a letter that the council remove the “draconian and Trumpian policies” that restrict a commissioner’s rights to speak freely.

“You can dress this up any way you want, and while I’m sure no one on staff or council will admit this publicly, but I know and the public knows that this proposal is nothing less than an attempt to silence minority voices, minor-
ity opinions, expert opinions and progressive views that staff and
council disagrees with,” wrote Lee, who is running this November for a council seat.

The council also heard from three members of the Parks and Recre-
ation Commission, all of whom spoke out against a new proposal to reduce the number of commis-
sion seats from seven to five. Chair Jeff Greenfield and Commissioners David Moss and Keith Reckdaill all suggested that cutting seats on the commission would reduce its capa-
city to conduct public outreach and make it more difficult for mem-
bers to manage workloads.

Reducing membership, Moss said, “will probably double our loud.”

The proposal to revise commis-
sion rules followed a nearly year-
long review of commission opera-
tions. Vice Chair Tony DuBois and Councilwoman Alison Cormack surveyed past and current commis-
sioners earlier this year and pro-
posed these rules to address what they perceive to be shortcomings in the current system.

Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner can be emailed at gsheyner@paweeekly.com.
Charming Palo Alto
Crescent Park Setting

756 University Avenue, Palo Alto
Bedrooms: 2  |  Bathrooms: 2  | Living: +/-1,313 sq ft
List Price: $1,698,000

Nick Granoski | 650-269-8556
Nick@GranoskiWeil.com
DRE 00994196

David Weil | 650-823-3855
David@GranoskiWeil.com
DRE 01400271
By 2031, local cities would need to accommodate tens of thousands of new housing units under a plan by the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG), which expects significant population growth in the Bay Area. Palo Alto would have to grow the most, relative to its existing number of households, but Mountain View wouldn’t be far behind. Data source: Association of Bay Area Governments.

### Housing

(continued from page 5)

have plenty of jobs and transportation services and that are deemed “high opportunity” areas based on economic, educational and environmental factors. It also looks to place additional obligations on cities that exhibit economic and racial exclusion. An outsize share of the obligation will go to the area’s three largest cities — San Francisco, San Jose and Oakland. San Francisco would have to plan for 72,080 housing units, San Jose for 66,522 and Oakland for 27,286.

Silicon Valley would see dramatic growth under the proposed scenario. Jurisdictions in Santa Clara County account for 143,550 of the units between 2023 and 2031, or about two-thirds of the nine-county-region’s total allocation. Alameda County is a very distant second, with a 19% share and 5,669 total units.

Alternative 8A creates two different methods for determining how many housing units each jurisdiction should build: one for low-income housing and another for market-rate housing. Allocation for housing units in the “very low” and “low” income categories would be primarily based on the existence of “high opportunity areas” in a given jurisdiction. That factor alone accounts for 70% of the allocation. The remaining 30% is split evenly between two factors: the ability to reach a job by car within 30 minutes and the ability to reach a job by transit within 45 minutes.

For “moderate” and “above moderate” units, 60% of the allocation is based on job proximity by an automobile, while the other 40% is based on access to “high opportunity areas.”

The housing numbers are particularly eye-popping in Palo Alto and in Mountain View, two cities that enjoy a wealth of jobs, quality schools, Caltrain access and a broad swath of census tracts listed as “highest opportunity” by the state housing department. Alternative 8A assigns 10,058 housing units to Palo Alto, which includes 4,055 units in the “very low” and “low” income categories, between 2023 and 2031. It reaches a conclusion that it has consistently failed to meet its own target of 300 new units per year. If the city were to actually build this housing, the new units would represent a growth rate of 36%, higher than any other city in the county.

Mountain View is expecting an assignment of 11,380 units, with 4,532 of them in the two lowest income categories. Its growth rate would be 33%, according to ABAG.

The cities of Santa Clara and Sunnyvale would be asked to plan for 12,047 and 12,998 housing units, respectively, though because they have larger populations the additional housing units represents growth rates of 26% and 23%, respectively.

The Oct. 15 decision is not yet final. Residents and cities will have a chance between Oct. 25 and Nov. 12 to comment to ABAG before final housing allocations are released. Even so, the Executive Board’s vote represented a major milestone for a yearlong process that featured dozens of meetings involving housing advocates, builders, county supervisors and council members from ABAG’s region.

Even after Alternative 8A emerged as the favored consensus of the majority, many members expressed all sorts of concerns about the adopted approach.

Officials from Napa and Sonoma counties warned about the perils of requiring heavy growth in environmentally sensitive areas that may be vulnerable to wildfires.

Representatives from Contra Costa County warned that methodology that allocates too many units into “high opportunity area” creates an impossible burden for small communities that will not be able to accommodate the growth. A coalition of cities from Contra Costa County proposed an alternative that would shift additional allocations to the south bay, saddling the region with 44% of the Bay Area’s total housing allocation, compared to 29% under Alternative 8A.

“Many in the surrounding regions are concerned that they are being asked to plan for housing in mental areas we have in the last quarter of a century,” with south bay cities producing far more jobs than housing. Palo Alto leaders worry about Alternative 8A for the exact opposite reason. The regional mandate, they have argued in a series of letters to ABAG, represents an impossible task.

“It is fundamentally not reasonable to accept that some jurisdictions will be able to accommodate increasing its housing stock upwards of 25% to 40% over the next eight years,” Palo Alto City Manager Ed Shikada wrote to the ABAG Executive Board last month. “Not since the end of World War II have we established Bay Area communities seen such unprecedented growth.”

“Beyond that, considering the actual feasibility of adding 10,000 new housing units in a small to medium size jurisdiction. Higher property values, less land, less federal and state funding to subsidize housing, and known limitations on infrastructure all conspire against the ambitious and unachievable housing goals being contemplated by the California Transportation Commission. On the other side of the debate are those who believe that wealthy communities have an obligation to go even further in creating low-income housing. East Palo Alto Vice Mayor Carlos Romero, who serves on the board of the regional planning committee, called the housing goals “ambitious and unachievable.”

Palo Alto City Manager Ed Shikada, in a letter to ABAG, called the housing goals “ambitious and unachievable.”

Palo Alto leaders are both protesting the allocation and planning for its adoption.

The decision is not final, but it’s getting there. Public comments will be taken on the plan for two-and-a-half weeks starting on Oct. 25. Email RHNA@bayareametro.gov. A public meeting will be held on Nov. 12, after which the ABAG Executive Board will again vote on the method. In 2021, the state Department of Housing and Community Development will review the plan; ABAG will then issue the draft allocations, which will be followed by an appeal period in the summer prior to final allocations in late 2021.

### What’s at stake

- The Bay Area must plan for 441,116 new homes by 2031, an allocation that no one has agreed to, according to the state. Of these, 114,442 would be for low and very-low wage earners.
- The Association of Bay Area Government (ABAG) decided on Oct. 15 on a methodology for allocating new housing to the 101 cities and nine counties in the region.
- The methodology places more housing in cities where opportunities — defined as educational, economic and environmental resources — are higher and that have more jobs or easier access to jobs via public transit or automobile.
- Palo Alto would be allocated 10,058 housing units, the most relative to the number of households of any Santa Clara County city, amounting to growth by 36% in the eight-year cycle, 2023-2031.
- Palo Alto City Manager Ed Shikada, in a letter to ABAG, called the housing goals “ambitious and unachievable.”
- Palo Alto leaders are both protesting the allocation and planning for its adoption.
- The decision is not final, but it’s getting there. Public comments will be taken on the plan for two-and-a-half weeks starting on Oct. 25. Email RHNA@bayareametro.gov. A public meeting will be held on Nov. 12, after which the ABAG Executive Board will again vote on the method. In 2021, the state Department of Housing and Community Development will review the plan; ABAG will then issue the draft allocations, which will be followed by an appeal period in the summer prior to final allocations in late 2021.

### Market Place

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Cityview
A round-up of Palo Alto government action this week

City Council (Oct. 19)

Finance
The council heard an update about the city’s budget and voted to extend the “at-risk lane” ramp for Fire Department employees, possibly by dipping into the council’s $744,000 reserve. Yes: Comarick, DuBois, Filseth, Kniss, Kou, Palmateer. No: Zinman.

Council Finance Committee (Oct. 22)

The council heard an update about the city’s $6 million budget and voted to approve it. Moun- tain View Council member Chris Clark, who sits on ABAG’s Executive Board, spoke for many when
“It is practically infeasible for a jurisdiction the size of Palo Alto to drastically increase the number of housing units in a short period of time,” the report states.

While the city is not required to actually build all the housing in the allocation, it is required to update its Housing Element to identify the sites that can accommodate the units, as well as the strategies that the city is pursuing to enable development. This could include rezoning commercial sites to residential use and relaxing development standards to allow more housing units.

Some members of the City Council believe the entire RHNA process is critically flawed and reject the notion that the city could — or should — try to meet the regionally adopted targets. In July, shortly after the state housing department determined that the Bay Area region needs to plan for 441,176 new units, Vice Mayor Tom DuBois and council members Eric Filseth and Lydia Kou co-authored a letter to Shikida, City Attorney Molly Stump and Lait expressing their objections to the agency’s growth figures.

The numbers, they argued in the July 9 letter, are based on “an aggressive and unrealistic job growth projection for the Bay Area and Silicon Valley in particular — even before COVID-19.”

“They note growth numbers have been translated into unachievable housing growth rates, especially affordable housing growth rates, that simply cannot be met under any zoning without massive outside investments — subsidies which have never been forthcoming in the past, and are unlikely to appear in the future,” the letter states. “The HCD plan represents a gigantic unfunded mandate!”

At the same time, council members and planners recognize that the RHNA process, which was once relatively easy to ignore, is starting to grow some teeth. Under Senate Bill 35, cities that fall well short of their targets in particular income categories will lose some of their power to say no to new developments in these categories. The 2017 law creates a streamlined approval process in these communities, requiring approval of housing developments within either 60 days or 90 days, depending on the number of units. In addition, these developments would be allowed to dedicate 10% of their units to below-market-rate housing, below the city’s normal standard of 15%.

During an Oct. 5 discussion of Palo Alto’s newly created “planned housing zone,” Lait told the council that the city has an interest in meeting the SB 35 thresholds to maintain local control.” Otherwise, housing developments would be approved by right, with no design review and, in some instances, with substantial breaks on parking, Lait said.

Others welcome the RHNA process as an opportunity to implement some much-needed changes. During the council’s Sept. 21 discussion of affordable housing, Mayor Adrian Fine observed that while some dismiss the city’s allocation of more than 10,000 units as “crazy,” the process also creates an opportunity for the city to “exercise local control.”

“I think it’s good for our community to create new neighborhoods and places for new families,” Fine said. “It’s also good in terms of our diversity and, frankly, it begins to fulfill a small part of the regional obligations, which I know some of us have issues with, but that hammer isn’t getting any softer.”

Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner can be emailed at gsheyner@paweekly.com.
City looks to nix Foothills Park restriction

Spurred by a lawsuit from a coalition that includes ALCU, the NAACP, Palo Alto is preparing to permanently abolish a long-standing policy of limiting Foothills Park only to residents and their guests.

The City Council plans to consider on Nov. 2 a new recommendation from City Manager Ed Shikada and City Attorney Molly Stump to settle the lawsuit by abolishing the policy and making the nature preserve accessible to all. The new policy would also limit daily entrance to the park.

The council approved the recommendation in response to a lawsuit filed by the city of Palo Alto, the Clausen Foundation and Save Our Parks that alleges the city’s policy of limiting entry to residents and their guests is discriminatory.

The policy was first implemented in the 1970s and has been in place ever since. City Manager Shikada said it was the result of a lawsuit settlement.

The city council will consider the recommendation at its meeting on Nov. 2, with a vote expected to take place the following week.

City councilors expressed support for the recommendation, with some members noting that it could potentially open up the park to more people.

Councilor Susan Trinh said she would support the recommendation, saying, “This is a good move forward for the city.”

Councilor Mark Stone also supported the recommendation, saying, “I think it’s important that we make the park accessible to everyone.”

The recommendation will also need to be approved by the board of directors of the Save Our Parks foundation, which owns the property.

The council also discussed other potential changes to the park, including the possibility of adding new amenities and increasing access to the park. Councilor Trinh noted that the city could consider adding more parking spaces or opening up additional trails.

The recommendation to nix the policy will be considered at the council’s next meeting on Nov. 2.

The Palo Alto Weekly is adjudicated to publish in Santa Clara County.

City councilors phasing out parking permits

Palo Alto is phasing out its parking permit program for nonresidents, effective immediately.

The program, which has been in place for more than two decades, required nonresidents to purchase permits to park in the city’s public lots and garages.

The council’s decision toPhase out the program follows a recent review of the program’s effectiveness.

Councilor Mark Stone said the council reviewed the program and decided it was no longer necessary.

Councilor Susan Trinh agreed, adding that the program was not being used effectively.

The council’s decision to phase out the program comes as the city continues to work on a comprehensive parking strategy.

The city has been working on a parking strategy for several years, and the council is expected to consider adopting a new strategy in the coming months.

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Revenue

(continued from page 11)

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News Digest

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Susanne Friedlaender
March 8, 1930 – August 17, 2020

Sue Friedlaender passed away peacefully in her sleep on August 17, 2020, after a lengthy illness. Sue was born in 1930 in Berlin, Germany. Her family was fortunate to be able to escape Nazi persecution and settle in Michigan. She received a bachelor’s in Education from the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

Sue married Frank Friedlaender and moved to Pasadena. She completed a Master’s in Library Science at USC and worked in the children’s department of the Pasadena Public Library where Saturday morning children’s storytime was the highlight of her week.

After their first two children were born, Sue and Frank relocated to Ladera. All three of Sue’s children attended Peninsula School in Menlo Park. She valued Peninsula’s progressive, creative orientation to education and worked as a librarian there for years, where she sparked a love of reading and learning in many children.

In the 1980’s, Sue began the next chapter of her life in Palo Alto where she founded The Bridge Language School. She taught English as a second language, German, and offered many other languages through a cadre of teachers.

Sue loved to garden, enjoyed art and music, and highly valued beauty in the world around her. Sue was strongly committed to beauty in the world and deep appreciation for learning. Sue took great pride in sharing generations of family history through detailed records and animated storytelling. She made friends wherever she went, greeting everyone with a smile and genuine interest.

She is survived by her younger brother Walter List, her son David, her daughters Lenore and Diane, her grandchildren, Hannah, Zach, Miles and Josie, and former husband Frank.

The family thanks Kensington Memory Care for their exceptional love and care for Sue for these last few years and the palliative care team at Kaiser Redwood City and Kindred Hospice Services.

Memorial donations may be made to Smile Train www.smiletrain.org/
We are reprinting our editorial endorsements below for readers who may have missed them in prior weeks.

For full explanations of the positions taken on local candidates and issues, go to PaloAltoOnline.com/news/section/editorials.

Voters who are still researching measures and candidates prior to casting their ballots can also find helpful articles all gathered in our Election Guide on PaloAltoOnline.com (search for “Election Guide 2020”).

U.S. Congress
Anna Eshoo (D)(inc)

State Senate
Josh Becker (D)

State Assembly
Marc Berman (D)(inc)

County Board of Education
Melissa Baten Caswell

Foothill-DeAnza College District Board
Peter Landsberger (inc)
Laura Casas (inc)
Gilbert Wong (inc)

Palo Alto City Council
Pat Burt
Ed Lauing
Greer Stone
Lydia Kou (inc)

Palo Alto Unified School District Board
Jennifer DiBrienza (inc)
Todd Collins (inc)
Jesse Ladomirak

Local and state ballot measures

Measure O - YES
Palo Alto Unified School District Parcel Tax (requires two-thirds vote)

Measure S - NO
Santa Clara Valley Water District Parcel Tax (requires two-thirds vote)

Measure RR - YES
Caltrain Sales Tax Measure (requires two-thirds vote)

State propositions

Prop. 14 - No Stem cell bonds
Prop. 15 - Yes Commercial property tax split roll
Prop. 16 - Yes Affirmative action
Prop. 17 - Yes Parolees’ right to vote
Prop. 18 - Yes 17-year old vote in primaries
Prop. 19 - Yes Transfer of tax base
Prop. 20 - No Criminal justice reform rollbacks
Prop. 21 - Yes Rent control at local level
Prop. 22 - No Gig workers as independent contractors
Prop. 23 - No Dialysis clinic requirements
Prop. 24 - Yes Data privacy
Prop. 25 - Yes Cash bail referendum

A quality-of-life issue

Editor: Regarding the Castilleja School expansion, let’s be clear, this debate is not a referendum on women’s education. Everyone in Palo Alto supports women’s education.

And this is not a debate on the quality of education that Castilleja provides. Castilleja is a fine school, as we are blessed with a number of fine schools in the area such as Palo, Gunn, Sacred Heart Prep, Menlo School and Pinewood.

The issue — and only issue on the table — is the question of Castilleja’s efforts to bully its neighbors and all of Palo Alto in a money grab to expand it’s already over-committed location to allow for more $45,000 per year sources of revenue (aka students).

The issue is this: As reported in the Draft Environmental Impact Report, traffic caused by the expansion of Palo Alto’s Castilleja School was identified as a “significant and unavoidable” impact to the neighborhood.

That’s the only fact that matters — that the Castilleja expansion will have a negative impact on the traffic, quality of life, and safety to all of Palo Alto, with nothing of value being returned by the Castilleja expansion.

The sad point is that Castilleja has the wealth and resources to explore other expansion options. For example, look at what Harker and Pinewood did to expand by creating a second campus. And I’m sure that nearby cities would cherish the opportunity to have a bustling Castilleja campus in their community.

One last and interesting question: How many signs in support of Castilleja’s expansion have you seen around Palo Alto? Sure, we see lots of signs supporting Castilleja the school or supporting women’s education, but not a single sign supporting the unwelcome Castilleja expansion.

Bill Schmarzo
Emerson St, Palo Alto

Climate change and housing

Editor: For those of you who haven’t lived in Palo Alto for half a century, 95 degrees, three days in a row in the middle of October, is not an “Indian summer.” It’s not normal. It’s climate change. Wildfires in November (2018) is not normal. No freeze for 15 winters in a row (2004 through 2019) is not normal. No fog in August is not normal. Not only are three days in a row with temperatures 25 degrees above average in the middle of October not normal, it’s terrifying.

Two of the three biggest factors in humans heating up the planet are transportation and building. In refusing to allow density housing, Palo Altans are forcing people to drive and drive longer.

Until the planetary population stops increasing, more housing needs to be built, but Palo Alto builds 6,000-square-foot dwellings for a family of four rather than 6,000 square feet for four families of four (a fourplex). The social climate change “money” spent on four people that could have been used for 16.

Palo Altans have been voting in “residentialists” for years. Palo Altans for Sensible Zoning is the political embodiment of the residentialists. A vote for anyone they endorse is a vote for climate change.

At what point does our refusal to build enough housing become criminal?

Deborah Goldsen
Birch Street, Palo Alto

Single-family zoning

The Weekly endorsed four candidates for Palo Alto’s City Council, all of whom strongly oppose state legislative mandates that would effectively eliminate single-family zoning for housing.

Yet, at the same time, the Weekly also endorses for reelection the current California Assembly representative, former Palo Alto City Councilman Marc Berman. This is somewhat odd because Berman supports state mandates that would override local control.

Berman voted in favor of SB1210 during the last legislative session. This bill, which did not pass because of time limits, would override local zoning ordinances and allow denser housing in single-family residence zones. There was an earlier and more draconian effort at busting up the single-family zoning, Scott Weiner’s SB50, which did not make it out of the State Senate a few years back and so Berman did not have to vote on it and was questioned, he weaseled out of making a clear statement. In a 2019 interview with the Weekly, he said that he “shares the bill’s goals.”

Residents who are concerned about housing policy directives from Sacramento overriding local control of zoning for housing should vote instead for someone who has taken a strong position against these proposals.

Arthur Liberman
Chimalus Drive, Palo Alto

No on Measure RR

Editor: I agree with Michael Brady in recommending a “no” vote on Measure RR. These regressive taxes contribute to making the Bay Area a horribly expensive place to live; especially for people of modest means, who must pay the greatest percentage of their income in these regressive taxes and fees. Each increase by itself does not amount to much, but the cumulative effect is to add to the unaffordability of the region. The tax proposal fails to take into account that residents are taking an economic hit from the never-ending lockdowns. Recommending a sales tax increase during these difficult times is simply tone deaf. Since the shutdowns began, the government has shown little sympathy to residents who have been ruined financially.

More alarming are reports that special interests are pouring millions of dollars into the push for
An Alternative View

Why a gag order for commissioners?

by Diana Diamond

In a proposed new handbook for some 41 members on Palo Alto’s boards and commissions, one recommendation from city staff states that these City Council appointees should avoid talking to the press: “Statements to the media should generally be avoided.”

That would certainly ensure less transparency in this city. And some commissioners are saying it is a draconian attempt to stifle their First Amendment rights.

Late last year, City Manager Ed Shikada told the council that some commissioners were speaking not as individuals but for the commission and as a result were giving mixed messages to the public. He added his concern that some conversations were talking about items in which the council was not interested.

The council decided that the city should develop standards and guidelines for these commissions, in a “broad and general way,” according to Councilman and then Mayor Eric Filseth. The council did not suggest any rules about talking to the press. Council members Tom DuBois and Alison Cormack were asked to work with staff on general instructions. Now we have a 33-page single-spaced handbook written by staff, filled with proposed regulations for commissioners.

There are seven boards and commissions, all of whom meet regularly. The handbook includes guidelines that not only discourage commissioners from talking to the media but also requires every board to submit a work plan for council approval, which, evidently, would disallow a commission from talking about events that occur during the year, like police-public conflicts and disturbances.

Most upsetting to some commissioners is that the book specifies the council can remove any commissioner at any time for any reason.

Wow! That sure doesn’t sound like open government, does it? So if a council has a divided Human Relations Commission, does that mean half the commission can summarily be dismissed because the council doesn’t like the recalcitrants who support something like gay marriage? Just asking. But we all need to ask because the rule is so unspecific that it appears to mean anyone could be removed at any time by the whim of the council.

I don’t like that.

The council started discussing these guidelines at last Monday’s meeting, but only commissioners spoke. The topic is on the agenda again this Monday, Oct. 26. Of course I am a journalist, I am particularly concerned about proposed rules that instruct commissioners not to talk to the press, which were first reported by the Daily Post.

Filseth earlier had told me that he was unaware of the rules about talking with the press. DuBois told me that neither he nor Cormack as council reps wrote the report.

I went through the document. In the index, the last item was “Addressing the Media and the Public.”

The first part read, “Statements to the media should generally be avoided. If asked, route questions through the Chair in collaboration with the City’s Chief Communications Officer.” Then it goes on to say: “When addressing the media, observe the following guidelines:”

• You must clarify who you represent as the speaker. Are you speaking in your capacity as a BCC (Board, Commission or Committee) Chair or as a private resident?

• Comments to the media or the public should be factual and accurate. Avoid speculation.

So what’s a commissioner supposed to do? Avoid talking to the press? But if s/he doesn’t talk to the press, s/he cannot express views differ from each other. And there is no singular message expected — just look at all the 4-3 council votes. There are usually majority and minority views on any committee, and boards and commissions in Palo Alto are no exception.

And why in the world does the chair of a commission have to work “in collaboration with the City’s Chief Communications Officer,” a staff person? Commissions should not need any staff approval in making their recommendations to the council.

The council runs the city, not the staff.

Period.

Diana Diamond is a longtime Palo Alto journalist, editor and author of the blog “An Alternative View,” which can be found at PaloAltoOnline.com/blogs. You can email her at DianaDiamond@gmail.com.

Follow the money

Editor, Greg Tanaka listed almost $43,000 in donations from real estate interests out of $68,591 reported on his California Form 460 filing for his July 1 to September 19 reporting period, according to public records.

In two previous California Form 460 filings, Tanaka also reported receiving $15,500 in donations from various real estate interests, both of those periods being before he filed papers in July of this year to run for reelection. That is an aggregate of at least $58,500 from real estate interests, which is a lot of money from a single business sector of our community.

Overall, Tanaka had $13,000 in donations during the last half of 2019 and $35,260 in donations so far in 2020 for a grand total through September 19 of $96,260, which is a lot of money (to say the least) to underwrite a local city council campaign. Presumably he has received more donations since September 19, which if received, may put him over the $100,000 mark.

We all hear that money buys “access.” Tanaka consistently votes pro-business. Wonder why? Possibly, “follow the money” as they say.

Palo Alto needs City Council members who have put — and will put — the interests and concerns of the residents of Palo Alto foremost in their deliberations. We do not need someone who is beholden to business.

Joe Hirsch
Georgia Avenue, Palo Alto

Stay safe

Editor, I am appalled, but I guess not surprised, after seeing photos of President Trump arrive back at the White House earlier this month still contagious — and remove his mask, and leave it off as he went into the building. He obviously doesn’t know that masks are to protect others almost more than to protect oneself. I sincerely hope that my fellow Palo Altans have more sense than that. Let’s continue to keep each other healthy.

Virginia Smedberg
Washington Avenue, Palo Alto

Letters

(continued from page 18)

this regressive Caltrain sales tax. The scope and intensity of the pro-RR push is disturbing. What is the hidden agenda behind Measure RR? Why are the special interests and stop the money a post-COVID-19 Caltrain ridership needed? And why are the special interests out of $68,591 reporters on his California Form 460 filing for his July 1 to September 19 reporting period, according to public records.

In two previous California Form 460 filings, Tanaka also reported receiving $15,500 in donations from various real estate interests, both of those periods being before he filed papers in July of this year to run for reelection. That is an aggregate of at least $58,500 from real estate interests, which is a lot of money from a single business sector of our community.

Overall, Tanaka had $13,000 in donations during the last half of 2019 and $35,260 in donations so far in 2020 for a grand total through September 19 of $96,260, which is a lot of money (to say the least) to underwrite a local city council campaign. Presumably he has received more donations since September 19, which if received, may put him over the $100,000 mark.

We all hear that money buys “access.” Tanaka consistently votes pro-business. Wonder why? Possibly, “follow the money” as they say.

Palo Alto needs City Council members who have put — and will put — the interests and concerns of the residents of Palo Alto foremost in their deliberations. We do not need someone who is beholden to business.

Joe Hirsch
Georgia Avenue, Palo Alto

Stay safe

Editor, I am appalled, but I guess not surprised, after seeing photos of President Trump arrive back at the White House earlier this month still contagious — and remove his mask, and leave it off as he went into the building. He obviously doesn’t know that masks are to protect others almost more than to protect oneself. I sincerely hope that my fellow Palo Altans have more sense than that. Let’s continue to keep each other healthy.

Virginia Smedberg
Washington Avenue, Palo Alto

www.PaloAltoOnline.com • Palo Alto Weekly • October 23, 2020 • Page 19
580 Addison Avenue, Palo Alto

Luxurious Living in Prime Palo Alto
The sought-after neighborhood of Professorville sets the stage for this beautiful 5-bedroom, 5-bathroom home, with over 3,750 square feet of luxury living space on a corner lot of more than 5,750 square feet. Built in 2008, and showcasing outstanding build quality throughout, this home offers elegant spaces to go along with a modern floorplan. A grand staircase connects all three levels of this bright, airy residence, which boasts expansive gathering spaces including the living room centered by a fireplace, the chef’s kitchen with appliances from JennAir and Bosch, and the light-filled family room with backyard access. The master suite opens to a private balcony, while the home’s additional bedrooms include one that easily converts into office space to work from home in style. An au pair quarters with its own outside entrance completes the downstairs. Entertain guests with ease in the backyard with a covered patio, built-in grill, and an outstanding wood-burning pizza oven. This great location is just blocks to University Avenue, convenient to Stanford University, and offers access to acclaimed Palo Alto schools including Addison Elementary, which is just steps away (buyer to verify eligibility).

For virtual open houses & more photos, please visit:
www.580Addison.com
Offered at $4,488,000

Easy access for potential buyers and Realtors® only.

Listed by Michael Repka of the DeLeon Team, the #1 Team in Palo Alto.

Data from BrokerMetrics® based on MLS sales from January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2019, in Palo Alto, residential properties, with no off MLS sales included in the rankings.

Michael Repka, DRE #01854880 | 650.900.7000 | michael@deleonrealty.com

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2.5% Commission Paid to Buyer’s Agent • Waived if DeLeon Buyer’s Agent

2797 Ross Road, Palo Alto

Bright, Luxurious, with a Modern Floorplan
Recently completed in 2017, this incredible home offers top-of-the-line luxury, spectacular build quality, and a floorplan ideally suited for the modern family. Offering 4 bedrooms, 3.5 bathrooms, and nearly 3,300 square feet of living space, this stunning modern farmhouse-style home welcomes you with a fully enclosed, fireplace-centered outdoor living room, and inside, high, dramatic ceilings and excellent use of glass craft a bright, airy ambiance. White oak floors extend throughout expansive, open gathering spaces, including the living room with a linear fireplace, the quartz-appointed kitchen with Thermador appliances, and the family room with a wall of glass opening completely to the backyard for true indoor/outdoor living. Four spacious bedrooms include the inviting master suite with a spa-like bathroom plus access to the backyard. This home also boasts numerous smart features, including a security system and a touchpad-controlled Sonos sound system, as well as an office so you can work from home in style. Topping it all off is a location close to California Avenue, with easy access to Caltrain and commute routes, and served by excellent Palo Alto schools.

For virtual open houses & more photos, please visit:

www.2797Ross.com
Offered at $5,988,000

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I thought your explanation of how good reporters approach election coverage and endorsements was excellent. Many people don’t understand the role of the press. Local journalism is vitally important to the civic life of our communities. Thank you!

- Brenda T.

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Dear Friends,

Six months have passed since California’s COVID-19 shelter-in-place order went into effect. During this entire time, we at Ravenswood Family Health Network have continued to deliver essential health care services in our communities. Since MayView Community Health Center became a member of Ravenswood Family Health Network in April 2020, we have pivoted to share our combined wealth of expertise—greatly facilitating our ability to respond to this crisis.

We serve communities who are at high-risk for COVID-19, including patients who are low-income, identify as racial or ethnic minorities, and/or have chronic health conditions. Understanding this, our staff on the front lines have risen to the challenge with grace, courage, and compassion.

Our clinics have implemented many measures to ensure that our patients, providers, and support staff are as safe as possible. We have created careful strategies for minimizing risk of COVID exposure, such as screening all patients, staff, and visitors before entry into our clinics, offering telehealth visits, creating drive-through dental appointments for our youngest dental patients, and dispensing prescriptions from our parking lot. We began offering COVID-19 testing for our symptomatic patients in March, and now test our asymptomatic patients who are essential workers plus any patient who wants to be tested.

We are excited to share that amidst our efforts to deal with the COVID-19 pandemic, we were able to transition to a new electronic health records (EHR) system called Epic. On July 14, 2020, after a year-long planning process, we successfully transitioned to Epic from our old EHR system. We expect this transition to improve our provider’s efficiency and allow us to better coordinate care with our external health care partners, including specialists, who also use Epic and shorten response time in Emergency Rooms or at Hospital Admissions because records, lab results, and medication lists will be available.

We continue to support our communities by providing culturally sensitive, integrated primary and preventive health care, regardless of ability to pay or immigration status. We also are grateful for our partner agencies who are working with us to address the food, housing, material, and educational needs of our shared clients. We would like to thank you in advance for your generosity and support.

Together, we can make a difference in the lives of our neighbors, ensuring that everyone has access to high quality health care.

Luisa Buada, RN, MPH
Chief Executive Officer
To improve the health of the community by providing culturally sensitive, integrated primary and preventative health care to all, regardless of ability to pay or immigration status, and collaborating with community partners to address the social determinants of health.

One Stop Shop

Guadalupe has been a patient of Ravenswood Family Health Network (Ravenswood) since the doors first opened in 2001. Guadalupe was nine years-old when her mother took her and her siblings to Ravenswood for all their health care needs. Now 30 years-old, Guadalupe still goes to Ravenswood. She has found a care team—of doctors, physician assistants, optometrists, dentists, pharmacists, and much more—that she deeply trusts and relies on.

Just as Guadalupe’s mother took her and her siblings to Ravenswood, Guadalupe is now doing the same for her family—she takes all of her children to Ravenswood! Guadalupe’s husband is a Ravenswood patient too! Guadalupe’s children have used Ravenswood’s Pediatric and Dental services and her husband has used Family Practice services, while Guadalupe has utilized all of Ravenswood’s services.

While Guadalupe is pleased with all the services she has received at Ravenswood, she has been exceptionally pleased with Ravenswood’s Women’s Health services. She shares how Rebecca Pinto, a Women’s Health Physician Assistant, “has gone above and beyond” for her as her Women’s Health provider. Guadalupe has been so delighted with Rebecca’s care!

Guadalupe stated, “At Ravenswood, I don’t feel like I am another number!”

February was a challenging month for Guadalupe’s family, as she was diagnosed with cervical cancer. She had many worries about her current stage. Her primary care provider, Amy Wolfe, referred her to external care at Stanford for additional exams and imaging to get a better understanding of her current state and progress. Upon receiving the results, she felt overwhelmed by uncertainty, so she called Rebecca. Rebecca clarified how her current stage of cancer, stage 1, meant that cancer cells were not found beyond the tissues of the cervix and uterus. Guadalupe said with relief, “I know I can call Rebecca whenever I have a worry—she makes me feel secure about my health.”

To remove the cancer in her cervix, she went through a hysterectomy, which is a surgical procedure to remove the uterus and cervix. In July, Guadalupe was cancer free! “One contributing factor to her success story was that she kept all of her appointments,” shared Rebecca proudly. “I have known Guadalupe for 14+ years. Long term patients like her bring joy, richness, and purpose to the work we do.”

Facing COVID

Just as Guadalupe was recovering from her surgery, she was unexpectedly infected by COVID-19 in August. She had no idea how she contracted it as she practiced social distancing, hand washing regularly, and mask wearing. After experiencing COVID-19 symptoms for a week—fever, headaches, fatigue, sore throat, and congestion—she feared for the worse and was rushed into the emergency room.

She was immediately tested for COVID-19, and the result was positive. Since she was immunocompromised due to the process of recovering from cancer, the virus took a hard hit on her health. She was on bed rest for a few weeks. Luckily, her husband and children did not have COVID and were able to help Guadalupe recover. Once she had regained her strength, Guadalupe took another COVID test and was negative! Guadalupe and her family were relieved after months of health challenges for her!

After surviving COVID-19, she scheduled a follow-up appointment with her primary care provider, Amy, to assess her overall health. So far, Guadalupe has experienced minor damage to her respiratory system. Amy is working with Guadalupe to strengthen her breathing muscles.

The challenges that Guadalupe faced demonstrate not only the multiple health problems our communities face, but also the resiliency of our communities. Regardless of the obstacles faced among our communities, Ravenswood will always be there to serve and support the well-being of our communities.
Providing Care During COVID

In the first three months of COVID, we quickly transitioned the way we provided care to be safer for patients and staff by launching telephone and teledentistry visits. We canceled routine visits, except for prenatal, reproductive health, and well-child visits. Additionally, we started dispensing prescriptions outside of our main health center via our mobile clinic and offering drive-through dental exams for our youngest patients, ages three and younger, to ensure they had continuous access to preventive dental care during this key life stage.

As we learned more about COVID and developed new procedures and workflows, we started offering more in-person services. All services are now open with the exception of our optical shop. Although we are open for in-person appointments, we are minimizing walk-ins by expediting phone triaging. We understand that some patients may be apprehensive about coming in for care so our Health Coaches have conducted health check-in calls to those patients.

We check that all staff, patients, and visitors are wearing masks and screened before entering any of our buildings. We sanitize all surfaces regularly, space lobby chairs at least six feet apart, and practice social distancing. We also have plexiglass at each front desk space. Our Incident Response Team has worked on obtaining personal protective equipment supplies through every means necessary as well.

COVID-19 Testing

Since March, we have conducted COVID testing for symptomatic patients via drive-thru in the parking lots of our main health center in East Palo Alto and our Sunnyvale clinic. Currently, COVID testing is by appointment only. We recently expanded access to testing for asymptomatic patients who are essential workers and any patient who requests to be tested.

Evolving Safety Guidelines

We regularly update our infection control protocols and workflows to ensure that we are following the most up-to-date best practices. For instance, our Dental Team created a 26-page infection control manual which guides us in providing dental care in the safest manner possible during COVID.

As we continue to face this pandemic, we will keep taking extensive precautions throughout our clinics to keep our patients and staff as safe as possible, adopting digital devices to increase efficiencies, and changing our workflows as health guidelines evolve. During this pandemic, our staff have remained dedicated, responsive, and flexible, as they continue serving our patients during difficult times.

Ravenswood Receives Over 12,000 PPE Donations from the Community

Ravenswood Family Health Network is extremely grateful for the way our community has come together in this challenging time and provided us with in-kind donations of personal protective equipment (PPE) when shortages meant we could run out and have to close. We would like to thank our local students from Mountain View High School and Foothill College for their donations, our local businesses and organizations, Alan Meyer Group, Seamstresses United, WiChinese, Sand Hill Properties/Woodland Park Communities, Maker Nexus, Nhat Tam Charity, and Advantage Converting, as well as our individual donors. Thanks to the generosity of many different groups of people, Ravenswood has received over 11,000 masks, including N95s, community masks, and surgical masks, as well as over 1,000 other PPE materials such as face shields and hand sanitizers. These supplies help us keep our staff and patients safe! As we operate on the front-lines of the pandemic, the support of the community means so much to us.
Ravenswood’s Transition to Epic in Spite of COVID

After using our current electronic health records system for nearly a decade, we switched over to a more efficient system called Epic. We wanted our providers and staff to spend less time trying to figure out electronic health records, and more time doing what they are passionate about—caring for our communities. We chose to transition to Epic because it is one of the largest electronic health records systems used by health care organizations throughout the United States. Using Epic will help us better coordinate care with external health partners such as Kaiser Permanente, Stanford, Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital at Stanford, and Sutter Health/Palo Alto Medical Foundation, since they use Epic as well.

For over a year, we prepared for this transition. The onset of COVID-19 threw a wrench into our meticulously planned transition strategy—suddenly we were operating at the front lines of a pandemic while simultaneously switching records systems. Thanks to the hard work and flexibility of our transition team, however, we were able to pull off the conversion despite these challenges, and we successfully moved to Epic on July 14, 2020! We are so happy to have completed this transition so that we can enhance the care we provide for our patients.

We Value Feedback! Patient Advisory Day 2020

Ravenswood Family Health Network had the pleasure of holding our third annual Patient Advisory Day in September of 2020. In the past, this event has been held in-person at our main health center, where patients have come together with our clinic staff to discuss how Ravenswood can continuously improve the patient experience. Since our patients’ feedback is vital to improving the way we provide care, Ravenswood held the event virtually this year to learn from our patients despite the ongoing pandemic.

On September 12th and 19th, our Board of Directors, CEO, Chief Compliance and Risk Officer, Patient Experience Manager, Staff Development/Event Planning Coordinator, and clinic staff joined forces to lead seven Zoom sessions in English, Spanish, and Tongan. Patients shared the many reasons why they choose to seek care at Ravenswood and also gave constructive feedback on how services could be optimized. “Despite holding the event virtually, our patients called in and provided the feedback we needed to hear to improve our care,” shared Christina Webster, our Patient Experience Manager. Patients’ feedback is crucial as we find the best ways to deliver care during the pandemic and continue to update protocols to ensure safety. As we push forward, we encourage our Ravenswood family to continue giving us feedback on where we can make changes and ultimately meet the needs of our community.

Photographer: Lourdes Sanchez
Image: Screenshot compilation

Ravenswood’s CEO, Luisa Buada (top row, labeled), listening to patients share their experience through our virtual Patient Advisory Day.

Make a difference in someone’s health journey this holiday season!

Donations postmarked by February 28, 2021 will be matched dollar for dollar! As of October 9, 2020, six generous donors are matching up to $90,000! Please write “2020 Year-End Campaign” on the memo line and include this remit slip.

Yes! I Want to Join Ravenswood’s Care Team!

- [$100] pays for one pediatric patient’s routine dental exam with x-rays
- [$250] pays for one patient’s routine eye exam
- [$500] pays for one medical visit for an uninsured patient
- [$2,000] pays for one year of care for a diabetic patient
- [$5,000] pays for one mother’s prenatal care
- [Other ____________________________________________________________]

Questions? Contact the Development Team at Development@RavenswoodFHC.org

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Questions? Contact the Development Team at Development@RavenswoodFHC.org

WWW.RAVENSWOODFHC.ORG

Graphic and logo courtesy of GivingTuesday.org
Above: Natashia Deneé plays The Commissioner, left, and Cynthia Lagodzinski stars in the title role of “Lysistrata,” a video production by The Pear Theatre.

Left: Tyler Jeffreys plays Lampito in “Lysistrata.”

PEAR THEATRE OFFERS WELL ACTED, POORLY PRODUCED ‘LYSISTRATA’

by John Orr | Photos by John Deven

Yes, we audience members are desperate to see live theater and actors are desperate to perform. And bless their hearts at the Pear Theatre for wanting to bring us a show — “Lysistrata” — via the magic of video recording.

But the video, which is available through Nov. 15, is a technical mess.

The show is often funny — it is an ancient Greek comedy, after all — but it looks and sounds as if director Betsy Kruse Craig and videographers Sinjin Jones and John Beamer had never seen an actual movie, and had no idea of how to make a play work on a screen. Directing for the stage is entirely different from directing for a camera.

And, the production is hampered by the demands of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Everybody in the all-woman cast wears a full-face, clear-plastic mask and everybody stays socially distanced. It looks like the entire production was filmed in The Pear’s side parking lot.

But even accounting for that, there is no forgiveness for the tragic blocking, which makes it difficult to know who is performing from scene to scene. The unfortunate camera flow makes it hard to keep track of dialogue, which is not helped by the inept sound mixing. Lines of dialogue are overwhelmed by clacking sounds of props on the stage, or unexplained crashing noises.

The blocking might have worked indoors on a regular stage — Kruse Craig is an accomplished and capable stage director — but it doesn’t work in this format.

For those who can tolerate the ham-handed video production, there are laughs to be had, and all eight members of the cast have moments that can be enjoyed. There is some good acting happening behind those plastic face masks, although it is sometimes hard to see, thanks to sun glare on the plastic.

This production is Carolyn Balducci’s 1991 adaptation of the play by Aristophanes, first performed in Athens in 411 B.C. In it, the women of Athens, tired of their husbands and lovers always being away at war, decide to withhold sex until the men agree to keep the peace.

The embargo is suggested and organized by Lysistrata, played strongly by Cynthia Lagodzinski. She starts with Kalonike (played with plenty of humor by the great Nicole Martin), and soon more women are gathered, from all the warring Greek cities.

Can they get the men to cooperate?

“Men always want to cooperate,” says one woman. “The only problem is getting them to stop.”

Pouring wine in a Spartan shield, the women swear an oath, which includes “to my lover or my husband, I’ll not open my doors, though he flaunts his battering ram.”

The young women are helped in their effort by the older-women chorus, which takes over the treasury. The older-men chorus complains, “To arms! To arms! Men with balls, arouse yourselves! ... What if the enemy controls the treasury, which issues my veterans’ benefits?”

The play dives deep into a cornball soup as some of the women try to escape Lysistrata’s hold.

“They are, to put it bluntly,” says Lysistrata, “dying to get laid.”

Eventually, the men agree to stop their wars, the wine flows, everybody is happy, and the finale offers a connection between ancient and modern democracy.

While it has its charms, technical difficulties mean that the Pear’s production — like Lysistrata’s sex strike — leaves something to be desired.

Freelance writer John Orr can be emailed at johnorr@regardingarts.com.

“Lysistrata” runs through Nov. 15. Tickets are $30-$34. For more information, go to thepear.org.
1206 N. Lemon Avenue, Menlo Park

Energy-Efficient Luxury in Central Menlo

Set on a lot of more than 0.30 acres in Central Menlo, this beautiful custom home offers timeless luxury blended with the best of modern sustainability. Built in 2011 as the first passive home in Menlo Park, this residence is nearly entirely energy self-sustainable, and features solar panels, a circulating hot water system, air filtration, and highly insulated walls for year-round temperature control. A wondrous, grand-scale ceiling with dramatic dark beams crafts an airy ambiance, and excellent use of glass fills the home with light. Enjoy large gathering spaces perfect for entertaining, the kitchen with an induction cooktop, and the family room with a wall of glass that opens to the backyard patio. Offering 4 bedrooms, 3.5 bathrooms, and over 3,300 square feet of living space, this home is ideally suited for the modern, eco-conscious family. Topping it all off is a location just moments from downtown Menlo Park, with top-ranked public and private schools within walking distance.

For virtual open houses & more photos, please visit:
www.1206NLemonAve.com
Offered at $4,988,000

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984 MONTE ROSA DRIVE, MENLO PARK

Beautifully Remodeled on a 0.42-Acre Lot

Privately situated on a spacious lot of over 0.42 acres in the sought-after neighborhood of Sharon Heights, this beautifully remodeled home of 6 bedrooms and 5 bathrooms offers 3,566 square feet of luxurious living space. A flagstone pathway leads past the expansive front yard to the front door, and inside, high ceilings and excellent use of glass create a bright, airy ambiance, highlighting beautiful wood floors that extend throughout most of the home. Features include the living room with a brick fireplace, the great room crowned by a cathedral ceiling and a kitchen with Thermador appliances. The master suite provides a welcoming retreat, and the additional bedrooms offer comfort and convenience, including one that easily converts to an office. Find great space for outdoor enjoyment in the multi-level backyard with a lawn and ample patio space. And enjoy a location close to everything Sharon Heights has to offer, with access to top-ranked schools (buyer to verify eligibility).

For more information, video tour & more photos, please visit:
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Offered at $3,988,000

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435 SHERIDAN AVENUE #309, PALO ALTO

Penthouse Condo Close to Stanford
Stylish living awaits in this penthouse condominium, boasting an enviable location just moments to Stanford University, California Avenue, and Caltrain. Offering 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, and over 1,500 square feet of living space, this home takes full advantage of its top-floor location with no shared walls and a tremendous amount of natural light. Enjoy an open floorplan that includes the living room with fireplace, the kitchen with a stainless-steel refrigerator, and the dining room with two French doors opening to a balcony for al fresco enjoyment. Two bedrooms include the spacious master suite with access to its own private balcony. This modern complex includes two parking spaces in the underground garage, storage, and a secure, gated entrance. Plus you will enjoy an unbeatable location with access to acclaimed Palo Alto schools (buyer to verify eligibility).

For more information, video tour & more photos, please visit:
www.435Sheridan309.com
Offered at $1,488,000

Easy access for potential buyers and Realtors® only.

Listed by Michael Repka of the DeLeon Team, the #1 Team in Palo Alto.

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5 OAK FOREST COURT, PORTOLA VALLEY

Private Woodland Paradise on over 1.5 Acres
Privately situated on a verdant lot of more than 1.5 acres, this peaceful Portola Valley home offers 4 bedrooms, 4.5 bathrooms, and over 4,200 square feet of inviting living space. Experience an instant connection to the natural beauty that surrounds this home the second you step inside, as picture windows, skylights, and transom windows fill the home with light and showcase the tranquil grounds. Soaring ceilings craft a fresh, airy ambiance that flows throughout. Highlights include two spectacular fireplaces, the chef’s kitchen that flows into the expansive family room, and the office to meet all work-from-home needs. Find comfort in the large master suite, and appreciate the convenience of an additional bedroom suite for family or guests. The grounds include ample patio space, and a serene deck shaded by towering trees. This great location is mere moments to nature trails and Preserves, a short trip to Roberts Market, and acclaimed public and private schools are close at hand.

For more information, video tour & more photos, please visit:
www.5OakForest.com
Offered at $3,988,000

Easy access for potential buyers and Realtors® only.

Listed by Michael Repka of the DeLeon Team, the #1 Team in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties
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391 BELMONT AVENUE, REDWOOD CITY

Newly Renovated and Turn-Key Ready
Offering 4 bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms, and a convenient floorplan, this beautifully renovated home is ready to meet the needs of a modern family. New hardwood floors, new carpet, and designer-selected paint colors give this home a fresh, invigorating energy that carries throughout nearly 2,000 square feet of living space. Entertain guests in the living room centered by a fireplace, craft delicious meals in the kitchen with new quartz countertops, and find great space for outdoor enjoyment in the peaceful, private backyard. All four bedrooms are conveniently located on the upstairs level, including the large master suite. Plus, enjoy a location that puts you just a short trip to both downtown Redwood City and Menlo Park, and is convenient to both US 101 and Interstate 280 for Bay Area commuting.

For more information, video tour & more photos, please visit:
www.391Belmont.com
Offered at $1,798,000

Easy access for potential buyers and Realtors® only.

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S

ometimes surprising and wonder-
ful started happening in the last few
weeks: There were more restaurants
opening than I could keep up with.

Establishments of all stripes, from boba
shops, a food truck and a ghost kitchen
to sit-down restaurants, are opening up
shop after months of closures and dire
predictions about the state of the restaurant
industry (nearly one in six restaurants, or
about 100,000 restaurants, has closed either
permanently or long-term since March, ac-
cording to the National Restaurant Asso-
ciation). Many local projects had been in
the pipeline for months or even years, and
owners said they felt a financial pressure
to open as soon as possible, despite the
limitations and risks.

Zareen Khan, who opened the third loca-
tion of her eponymous restaurant in down-
town Redwood City this month, said she
invested “significantly” in the space before
the coronavirus hit. She started paying rent
in May, meaning she went more than five
months without any business coming in at
that location.

“Cities are being very supportive with
outdoor dining so that has helped many
restaurants reopen as well,” Khan added.

Omid Zahedi opened this month Rise
Woodfire, a massive restaurant at the San
Mateo train station. It had been in the
works for two years — two years of investment,
a full remodel and effort that he couldn’t
walk away from.

“We needed to open as soon as possible
due to our financial obligations, and every
month we did not would be another month
of falling behind on them,” he said.

Many Santa Clara and San Mateo county
restaurants are also now taking advantage
of the fact that they can again serve cus-
tomers indoors, albeit at much-reduced
numbers (25% capacity or 100 customers,
whichever is fewer).

“There is the counter intuitive optimism
that ‘this too shall pass,’” Zahedi said.

“Time will tell but the bold and brave that
stayed the course in the face of dramatic
fear in the industry may end up benefiting
from the inevitable normalization of this
time. What better time to build a restaurant
from the inevitable normalization of this
fear in the industry may end up benefiting
both a dozen new restaurants that have
opened or are opening soon on the Pen-
insula, representing an exciting range of
cuisines and a sense of optimism about the
local dining world.

Because these restaurants are all new and
some of their hours are changing as they
adjust, call them directly or check websites
and social media for current hours.

House on First, Los Altos
House on First has replaced Bumble
in downtown Los Altos, opened by Jean-Luc
Kayigire, who owns cocktail bar Amandine
Project down the street.

House on First serves coffee, tea and pas-
tries in the morning and dinner, cocktails,
wine and beer in the evening. The dinner
menu includes a burger (you can opt for
the plant-based Impossible patty), halibut with
romesco sauce, smoked duck with parsnip
puree and ribeye steak with herb-roasted
duck potatoes. The space has a massive out-
door patio for socially distancing dining,
heat lamps included.

Outdoor dining, 145 1st St., Los Altos;
facebook.com/houseonfirst/

Tokemona Foods, East Palo Alto
Polynesian food is vastly underrepresent-
ed on the Peninsula, but the newly opened
Tokemona Foods has changed that.

Tokemona sells frozen foods and ingre-
dients grown on the company’s farms in
Ha’ateiho, Tonga, like frozen ufi, or Samo-
an sweet potato. On the weekends, there’s
hot food, like palusami (taro leaves cooked
in coconut milk), sapasui (referred to as
Samoan chop suey, glass noodles stir fried
with vegetables) and feke (steamed octopus
tossed in a coconut cream sauce), among
other dishes.

Preorder for pickup, 1425 Bay Road,
East Palo Alto; tokemonafoods.com

T Bread, Mountain View
The owners of T Bread opened a bahn mi
shop in Saigon in 1990 and have brought
their concept to Mountain View. T Bread
makes eight kinds of foot-long bahn mi
with fillings like pate, grilled pork, sar-
dines and meathballs. There’s also made-to-
order goi cuon (spring rolls) and a selection
of pastries.

Takeout and delivery. 805 E El Camino
Real, Suite D, Mountain View; thread.store

Marufuku Ramen, Redwood City
San Francisco ramen favorite Marufuku
is opening in downtown Redwood City on
Tuesday, Oct. 27.

Marufuku’s 20-hour tonkotsu ramen
regularly drew long lines in San Francis-
ci pre-pandemic. Marufuku is known for
hakata, a regional style of ramen — a rich
pork broth served with thinner than typi-
cal noodles. Marufuku’s hakata ramen is
topped with charshu pork belly, a seasoned
soft boiled egg, green onions, kikurage
mushrooms and bean sprouts. The menu
also includes chicken putan and vegetable
ramens, rice bowls and sides like karaage
and fried shishito peppers.

Outdoor and indoor dining, 805 Middle-
field Road, Redwood City; marufukura-
men.com

BottleShop, Redwood City
John Graham-Taylor, a culinary school
graduate, sommelier, former wine sup-
plier and restaurant general manager, has
reopened Redwood City wine bar Bottle-
Shop. His resume includes stints in both the
front- and back-of-house at the Michelin-
starred Chez TJ in Mountain View, the
now-closed Viognier at Draeger’s in San
Mateo and Cotogona in San Francisco.

After BottleShop closed several months
ago, Graham-Taylor took it over with part-
tner Tom Boriolo, wanting to bring a casual
wine bar with high-level service to the
Peninsula.

“We wanted to bring that level of qual-
ity but down to a more approachable and
less stiff environment where you can come
in, get really beautiful food, really mani-
cured service but in jeans and flip flops,”
Graham-Taylor said.

While the former BottleShop focused on
natural wines, the new iteration will not
(though there will be some on the menu).

Graham-Taylor described the wine selec-
tion as food-friendly. He plans to offer cus-
tomers food-and-wine pairings to customers
in addition to a small menu of small bites
and charcuterie. Wine bottles will also be
available for retail purchase. They plan to
offer classes, socially distanced events and
wine and whiskey clubs.

Outdoor and indoor service. 2627
Broadway, Redwood City; thebottle-
shoprcw.com

Alepries Oaxacan Kitchen, Redwood City
Carmen Lopez and her son-in-law Rey-
aldo Hernandez, both natives of Oaxaca,
are behind the Alepries Oaxacan Kitchen
food truck, which is now parked in Red-
wood City Monday through Thursday and
pops up in Half Moon Bay on Friday and
Saturday.

Lopez and Hernandez want to expose
more local diners to the dishes and flavors
of Oaxacan cuisine. Their two signature
dishes are memelitas and tlalys. Memeli-
tas look like tacos but are served on larger,
handmade corn tortillas. They’re filled with
a layer of pureed black beans, cabbage, que-
sillo (Oaxacan cheese made from cow’s
milk), salsa, guacamole and drizzled with
asiento, or pork lard. Tlayudas, sometimes
referred to as Oaxacan pizza, look like flat-
bread covered with toppings. Lopez and
Hernandez toast a thin, 15-inch corn torti-
lla, lay it flat and smear it with asiento and
pureed black beans, topped with cabbage,
quesillo, tomatoes, salsa and your choice
of carne asada, chorizo or marinated pork
(or all three).

(continued on page 30)

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Eating Out

Unlikely openings

14 NEW RESTAURANTS LAUNCH LOCALLY DESPITE COVID DOWNTURN

by Elena Kadvany

Top: Customers dine inside Farmhouse Kitchen in Menlo Park. Photo by Olivia
treynor. Above: BottleShop is serving small bites along with wines by the glass and

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Eating Out

Unlikely openings (continued from page 29)

Memelitas and tlayudas are always on the menu but they rotate in additional dishes such as blandas (a Oaxacan burrito) and molotes (deep-fried masa stuffed with chorizo and potatoes).

Takeout. Located at 2666 Middlefield Road in Redwood City Monday-Thursday and 724 Main St. in Half Moon Bay Friday-Saturday. facebook.com/alebrijeskitchen/

Casper Restaurant Group, Sunnyvale
Pre-coronavirus, JW Catering’s large kitchen in Sunnyvale churned out orders for tech conferences, office lunches, bar and bat mitzvahs and special events. Now, it houses four different restaurant concepts available for pickup or delivery.

Jeffrey Weinberg’s pandemic pivot has been to transform his catering company into a ghost kitchen. It’s called Casper Restaurant Group, a play on the “ghost” concept. The first restaurant was The Marvelous Matzah Experiment (a riff off the TV show The Marvelous Mrs. Maisel), which serves Jewish deli fare inspired by Weinberg’s East Coast youth, like house-made pastrami and corned beef on Wise Sons Deli rye bread, matzah ball soup and challah French toast.

They’ve since added Toasty Melt (grilled cheeses), Gorgeous Grits (Southern-inspired food) and the Lockdown Limited Luncheon (daily specials that change weekly), with more on the way. Weinberg said he can scale up to a dozen concepts in a single kitchen. His employees deliver food so the company can avoid the 30% commission fee charged by third party delivery companies.

“It’s allowed me to keep my employees employed,” Weinberg said of the ghost kitchen. “It’s certainly not filling the gap on large corporate events — I gotta sell a lot of $15 sandwiches to make up for a $1,000 corporate event — (but) it’s allowed us to keep the lights on and the doors open.”

Weinberg is also looking for a brick-and-mortar space to expand The Marvelous Matzah Experiment, hopefully in Palo Alto. He’s hoping to partner with a local restaurateur who might be struggling during the pandemic to share a kitchen and staff.

Open for pickup and delivery. 649 S. Bernardo Ave., Sunnyvale; casperrestaurantgroup.com

Bamboo Sushi, Santa Clara
Bamboo Sushi, the Portland, Oregon sustainable sushi restaurant, is now open at Westfield Valley Fair on the border of Santa Clara and San Jose.

Bamboo Sushi is known for paying close attention to seafood sourcing and maintaining a low carbon footprint. Every piece of fish served at the restaurant must meet the Monterey Bay Aquarium’s Seafood Watch guidelines, and the menu notes where and how seafood was caught.

Bamboo Sushi Valley Fair serves nigiri, rolls, a wagyu burger and crispy sushi rice topped with your choice of fish, truffled eel sauce and green onion. It’s only open for takeout now as it eases into opening, though diners can eat their to-go food on an outdoor patio. The restaurant team is discussing when the dining room will open.

Bamboo Sushi will join the ranks of Din Tai Fung, Ramen Nagi, Super Duper Burgers and Salt & Straw at the mall. Several new eateries have also opened in recent weeks, including Shake Shack, fast casual chicken and rice eatery Rooster & Rice, Southern California seafood restaurant King’s Fish House and Japanese cheesecake chain Uncle Tetsu. The mall recently built a new outdoor dining plaza as part of a $1.1 billion renovation.

Takeout and delivery, with outdoor seating. 38000 Paramount Blvd., Saratoga; bamboo-sushi.com

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Unlikely openings (continued from page 29)

The BottleShop pairs small bites with its wines. Courtesy BottleShop.

Known for its 20-hour tonkotsu, San Francisco’s Marufuku Ramen is opening a new location in Redwood City on Oct. 27. Courtesy Marufuku.
Eating Out

Rise Woodfire, San Mateo
The owners of Rise Pizzeria in Burlingame recently opened their second eatery, Rise Woodfire, located in a historic building at the San Mateo train station at 2 North B. St. The restaurant serves the same thin crust, wood-fired pizza as at Rise Pizzeria, the dough made from four flours that are fermented using a sponge method over three days. More than a dozen pizzas are available, or you can build your own from a range of cheese and toppings.

The open kitchen is equipped with two wood-fired ovens that were handbuilt in San Bruno, which serves some inventive milk tea drinks, like black tea mixed with milk infused with Cinnamon Toast Crunch cereal or blended with double-stuffed Oreo. Societea House & Eatery in San Bruno, which serves some in

Oriental Eats
Societea House & Eatery also serves the local boba boom continues with the opening of Societea House & Eatery in San Bruno, which serves some inventive milk tea drinks, like black tea mixed with milk infused with Cinnamon Toast Crunch cereal or blended with double-stuffed Oreo. Societea House & Eatery also serves food, including kimchi fried rice, bulgogi sandwich, fried chicken sandwich, pop-corn chicken and “loaded” waffle fries topped with spicy pork or lemongrass chicken, kimchi, kimchi aioli, pickled vegetables and furikake.

Takeout and indoor dining; 446 San Mateo Ave., San Bruno; 650-636-4494

Pylos Estiatorio, San Carlos
Laurel Street has a new Greek and Mediterranean option with the opening of Pylos, from the owner of the nearby Spasso and Blind Tasting. Pylos is open for lunch and dinner, with dishes such as keftedes saltsa (lamb-beef meatballs in a tomato sauce topped with yogurt), avgolemono (egg-lemon soup with chicken and rice), saganaki (pan-fried cheese with lemon and oregano) chicken souvlaki and grilled lamb chops.

Takeout, indoor and outdoor dining; 621 Laurel St., San Carlos; 650-226-3652

Societea House & Eatery, San Bruno
Laurel Street has a new Greek and Mediterranean eatery. Vivace owner Mike Gunn’s son Hayden and nephew Serhat are running the restaurant. Look for pita wraps, rice plates and salads — plus a calamari “po boy” wrapped in a pita with tzatziki and pickled onions and beef and lamb cooked on a slowly turning spit, served with bright-pink beet labni.

Takeout, delivery indoor and outdoor dining; 2040 Ralston Ave., Belmont; capobelmont.com

Between the Bun, San Mateo
Oakland’s Between the Bun has brought its lobster rolls to downtown San Mateo. As the name implies, these lobster rolls and other seafood sandwiches are served on a bun, more like a hamburger than a New England-style roll.

All the seafood rolls — Maine lobster, red crab and North Atlantic Bay shrimp are lightly dressed with mayo, butter and a spice blend. Sides include beans, kettle chips, slaw and waffle fries, plus lobster bisque and clam chowder.

Takeout and delivery; 132 S. B St. San Mateo; facebook.com/BTBLOBSTER/

Capo, Belmont
The family behind longtime Belmont Italian restaurant Vivace expanded in September with Capo, a fast-casual Mediterranean eatery. Vivace owner Mike Gunn’s son Hayden and nephew Serhat are running the restaurant. Look for pita wraps, rice plates and salads — plus a calamari “po boy” wrapped in a pita with tzatziki and pickled onions and beef and lamb cooked on a slowly turning spit, served with bright-pink beet labni.

Takeout, delivery indoor and outdoor dining; 2040 Ralston Ave., Belmont; capobelmont.com

Staff Writer Elena Kadvany can be emailed at ekadvany@paweekly.com. Check out her Peninsula Foodist blog at PaloAltoOnline.com/blogs.

House on First in Los Altos serves coffee, tea and pastries in the morning and dinner and cocktails in the evening on its massive outdoor patio. Photo by Elena Kadvany.

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In addition to running the top listing team in Silicon Valley, Michael Repka is also the Chief Executive Officer and General Counsel of DeLeon Realty. Michael has two law degrees, including an advanced law degree in taxation (LLM) from NYU School of Law, the #1 tax program in the nation. Prior to joining DeLeon Realty, Michael was a practicing real estate and tax attorney.

After obtaining his first law degree, Michael joined a law firm, where he counselled clients on the legal, tax, and procedural aspects of buying or selling homes. Following this, Michael worked at PricewaterhouseCoopers, focusing on mergers and acquisitions, and later at Baker & McKenzie, specializing in tax law. Michael then returned to real estate, first as a practicing attorney, and later as a broker.

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www.deleonrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #0190324
**Panel Discusses Halloween Horrors**... Books Inc. is hosting a virtual Halloween Horror Panel for young adults on Thursday, Oct. 29, at 5 p.m. Special guests include Sasha Laurens, author of “A Wicked Magic;” Kendare Blake, author of “Five Dark Fates;” Kate Alerden, author of “The Companion;” Kat Ellis, author of “Harrow Lake;” Kate Alice Marshall, author of “Rules for Vanishing;” and Justin Hiltz, author of “Deathless Divide.” This special event will be moderated by Danielle Vega, author of “The Unhinged.” To RSVP, go to booksinc.net.

**A comedic look at sheltering in place...** Author David Lassett, a PEN Faulkner Prize recipient and National Book Critics Circle Award finalist, will discuss his comedic novel “Shelter in Place” during a virtual event hosted by Books Inc. on Wed., Oct. 28, at 5 p.m. “Shelter in Place” takes a look at the inevitable invasion of a political upheaval can undermine even the most seemingly impregnable foundations. Through his main character, Leavitt pokes fun at the habits and fetishes of the so-called shelter industry. To RSVP, go to booksinc.net.

**New Lost Cities Series Launch...** Shannon Messenger will celebrate the launch of “Unlocked,” the latest novel in the New York Times, USA Today and Wall Street Journal bestselling Keeper of the Lost Cities series, which follows Sophie, a girl who discovers she’s from another world that exists side by side with ours — and one that has given her amazing abilities. “Unlocked” includes a comprehensive guide to the world of the Lost Cities, featuring new characters and theLost Cities’ secrets that have never been revealed before — plus fun bonuses like Keeper-themed recipes and full-color illustrations. The virtual event takes place on Tuesday, Nov. 17, at 6 p.m. To RSVP, go to keplers.org.

**Book Talk**

**Solving World Problems...** Bestselling author Adam Grant and entrepreneur Ben Cohen of Ben & Jerry’s ice cream will be guests during Kepler’s This Is Now virtual event about solving world problems by changing the way we run business. Grant’s bestseller “Give & Take” shows that nice guys actually do win by underscoring the ways that businesses that not only grow but flourish by operating beyond the bottom line while working to improve the lives of employees, customers and stakeholders simultaneously.

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3787 Woodside Road, Woodside

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Nestled on a verdant 3.15-acre lot (per county) in peaceful Woodside, this stunning estate presents superb privacy, timeless luxury, and incredible space for entertaining on a grand scale. Lofty ceilings craft an airy atmosphere throughout the home and tall, wide windows allow an abundance of natural light. Expansive formal rooms enjoy elegant appointments, the superb kitchen is sure to inspire your inner Top Chef, the handsome office can meet all work-from-home needs, and the lower level includes a theater for fantastic movie nights. Offering 6 bedrooms, 5.5 baths, and 7,168 sq. ft. of living space (per county), including a 1-bed, 1-bath guest house, this home will have you feeling a million miles away from the frenetic pace of Silicon Valley thanks to extraordinary grounds that include a pool, barbecue patio, and pathways that wind their way to the serene banks of Bear Gulch Creek, yet you will still enjoy the convenience of being just a short drive to the amenities of the Town of Woodside, and be close to Interstate 280 for Bay Area commuting. Adding the finishing touch, children may attend the acclaimed Woodside Elementary School (buyer to verify eligibility).

For virtual open houses & more photos, please visit:
www.3787Woodside.com
Offered at $11,988,000

Easy access for potential buyers and Realtors® only.

Listed by Michael Repka of the DeLeon Team, the #1 Team in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties*

Data from BaskettMetrics® based on MLS sales from January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2019, in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties combined, residential properties, with no off-MLS sales included in the rankings.

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中文諮詢請聯繫Audrey Sun, DRE #01933274 電話: 650.785.5822 | www.deleonrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
690 BLINN COURT, LOS ALTOS

Entertainers’ Dream in Peaceful Location

Set on a spacious corner lot of almost 9,000 square feet on a peaceful Los Altos cul-de-sac, this bright, inviting home offers 3 bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms, and nearly 2,800 square feet of living space. Beautiful divided light windows fill the home with natural light, highlighting hardwood floors that extend throughout most rooms. Expansive gathering spaces invite entertaining on a grand scale, and include the living room crowned by a beamed ceiling, the kitchen with a sunny breakfast nook, and the family room with a centerpiece brick fireplace. The entertainment options flow outside to the great backyard, which features a paver patio, an outdoor kitchen, lush lawn, a delightful bocce court, and a deck with a hot tub that can be accessed from the master suite. Enjoy a location mere moments to the excitement of downtown Los Altos, with top-ranked schools close at hand.

For more information, video tour & more photos, please visit:
www.690Blinn.com
Offered at $2,988,000

Easy access for potential buyers and Realtors® only,
Easy appointments between 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm on Saturday (10/24) and Sunday (10/25).

Listed by Michael Repka of the DeLeon Team, the #1 Team in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties

Data from BrokerMetrics® based on MLS sales from January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2019, in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties combined, residential properties, with no off-MLS sales included in the rankings.

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Chinese: Audrey Sun, DRE #01933274 電話: 650.785.5822 | www.deleonrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
COMMITTED TO TRANSPARENCY
2.5% Commission Paid to Buyer’s Agent • Waived if DeLeon Buyer’s Agent

25396 LA LOMA DRIVE, LOS ALTOS HILLS

Private and Light-Filled on 1.67 Acres
Nestled in near-complete privacy on 1.67 acres amongst the verdant beauty of Los Altos Hills, this bright, inviting home offers 5 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, and nearly 3,000 square feet of living space over two floors, plus approximately 950 square feet of bonus added space. An expansive front patio welcome you, while inside, walls of glass fill the home with natural light and showcase peaceful views of the surrounding area. Comfortable gathering spaces include the bright living room, the remodeled kitchen with two islands, and the family room with a linear fireplace and wet bar. This two-level home offers multiple vantage points to enjoy the tranquility of your surroundings, including an entertainment deck accessed from several rooms, a large lower patio, and the backyard that leads you to the Chamise Trail through the Rancho San Antonio Preserve. Ideal for hiking, biking, and nature walks, this serene location is also just a short trip to Rancho Shopping Center and downtown Los Altos.

For more information, video tour & more photos, please visit:
www.25396LaLoma.com
Offered at $3,488,000

Easy access for potential buyers and Realtors® only.

Listed by Michael Repka of the DeLeon Team, the #1 Team in Los Altos Hills.

Data from BrokerMetrics ® based on MLS sales from January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2019, in Los Altos Hills, residential properties, with no off-MLS sales included in the rankings.

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www.PaloAltoOnline.com • Palo Alto Weekly • October 23, 2020 • Page 39
**240 WINDSOR DRIVE, SAN CARLOS**

**Bright, Peaceful, with a Modern Floorplan**

Towering oak trees dot the landscape that envelops this gorgeous 3-bedroom, 2.5-bathroom home, offering over 2,100 square feet of bright living space on a lot of 7,746 square feet. Light, airy, and inviting, this home boasts a floorplan perfect for the modern family, highlighted by the living room with a centerpiece fireplace, and the granite-appointed kitchen with stainless-steel appliances. Three spacious bedrooms provide the accommodations, including the romantic master suite with a fireplace all its own, and two bedrooms that share a delightful Jack-and-Jill bathroom. Find great space for outdoor enjoyment in the backyard, with a spacious deck and patio perfect for enjoying the home’s verdant surroundings that evoke the feel of a mountainside retreat. This great location puts you just a short trip to the iconic Devonshire Little Store, as well as to the excitement of Laurel Street, and top-ranked local schools, plus you will be within walking distance of beautiful Heather Park.

For more information, video tour & more photos, please visit: [www.240WindsorDrive.com](http://www.240WindsorDrive.com)

Offered at $1,998,000

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**Listed by Audrey Sun of the DeLeon Team, the #1 Team in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties**

Data from BrokerMetrics® based on MLS sales from January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2019, in Santa Clara and San Mateo counties combined, residential properties, with no off-MLS sales included in the rankings.

For more information contact: Audrey Sun, DRE #01933274 電話: 650.785.5822 我們精通國語和粵語

Managing Broker: Michael Repka, DRE #01854880 | [www.deleonrealty.com](http://www.deleonrealty.com) | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
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2.5% Commission Paid to Buyer’s Agent • Waived if DeLeon Buyer’s Agent

103 STANFORD AVENUE, MENLO PARK

Newly Built Luxury with a Convenient Location
High-end appointments, tremendous build quality, and a floorplan perfect for a modern lifestyle – this recently completed home, built in 2020, offers all of this and so much more, with 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, and over 2,650 square feet of luxury living space, all set on a corner lot of 6,000 square feet. Abundant natural light infuses the home with a fresh, bright ambiance, while beautiful engineered white oak floors extend throughout. A fireplace in floor-to-ceiling stacked stone centers the living room, the chef’s kitchen includes stainless-steel JennAir appliances, and the comfortable family room opens to an outdoor patio. The master suite offers an inviting retreat, with a spa-like bathroom featuring a soaking tub and rainfall shower. This great location puts you mere moments to both downtown Menlo Park and Palo Alto, and close to Stanford University, as well as Venture Capital firms along Sand Hill Road. Plus, children may attend acclaimed Las Lomitas schools (buyer to verify eligibility).

For more information, video tour & more photos, please visit:
www.103Stanford.com
Offered at $3,988,000

Easy access for potential buyers and Realtors® only.

Listed by Michael Repka of the DeLeon Team, the #1 Team in Menlo Park.

Data from BetterMetrics® based on MLS sales from January 1, 2019, to December 31, 2019, in Menlo Park, residential properties, with no off-MLS sales included in the rankings.

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中文諮詢請聯繫Audrey Sun, DRE #01933274 電話: 650.785.5822 | www.deleonrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
Cities, organizations put a new spin on Halloween traditions

Safe activities abound on the Midpeninsula, from jack-o’-lantern walks to online screenings of spooky movies

by Sue Dremann

Palo Alto

Jack O’ Jaunt: Pumpkin-carving exhibition along California and University avenues on Oct. 30, 5:30-8 p.m. Winners of categories such as scariest, cutest and most creative pumpkin will receive a $50 gift certificate to Palo Alto restaurants of their choosing. Strolling, but no gathering, is permitted.

Mask-erade contest: Locals are invited to ditch the traditional Halloween mask and decorate a cloth face covering, then take a selfie and post the photo on Instagram that tags the city at @CityofPaloAlto. Winners will be featured on the city’s social media pages.

Midpen Media Movie Nights: Every evening in October, Midpen Media will play five classic films for a Spooky Movie Night experience. The films will air on Channel 30 at 8 p.m. and stream simultaneously on the Midpen Media Facebook page.

Most creative way to safely trick-or-treat contest: City-sponsored virtual contest about creating the most ingenious ways to disburse candy to trick-or-treaters. Community members can share their method through social media posts that tag the city of Palo Alto or by email to citymgr@cityofpaloalto.org. Winners will be featured on the city’s social media pages.

Once Upon a Midnight Dreary: Palo Alto Players’ livestreamed Halloween cabaret show of song and dance and spooky scenes takes place Oct. 23-24 and 29-31 at 8 p.m. and Oct. 25 at 2 p.m. for a fee of $20 per household to view the program. Visit palaplayers.org for tickets and information.

Public Art Scavenger Hunt: A downtown scavenger hunt involving the many whimsical Ghosts of Gourds. Winners can send the city their funny photos in front of the murals, which will be shared on social media. A printable scavenger hunt list and online map are available at cityofpaloalto.org/Halloween.

Pumpkin decorating with henna: One-hour class over Zoom hosted by Gamble Garden with Priti Aggarwal to teach viewers how to design a Halloween pumpkin using a custom-made henna paste free of chemicals and dyes. No carving required. The event is scheduled for Oct. 24, 10 a.m. All supplies (pumpkin and henna) are provided. To register, visit gamblegarden.org.

Spooktacular library events: The Palo Alto Library offers virtual Halloween-related events all month long and has many tips and resources for a safe and creative Halloween on its page at cityofpaloalto.org/library. Events include times on Oct. 26-30 and Halloween crafts on the library’s YouTube channel (search for palalcotickyliblary).

Trunk or Treat: Peninsula Bible Church on Middlefield Road will host its free Trunk or Treat drive-thru for families on Oct. 31, 3-5 p.m. Volunteers will decorate car trunks and tailgates, and children can participate in a visual scavenger hunt from the safety of their cars. Guests will be required to stay in their vehicles at all times and wear masks if they choose to roll down their windows. Kids will receive a goody bag at the end of the drive-thru. Visit pbc.org/trunk-or-treat.

Menlo Park

Day of the Dead Loteria: Menlo Park Library hosts a Day of the Dead-themed game (similar to bingo) for children on Oct. 23, 6-7 p.m., online. For information and to register, visit menlopark.org.

Halloween Hoopla Carni-val: Virtual city event includes free storytelling, a juggler, a costume contest and crafts on Oct. 30, 4-6 p.m. Children can also receive a free goody bag in advance of the event. For information and to register, visit menlopark.org and search for “Halloween Hoopla.”

Trick-or-Treat Drive-Thru: Menlo Church hosts an event featuring decorated cars, people dressed in costumes and drive-thru trick-or-treating combined with a canned food drive to benefit the ECumenical Hunger Program. The event takes place Oct. 28, 5-8 p.m., at 555 Mid- dlefield Road. RSVP at tinyurl.com/esvptots.

Mountain View

Monster Bash: The city’s Monster Bash, a series of events, includes a trivia night on Oct. 23 and a virtual concert on Oct. 30. The city is also hosting weekly challenges on social media providing a community recipe e-book and more. Visit moun tainview.gov/depts/CS/events/halloween.

Plaza Haunt: Festive decora tions at Pioneer Park and Civic Center Plaza through Oct. 31, 3-5 p.m. Volunteers will hand out candy to trick-or-treaters, and cars will receive a free goody bag in front of the murals, which will be shared on social media. To register for the drive-thru, visit menlo.church/trick-or-treat-drive-thru.

Trick or Treat Street: Drive-thru candy distribution by Menlo-Atherton High School’s Leadership program. Masks required. The event takes place Oct. 28, 5-8 p.m., at 555 Middlefield Road. RSVP at tinyurl.com/esvptots.

Mountain View

Monster Bash:

Halloween (continued from page 5)

Plaza Haunt with festive decora tions at Pioneer Park and Civic Center Plaza.

But most municipal leaders — and residents — expect to cele brate the spooky holiday closer to home. A recent nationwide Nextdoor poll found that 73% of neighbors say they’re looking for an alternative to trick-or-treating this year. Nextdoor has altered its annual Treat Map with icons for COVID-19-safe Halloween activities, promoting more so cially distanced activities, such as “haunted decor,” “pumpkin projects” and a “costume wave parade.”

Throughout the Midpenin sula, here’s how residents are rethinking their usual approach to Halloween.

Palo Alto: Candy chutes, a costume ‘parade,’ a scary swim and werewolves

College Terrace resident Laura Forrest is taking an innovative approach to candy deliveries at her Yale Street residence, where she’ll be inside her home wait ing for trick-or-treaters who will be guided by a one-way sign to a candy chute on Halloween. On Halloween, “scary” yellow caution tape and plastic sheeting will cordon off her front steps and door, she said. When she sees visitors arrive, she’ll send candy down the chute, which she construct ed from a leaf-blower bag and heavy, spray-painted cardstock. Trick-or-treaters can use a hand sanitzer station before retrieving the sweets from a witch’s cauldron. A sign guides them to the exit, she said.

The chute “is angled so it is gravity-assisted. My sister came a week ago and we tested it out,” Forrest said. When a candy bar arrived, her sister quickly snapped up the coveted choco late treat and refused to give it back, she said.

Forest set up the chute on Oct. 1 and her ingenue inspired one neighbor who planned to create her own version to promote so cial distancing, she said.

She has promoted the candy chute on social media and Next door but isn’t sure whether any one will show up this year.

“If not, my daughter and I will have some candy to eat,” she said.

Jesse Bingham, who with his brother, Josh, has set up an elab orate display every year at their Rinconada home in Old Palo Alto, said he’s cutting back — just a bit. Last year’s theme revolved around scary monster movies, and people in costumes were able to sit and watch films on various screens, but this year he’s taking a socially distanced approach. He’s focusing on were wolves in the front yard and a scarecrow-farmer and pumpkin theme on the side.

He’s considering having peo ple remove their cars from in front of his house so that anyone who wants to drive by can see the display unimpeded, he said. To maintain social distancing, Bingham said he hasn’t decorat ed his small backyard as in past years. This side the yard has a large, long driveway where people can maintain appropriate distance from each other.

“I still wanted to do something that people could enjoy. I’ll still get to connect with those who are out,” he said.

Julia Murphy-Chutorian, of Southgate, said she has invited her neighbors on Mariposa Avenue to put out tables with candy between 6-7 p.m. on Halloween.

“The neighbors can sit outside and see the kids come by and still be socially distanced. The nice thing is having an hour of fun for the neighbors to see the children. The fun part of Hal loween is opening the door and seeing the costumes,” she said.

She has also reached out to other streets in her neighborhood through Nextdoor to see if they want to join in, she said.

Few trick-or-treaters have come to her neighborhood in the past, Murphy-Chutorian noted. This year, she said she isn’t sure what will happen as people choose to stay closer to home.
because of the pandemic.

“Hopefully that’s what will come out of this. People will stay in the community and get to know their neighbors rather than going out to the hottest thing,” she said.

Greenmeadow Community Association will host a “Spooky Time Trials” swim meet in the association’s heated pool on Saturday morning, Oct. 24.

The neighborhood held a Halloween Scary Distance Meet during the evening for years, which took a hiatus from 2016 to 2018 but was revived in 2019, Donna Hill, chair of the association’s swim team committee, said in an email.

As in years past, attendees will be greeted with pool decorations, spooky music and coaches and volunteers in costume. Event organizers will also reward all swimmers with a commemorative swim cap, mini pumpkin and candy, according to Hill. Children can win large pumpkins through a raffle drawing including a socially distanced costume parade, or designating a home to set up individually for the entire street.

“When all returns to normal, we will revert to evenings and go back to serving dinner and having a bigger raffle,” she said.

The swim events for most children are about twice as long and volunteers in costume. Event organizers will also reward all swimmers with a commemorative swim cap, mini pumpkin and candy, according to Hill. Children can win large pumpkins through a raffle drawing including a socially distanced costume parade, or designating a home to set up individually for the entire street.

Donna Hill, chair of the association’s heated pool on Saturday morning, Oct. 24.

“The coolest kid in the universe” [E]

Slow animal that grows wings and gets in trouble in the story [S]

Wants really badly [S]

Palindromic Turkish title [S]

Sid: “I’m not ___ years old anymore.” Me: “No, I’m out there puttering every day. Everybody’s looking for some kind of distraction. It’s fun. This year has brought everything you can imagine (but all hope is not lost. This is the perfect holiday for social distancing,” she said. [S]

“Rhymes at the Zoo” — a group effort for Take Your Kids To Work Day in collaboration with my then-nine-year-old twins. Clues followed by an [E] were written by Ella.}

Take Your Kids To Work Day in collaboration with my then-nine-year-old twins. Clues followed by an [E] were written by Ella.}

Answers on page 10.

www.sudoku.name

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Two Great Properties in Old Palo Alto!

1420 Emerson Street, Palo Alto
New Price: $2,950,000
Living Area: 1,663 Sq Ft | Lot Size: 5,000 Sq Ft
(Per County Records, unverified)

This expanded 3 Bedroom/2 Bath bungalow has been transformed though modern design while retaining its 1920’s character. The welcoming front porch and a charming entry foyer are reminders of the home’s architectural heritage, and lead to a dramatic light-flooded living room with a soaring ceiling and clerestory windows. The kitchen and baths have been remodeled with classic finishes.

2046 & 2050 Emerson Street, Palo Alto
Offered at $3,500,000
Lot Size: 10,000 Sq Ft
(Per County Records, unverified)

Outstanding opportunity to own two charming cottages on a 10,000 sq. ft. lot in Palo Alto’s desirable Old Palo Alto neighborhood. Each home features a 2 Bedroom/1 Bath floorplan, a fully equipped kitchen and private back yard.

Endless possibilities to accommodate a multitude of needs: live in one/rent the other; live in one/work in the other; in-law quarters; shared ownership with a friend...or build new.

Both properties are just blocks to outstanding public schools, California Avenue shopping, restaurants and Caltrain station and near downtown Palo Alto, Town and Country Shopping Center, and world-renowned Stanford University.

For a complete virtual experience visit 1420Emerson.com and 2046-2050Emerson.com.
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