Nursing homes prepare for COVID vaccines

Page 5

Surreal times
Photos capture historic events that shaped 2020

Page 12

Upfront: City to roll out ambulance insurance
Upfront: Ada’s Cafe fights for survival
Eating Out: Best meals in the worst year
It is as important as ever to get the care you need.
Stanford Health Care is taking every precaution to keep you safe.

To protect your health, we are:
- Sanitizing exam rooms after every patient
- Testing patients for COVID-19 before most procedures
- Screening everyone for COVID-19 risk before entry
- Providing and requiring masks for patients and staff
- Monitoring employee health, including regular COVID-19 testing

Don’t delay your care. Appointments are available at our locations across the Bay Area and remotely by video visit.

To learn more, visit: stanfordhealthcare.org/resumingcare
Throughout this difficult year, our community has been resilient and supportive.

Grateful for my clients, friends and family, and expressing a sincere thank you to the healthcare and essential workers.

Wishing you happy holidays and a safe start to the new year.
"PVI’s Meals on Wheels brings me love. The meals have kept me alive and changed my life. It’s my connection to human beings. The warm and pleasant driver is like receiving a “hug through their smiles.”

James lives alone and struggles with mobility due to chronic health conditions, making shopping and cooking for himself very difficult. The local liquor store is the most accessible option for food purchases, yet choices are scarce for healthy, affordable and easy to prepare meals. Though primarily wheelchair bound, James is anxious about using his wheelchair after witnessing another wheelchair user tip over on the uneven sidewalk. When James contacted PVI’s Meals on Wheels program he weighed only 110 pounds and had no food in his refrigerator. Now James is sustained by daily nutritious meals. His PVI Meals on Wheels volunteer driver is often the only person he sees and the connection is like a “daily hug.”

Help us reach our $500,000 holiday goal to feed seniors in need from East Palo Alto to Daly City!

Food needs have skyrocketed on the Peninsula due to COVID-19 and are amplified during the holidays.

With your support PVI’s Meals on Wheels nutritious meal deliveries have continued uninterrupted throughout COVID-19. And we’ve adapted to the new reality by offering virtual access to our critical senior care and caregiver programs from the comfort of home.

You may ask “What can I do to help?”

Your gift today can have an immediate impact on the families that need us most!

Visit penvol.org for more information and to read more impact stories.

Have an immediate impact by donating online at penvol.org/donate.
Long-term care facilities prepare for COVID-19 vaccines

The county’s most vulnerable population will begin being vaccinated next week

by Sue Dremann

Operators of local skilled nursing and long-term care facilities are breathing a sigh of relief after learning that they will receive doses of COVID-19 vaccines for their patients and staff as early as next week.

Walgreens and CVS Health started administering vaccines made by Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna Inc. on Dec. 18 and 21, respectively, in other states as part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Pharmacy Partnership for Long-term Care Program. CVS will roll out its program in California starting Dec. 28, Monica Prinzring, CVS spokeswoman for the western region, wrote in an email on Tuesday.

Walgreens is scheduled to provide vaccinations at approximately 800 long-term care facilities across 12 states this week, but not in California. The company will begin clinics in 39 additional states the week of Dec. 28, or once the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention approves more jurisdictions, Walgreens spokeswoman Emily Delnicki said on Tuesday.

Rhonda Bekkedahl, CEO and executive director at Channing House in Palo Alto, said:

“Seeds of Summer” received $2,460 per trip.

With camps shut down, Hidden Villa sends seeds, leaves and lessons to area youth

by Gennady Sheyner

Hidden Villa tried to stay true to its core mission during this highly abnormal year.

”The availability of the vaccine has given our residents, staff and their families hope. Hope that this pandemic will one day be in the past,” Bekkedahl wrote in an email on Tuesday.

“We are very excited to be receiving the first dose of the vaccine this month,” Bekkedahl wrote in an email on Tuesday. “The availability of the vaccine has given our residents, staff and their families hope. Hope that this pandemic will one day be in the past.”

(continued on page 20)

EMERGENCY SERVICES

City proposes ambulance insurance

Program expected to bring in more than $1M annually

by Gennady Sheyner

Palo Alto residents and businesses may soon have the option of subscribing to a new service that most will hope they’ll never have to use: unlimited rides in Fire Department ambulances.

The Palo Alto Fire Department is preparing to get into the insurance business by offering all households and businesses the option of paying a flat monthly fee. Those who participate would not have to pay any out-of-pocket costs if they require an ambulance transport — a service that can cost some residents as much as $2,460 per trip.

The program has two main goals: giving local residents and employees one less worry when they’re facing a medical emergency, and giving the Fire Department an important new revenue source at a time of budget shortfalls. The City Council’s Finance Committee received its first look at the proposed program last week and the full council is expected to take it up in early 2021.

“The biggest compliment we get as an emergency medical provider is our service,” Fire Chief Geo Blackshire told the committee at the Dec. 15 meeting. “The most regular complaint we get is billing. What we feel is that we’re providing some cushion to one of our biggest complaints that we get, and that’s our billing. We can provide that to the customer and give them a means of saving cost if they require an ambulance — a service that can cost some residents as much as $2,460 per trip.”

(continued on page 20)
The Petition for Probate requests that:

1. The decedent's representative to administer the estate of CRAIG O. KLEIN in the Superior Court of California, County of SANTA CLARA.

2. The will and any codicils be admitted to probate. The will and codicils, if any, be given for examination in the file kept by the clerk of the court.

3. If the decedent's representative has ceased to administer the estate, the court will grant the petition and grant the decedent's representative the power to administer the estate.

4. The will and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate.

5. The court will grant the petition and declare the will and codicils, if any, to be the last will and testament of the decedent.

6. The court will declare the will and codicils, if any, to be the last will and testament of the decedent, and the decedent's representative to be the executor and administratrix of the estate.

7. The court will grant the petition for probate and the petition for administration.

8. The court will grant the petition and declare the will and codicils, if any, to be the last will and testament of the decedent.

9. The court will grant the petition and declare the will and codicils, if any, to be the last will and testament of the decedent, and the decedent's representative to be the executor and administratrix of the estate.

10. The court will grant the petition for probate and the petition for administration.

11. The court will grant the petition and declare the will and codicils, if any, to be the last will and testament of the decedent.

The court will pass upon all claims, accounts, and matters arising in or connected with the estate until it is closed.

FULFILLING CHRISTMAS WISHES ... Every other Saturday since late March, the Karat School Project has dropped off educational materials and gift cards for food to local families living in relocation vehicles. PV dwellers have said each visit feels like Christmas, according to Founder Evelyne Keonlian. “In a way, the organization planned ahead to bring holiday cheer for the families they serve. Within two weeks, the nonprofit worked with parents to get their children’s wish lists with text message (many wanted bicycles) and gathered the items through donor support. The gifts were delivered Dec. 19 to about 35 families, each with an average of five children, who live in RVs along El Camino Real in Palo Alto.

“The joy in the children’s eyes — it was just amazing,” Keonlian said. The families also received gift cards to purchase holiday meals. The assistance was particularly meaningful to a single mother of a 3-year-old boy. She was unable to text the nonprofit her son’s wish list because she has been out of work due to the pandemic, preventing her from paying their utility bills. It wasn’t the program itself that was the issue but the two photos used in the ad: one featuring a Black family and another featuring a Black couple. “Why must we assume that African Americans are the ones who need this kind of assistance, when no other racial groups were represented?” resident Michael Cass asked in a letter. Officials say that there was no intention to link the program with any race or to suggest that Black individuals are more likely to need assistance with their bills. Catherine Elvert, communications manager for Palo Alto Utilities, said the marketing approach is “to focus on all aspects of the community” and to depict images of customers of “all ages and races.” The fact that this flyer only depicted Black individuals was coincidental, she said. “We strive to show diversity across our communication and outreach channels to reflect the diversity of the community we serve.”

Rhonda Bekkedahl, Channing House CEO, on the arrival of COVID-19 vaccines. See story on page 5.
Plans for Palo Alto History Museum remain in limbo
Council proposes selling or leasing the Roth Building, a long-considered site of future museum

For nearly two decades, Palo Alto’s elected officials and civic leaders have viewed the historic Roth Building next to Heritage Park as the perfect place for park improvements.

But with the city’s finances on the wane and frustrations mounting about the slow pace of progress on museum fundraising, some members of the City Council indicated on Dec. 14 that it may be time to abandon the project and consider other options, including the possible sale of the 1932 building that was designed by renowned architect Birge Clark and that once housed the Palo Alto Medical Clinic.

For city leaders, the historic building at 300 Homer St. is both a headache and treasure. It is a historic asset in a prime downtown location, adorned with murals that celebrate medical achievements. It is also vacant, derelict and seismically unsafe.

Everyone agrees the building should be fixed up as soon as possible. But the only plan to do so thus far has come from Palo Alto Museum, the nonprofit that has been spearheading the museum project since 2004. The organization presented the council with two options. One would help structurally and seismically rehabilitate the building to create what’s known as a “cold shell” for the museum. Another would involve making further renovations to make the building occupiable by the museum. The former option would cost an estimated $6 million; the latter would run at about $10.5 million.

Most of the funding for the cold shell option would not come from the city’s general fund, according to the museum’s proposal. The nonprofit has about $500,000 in cash on hand for the construction and another $4.9 million in revenues from the city’s “transfer of development rights” program, which supports the rehabilitation of historical buildings. The museum also has received $300,000 in county grants, and city staff has identified another $500,000 that can be allocated for the project from library impact fees (the new museum would hold Palo Alto’s historical archives, which are currently housed at Cubberley Community Center).

For the more ambitious $10.5 million plan, the museum had recommended utilizing other impact fees, including ones designated for park improvements.

With the city’s finances in a rut, council members showed little appetite last week for significantly investing more public funds in the project. Instead, the council reverted to its familiar pattern and requested that staff consider other options for the Roth Building.

As in the past, council members talked about the urgent need to rehabilitate the building as soon as possible. They recommended leasing some — or all — of the building to a private entity. And for the first time, they floated the idea of outright selling the historic building, though several members also noted that they were particularly favor going this route.

They stopped well short, however, of taking the type of actions that proponents of the museum had been hoping for.

Council member Alison Cormack was among those who urged action on fixing up the Roth Building. Cormack said she recently toured the building and saw medical equipment that has been in the building since the city purchased it in 2000.

“I’m appalled that our city and prior councils and this council and staff have let that building just sit there for 20 years. ... I’m actually really stunned. I’m stunned this has not been on our infrastructure list,” Cormack said.

While Vice Mayor Tom DuBois joined the council majority in agreeing the building is a Palo Alto-owned asset and suggested that the city needs to at least fund the cold shell, most of his colleagues were reluctant to spend more public money on the project. Cormack brought up the idea of selling the Roth Building, saying it would be irresponsible for the council to not consider that option.

The council voted 5-2, with DuBois and Cormack member Lydia Kuo dissenting, to direct staff to explore a menu of options for the Roth Building, including considering a possible sale, with Palo Alto Museum getting a first right of purchase. Other options are pursuing a lease that would generate revenue, rezoning the site to make it economically viable and partnering with the museum to build a “warm shell” without the use of public funding.

Mayor Adrian Fine called the museum project “laudable” but suggested that allocating the impact fees to the museum would represent “an end run around the financial process.” Impact fees, he said, are intended for a whole range of priorities including parks, libraries and community centers.

“If I knew we could’ve done it on council, I would’ve done it years ago,” Fine said. “I would have said, ‘I love bike lanes and dog parks, and let’s use the impact fees to fund those.’ I find this entirely inappropriate.”

Council member Eric Filseth also rejected the notion that the city has millions of dollars available for the museum project. He joined the council majority in directing staff to return in six months with an update on other uses for the building. While the vote was similar to the council’s prior direction to explore other options for the Roth Building (with the notable addition on a potential sale), council member Liz Kniss said she believes the options represent a reasonable road for the city at a time when its finances are strained.

“We are in terrible times,” Kniss said. “We’ve still got a raging pandemic. We’ve got an economic situation that looks about as bleak as one has looked in a long time. We don’t have a really clear avenue for really dealing with this as of yet.”

Stuff Writer Gennady Sheyner can be emailed at gsheyner@paweekly.com.
Support our Kids
with a gift to the Holiday Fund

Each year the Palo Alto Weekly Holiday Fund raises money to support programs serving families and children in the Palo Alto area. Since the Weekly and the Silicon Valley Community Foundation cover all the administrative costs, every dollar raised goes directly to support community programs through grants to non-profit organizations.

And with the generous support of matching grants from local foundations, including the Packard, Hewlett, Peery and Arrillaga foundations, your tax-deductible gift will be doubled in size. A donation of $100 turns into $200 with the foundation matching gifts.

Whether as an individual, a business or in honor of someone else, help us reach our goal of $400,000 by making a generous contribution to the Holiday Fund.

With your generosity, we can give a major boost to the programs in our community helping kids and families.

Give to the Palo Alto Weekly Holiday Fund and your donation is doubled. You give to non-profit groups that work right here in our community. It’s a great way to ensure that your charitable donations are working at home.

As of December 22, 335 donors have contributed $210,970 to the Palo Alto Weekly Holiday Fund.

29 Anonymous..............................................$9,595

New Donors

Roy Levin & Jan Thomson ....................250
Pat Yanklowski & Mark Krasnow ..........100
Deborah Myles ....................................100
Katherine Bryant ..............................144
Sallie Tasto .....................................1,000
Steve & Gayle Brugler ........................1,000
Nancy Tuck .......................................1,000
John & Mary Schaefer ......................100
James & Kathryn Lodato .................500
Daniel & Jess Taerk ...........................200
Rosalee Shepherd ............................100
David & Betsy Fryberger ....................200
Tom Hanks ......................................100
Margo Sensenbrenner ......................* 100
J. Gonzales .......................................100
Don & Bonnie Miller .........................200
Constance Crawford .......................* 100
Vic & Norma Hesterman ....................250
Joanne Kolbroy .................................300
Susan Olsforsk ................................200
Neilson Buchanan .........................1,250

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

Enclosed is a check for $______________

Name _________________________________________________________
Email __________________________________________________________
City/State/Zip ___________________________________________________
Business Name __________________________________________________

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

☐ In my name as shown above
☐ In the name of business above

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

(Name of person)

Support our Kids
with a gift to the Holiday Fund

All donors and their gift amounts will be published in the Palo Alto Weekly unless the boxes below are checked.

☐ I wish to contribute anonymously.

☐ Please withhold the amount of my contribution.

Please make checks payable to: Silicon Valley Community Foundation

Send coupon and check to:
01 – Palo Alto Weekly Holiday Fund
c/o Silicon Valley Community Foundation
P.O. Box 45389
San Francisco, CA 94145

The Palo Alto Weekly Holiday Fund is a donor advised fund of Silicon Valley Community Foundation, a 501 (c)(3) charitable organization. A contribution to this fund allows your donation to be tax-deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Support our Kids
with a gift to the Holiday Fund

Non-profits: Grant application & guidelines at PaloAltoOnline.com/holiday_fund
Application deadline: January 11, 2021

Support our Kids
with a gift to the Holiday Fund

Last Year’s Grant Recipients

Alles Academy ........................................$20,000
Alive Works .........................................$5,000
Acknowledgments (F_racebuilders) ........$5,000
Adolescent Counseling Services ..........$7,500
All Students Matter ..............................$15,000
Art in Action .......................................$5,000
Art of Yoga .........................................$5,000
Bayshore Christian Missions ...............$5,000
Big Brothers Big Sisters .......................$5,000
Bueno Vista Homework Club (Caritas) ..$10,000
CAUSA of San Mateo County ..............$5,000
CASY .............................................$10,000
DreamCatchers ...................................$20,000
East Palo Alto Academy Foundation ....$7,500
East Palo Alto Kids Foundation ..........$10,000
East Palo Alto Library (formerly Quest) $5,000
East Palo Alto Tennis & Training ........$10,000
Eucenrical Hunger Program .................$10,000
Environmental Volunteers .................$5,000
Family Connections .........................$5,000
Fit Kids Foundation .........................$5,000
Foundation for a College Education ......$7,500
Friends of Junior Museum & Zoo ........$5,000
Health Connected ..............................$5,000
Heart and Home Collaborative ............$15,000
Hidden Villa ......................................$5,000
Jasper Ridge Farm ..............................$5,000
Kara ................................................$7,500
Live in Peace .....................................$5,000
Marine Science Institute ....................$5,000
Music in the Schools Foundation ........$5,000
Musikfest .........................................$5,000
New Voices for Youth Social Good Fund $5,000
Nuestra Casa ......................................$7,500
Palo Alto Art Center Foundation ..........$5,000
Palo Alto Housing ...............................$5,000
Palo Alto Music Connection ...............$5,000
Peninsula Bridge Program .......... ........$5,000
Peninsula College Fund .....................$5,000
Peninsula Volunteers .........................$5,000
Ravenwood Education Foundation .......$7,500
Rich May Foundation ..........................$5,000
Rise Together Education ....................$10,000
Robots for All ....................................$3,600
Silicon Valley Bicycle Exchange .........$5,000
Silicon Valley Urban Debate League ....$5,000
St. Francis of Assisi Youth Club ..........$5,000
TheatreWorks ...................................$5,000
Vista Center for Blind & Visually Impaired $5,000
WHIOPE .........................................$10,000
YMCA - EPA ....................................$10,000
YMCA - PA Family ............................$5,000
Youth Community Service .................$20,000
Youth Speaks Out ..............................$10,000

Child Care Facility Improvement Grants

Gatepath (Walters United) .................$5,000
All Five ........................................$10,000
Grace Lutheran Preschool ..................$5,000
The Learning Center .........................$5,000
Palo Alto Community Child Care .......$10,000
Palo Alto Friends Nursery School .......$6,000
Parents Nursery School .................$5,000
High school scholarships .................$8,000

Non-profits: Grant application & guidelines at PaloAltoOnline.com/holiday_fund
Application deadline: January 11, 2021
Three boys allegedly beat, rob woman

Police found credit cards in the woman's name, which had been used to withdraw large amounts of cash. Officers responding to a call on Dec. 21 at about 8:20 p.m. found a woman in her 60s in a parking garage at 180 El Camino Real with moderate injuries to her head and one knee, according to a press release.

The boys allegedly attempted to yank the woman's purse off her shoulder. When she attempted to hold onto it, one of the boys allegedly punched her repeatedly in the back of the head. She fell to the ground, at which point the same boy took the purse. The weapon used was a knife. He ran and was last seen running from the scene.

Police also are currently investigating a shooting that left a 40-year-old man with stomach and shoulder wounds on Sunday afternoon near U.S. Highway 101 and El Camino Real. The man was shot after his gun was erupted between his vehicle and another car near the on-ramp that connects U.S. Highway 101 and East Bayshore Road. Police believe there were four suspects in a black Honda Civic.

Three boys allegedly beat, rob woman

Three boys were arrested in connection with the strong-arm robbery of a woman at Stanford Shopping Center on Dec. 21, resulting in injuries that left her hospitalized, Palo Alto police said.

Officers responding to a call on Dec. 21 at about 8:20 p.m. found a woman in her 60s in a parking garage at 180 El Camino Real with moderate injuries to her head and one knee, according to a press release.

The boys allegedly attempted to yank the woman's purse off her shoulder. When she attempted to hold onto it, one of the boys allegedly punched her repeatedly in the back of the head. She fell to the ground, at which point the same boy took the purse. The weapon used was a knife. He ran and was last seen running from the scene.

Police also are currently investigating a shooting that left a 40-year-old man with stomach and shoulder wounds on Sunday afternoon near U.S. Highway 101 and El Camino Real. The man was shot after his gun was erupted between his vehicle and another car near the on-ramp that connects U.S. Highway 101 and East Bayshore Road. Police believe there were four suspects in a black Honda Civic.

Three boys allegedly beat, rob woman

Three boys were arrested in connection with the strong-arm robbery of a woman at Stanford Shopping Center on Dec. 21, resulting in injuries that left her hospitalized, Palo Alto police said.

Officers responding to a call on Dec. 21 at about 8:20 p.m. found a woman in her 60s in a parking garage at 180 El Camino Real with moderate injuries to her head and one knee, according to a press release.

The boys allegedly attempted to yank the woman's purse off her shoulder. When she attempted to hold onto it, one of the boys allegedly punched her repeatedly in the back of the head. She fell to the ground, at which point the same boy took the purse. The weapon used was a knife. He ran and was last seen running from the scene.

Police also are currently investigating a shooting that left a 40-year-old man with stomach and shoulder wounds on Sunday afternoon near U.S. Highway 101 and El Camino Real. The man was shot after his gun was erupted between his vehicle and another car near the on-ramp that connects U.S. Highway 101 and East Bayshore Road. Police believe there were four suspects in a black Honda Civic.
Midpeninsula Post editors and staff writers, all high school students, hold a Zoom staff meeting.

YOUTH

A newspaper by students, for students

High schoolers passionate about local journalism team up to start regional, independent publication

by Elena Kadvany

In eighth grade, Cedric Chan went through an unusual adolescent phase: immersing himself in city municipal code.

That eventually turned him on to watching city council meetings, and when he arrived at Los Altos High School, joining the student newspaper.

Chan, now a high school junior, is the managing editor of a new, student-run publication. Called the Midpeninsula Post, it’s made up of teenagers like him who stay up late to “geek out” over city council meetings and believe wholeheartedly in the mission of local journalism.

Tomoki Chien, editor in chief of the Midpeninsula Post and a junior at Los Altos High School, came up with the idea of a regional, independent news outlet that would cover stories that matter to high schoolers throughout the Peninsula. He felt frustrated by the limitations of school publications, which are “educational programs first, newspapers second.”

“Until I joined The Talon and started reporting on local politics, I didn’t realize there are interesting things here that are happening and very much relevant to my life — maybe even more so than things happening at a national or state scale,” Chien said.

He poached reporters from The Talon, Los Altos High’s student publication, and is working to recruit more student journalists from high schools in Mountain View and Palo Alto. They were assigned beats, such as city hall and education, for each city.

Midpeninsula Post reporters have covered school reopening plans, public health restrictions, the resignation of Los Altos’ city manager and the Palo Alto City Council’s vote to open FootHills Park to the public — all while managing Zoom classes and a typical high school workload.

(Chien tries not to text reporters during class time but often can’t help it when he has a buzzing story idea.)

Gil Rutstein, a Los Altos High sophomore who covers Los Altos City Hall and education for the Midpeninsula Post, said he was immediately drawn into the idea of a student-run media “conglomerate” that could have a larger impact than siloed student newspapers.

“I think there was such an incredible opportunity here to do something different and bring together people in a way that hasn’t really been done before that we can find and that would allow us to be free to pursue what we wanted without being tied to some sort of central organization or academic obligations,” Rutstein said. This summer, he covered local angles on the racial justice movement, including an interview with Los Altos Council member Neyssa Fligser about police reform and the City Council’s late-night decision to eliminate school resource officers from the Los Altos High School campus.

“That, for a particular group of students, is going to have a huge impact,” he said of the council’s decision to eliminate school resource officers. “We think that it’s a shame really that that information isn’t being brought to students in a way that’s effective.”

Stories are also packaged specifically for their audience (fellow teenagers) with a focus on graphics, videos and social media

COMMUNITY

Facing mounting COVID-19 hurdles, Ada’s Café temporarily shuts down

Resident starts auction to raise funds for the nonprofit, which hires people with disabilities

by Elena Kadvany

Ada’s Cafe in Palo Alto, like many local food businesses, is barely treading water amid the COVID-19 pandemic. Sales are down 80% at the Mitchell Park Community Center cafe. The staff of 50 has been cut to just six people.

But Ada’s is not a typical cafe. It’s a nonprofit that trains and employs people with developmental disabilities, giving them space to both work and belong. The pandemic has turned that mission and the business itself upside down: Founder Kathleen Foley-Hughes announced on Friday that the cafe will close temporarily until the new stay-at-home order is lifted in January.

“The goal of Ada’s is to create meaningful connections between the community and our employees. Right now that is a real struggle with sales down as much as they have been and real concerns about COVID-19 and the impact that would have on any of our employees, especially our mission-based employees,” she wrote in an email. “We can’t afford to keep losing significant money, wasting resources and potentially getting someone sick.”

Firoozeh Dumas, a Palo Alto resident, has launched an online auction to support Ada’s with a fundraising goal of $250,000. Dumas, whose children went to elementary school with Foley-Hughes’, said she was motivated in part as a native of Iran who always admired the U.S. for being more accepting of people with disabilities.

“I’m really saddened a place like Silicon Valley cannot sustain a business like Ada’s. What does that say about us if we let a business like this not survive?” Dumas said. “I know every business is suffering but if you look at the employees at this place, they are the most marginalized.”

Foley-Hughes, whose son Charlie has a developmental disability, opened Ada’s in 2014. The majority of Ada’s 50 employees have diagnoses including Down syndrome, traumatic brain injuries, autism spectrum disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder from war and incarceration and mental illness. The unemployment rate for people with disabilities is 10 times the average of a local area. Hughes has also hired refugees from Syria and El Salvador.

The nonprofit also conducts research as well as to improve workplaces for people with disabilities and on hiring, training and empowering people with disabilities in the commercial

Upfront

by Elena Kadvany

The goal of Ada’s is to create meaningful connections between the community and our employees. Right now that is a real struggle with sales down as much as they have been and real concerns about COVID-19 and the impact that would have on any of our employees, especially our mission-based employees,” she wrote in an email. “We can’t afford to keep losing significant money, wasting resources and potentially getting someone sick.”

Firoozeh Dumas, a Palo Alto resident, has launched an online auction to support Ada’s with a fundraising goal of $250,000. Dumas, whose children went to elementary school with Foley-Hughes’, said she was motivated in part as a native of Iran who always admired the U.S. for being more accepting of people with disabilities.

“I’m really saddened a place like Silicon Valley cannot sustain a business like Ada’s. What does that say about us if we let a business like this not survive?” Dumas said. “I know every business is suffering but if you look at the employees at this place, they are the most marginalized.”

Foley-Hughes, whose son Charlie has a developmental disability, opened Ada’s in 2014. The majority of Ada’s 50 employees have diagnoses including Down syndrome, traumatic brain injuries, autism spectrum disorder, post-traumatic stress disorder from war and incarceration and mental illness. The unemployment rate for people with disabilities is 10 times the average of a local area. Hughes has also hired refugees from Syria and El Salvador.

The nonprofit also conducts research as well as to improve workplaces for people with disabilities and on hiring, training and empowering people with disabilities in the commercial

(continued on page 23)
New Homes for the Holidays.

More than ever, Compass is here to help you find your place in the world.

The past 12 months have been unlike any other. As Palo Alto Weekly visual journalists captured this historic, life-changing year that included weeks of civil protests, unprecedented fires and a pandemic that transformed everyday life, their images reflect a range of unfamiliar and sometimes surreal — moments that shaped 2020.

When viewed together, these images reveal just how much life has changed over the past year. Photos predating Santa Clara County's first stay-at-home health order in mid-March feel like they were taken during another era. Those moments captured before the mask mandate are otherworldly, especially considering everything we know about the spread of the coronavirus now. And the images of orange skies covered in wildfire smoke above Palo Alto are apocalyptic.

But there's also images that show hundreds of people peacefull y protesting in the streets against social injustice and listening to Black community members share how they’ve experienced racism.

There's images of residents who rose above these challenging times, like Alice's Restaurant co-owner Andy Kerr, who delivered meals to first responders combating the CZU Lightning Complex fires in the Santa Cruz Mountains. And there are images of hope and the possible return to normalcy as some of the first recipients receive the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine.

Here are those moments that illustrate how our community persevered through this trying year.

Chief Visual Journalist Magali Gauthier can be emailed at mgauthier@paweekly.com.
Parker Bates cleans a booth after a voter has used it at the Palo Alto Art Center in Palo Alto on Nov. 3. Photo by Magali Gauthier.

Nurse Laura Zimmerman receives her first injection of the newly developed coronavirus vaccine at the Veterans Affairs Palo Alto Health Care System Hospital on Dec. 16. Photo by Federica Armstrong.

Sitting at a socially distanced desk, instructional aid Timothy Yung works with a student enrolled in the Palo Alto Unified School District’s Futures program on Sept. 11 after a small number of students are allowed back to campus for the first time since March. Photo by Magali Gauthier.

Signs behind Los Robles-Ronald McNair Academy kindergartener Clara remind students and staff to stay socially distant and to wear a mask at all times at the Boys and Girls Club in East Palo Alto on Sept. 16. Photo by Magali Gauthier.

About the cover: Demonstrators walk past a couple dining at Rooh in downtown Palo Alto on June 19. Photo by Magali Gauthier.
Smoke from nearby wildfires burning out of control in San Mateo and Santa Cruz counties since Aug. 16 envelope Palo Alto in an eerie orange sky that triggers tree lights to come on in the daytime on Sept. 9. Photo by Magali Gauthier.

FILTERED BY FIRE

An orange glow from wildfires can be seen on the horizon from the Palo Alto Baylands on Aug. 20. Photo by Brian Krippendorf.

From top down: Second Harvest of Silicon Valley volunteers load cars with boxes of food at the Avenidas Rose Kleiner Center in Mountain View on June 16. Taverna executive sous chef Kevin Nordhoff places roasted chicken in to go containers in the Palo Alto restaurant’s kitchen on March 17. A VTA worker cleans the driver’s space on a bus at the Mountain View train station on March 18. Photos by Magali Gauthier.
Above: About 500 demonstrators leave King Plaza and make their way down Hamilton Avenue in downtown Palo Alto on June 19 during a peaceful protest against police brutality and racism in the wake of the death of George Floyd, a Black man suffocated in the street while in custody of Minneapolis police on May 25. His death prompted monthlong protests nationwide.

Left: Demonstrators march in protest of police brutality against Black people in East Palo Alto on June 12. Photo by Magali Gauthier.

Left to right: Palo Alto resident Howard Kushlan wears gloves while grocery shopping for vulnerable neighbors unable to leave their houses during the shelter-in-place order. Quan Sims, a Palo Alto Unified School District Extended School Year program high school teacher, wears a clear mask over her face while explaining a class assignment during the summer program held at Greene Middle School on July 9. The clear mask helps students who rely on facial expressions understand what a staff member is communicating. Photos by Magali Gauthier.
Paul Lung Tuan
Resident of Palo Alto

Paul Lung Tuan has led a full life and passed away a few days shy of 92. Born in Shanghai in 1928 to Render and Mai Lung Tuan, he was the first of five children. After enduring the Chinese civil war and the Japanese occupation during WWII, he graduated from the University of Shanghai in 1948 with a B.A. in accounting, which put to good use at China Airlines and then at United Airlines, while attending the University of Denver.

Armed with an MBA degree and drafted into the U.S. Army in 1954, Paul became an army auditor in Washington D.C. and Germany, and also obtained U.S. citizenship with the help of the D.A.R. and his activities with the 2nd Army marching band.

In 1956, out of the army and back in Denver, Paul married his fiancé of 2 years, Jessie Chow, and they set off on a life together where he pursued interesting work in new fields, primarily computer systems. They soon became a family of four.

From 1959 to 1961 Paul worked for Burroughs Corporation, first as a sales tech rep in Hawaii, then as a district manager of tech services in Detroit. He was then lured to Salt Lake City to set up the computer center at University of Utah, and became its director. In 1963 he obtained an NSF grant to purchase an IBM mainframe, giving University of Utah the distinction of having the largest computer west of the Rockies.

Advanced education was important to Paul and the now family of five moved to Palo Alto in 1965, where he obtained an MS, an Eng, and PhD degrees from Stanford while working full time at SRI.

In 1971, after spending a year as an assistant professor of industrial engineering at University of Utah, Paul accepted a job as a U.S. government advisor on Systems Analysis to Taiwan. After living there until 1975 the family returned to Palo Alto, where Paul worked at SRI on challenging projects in transportation, including BART and the Boston subway. One of his favorite projects involved the Seoul subway. He also pioneered the use of metered on-ramps and synchronized traffic lights, among myriad other innovations we now take for granted.

At the age of 60 Paul almost retired but went to work as a vice president at Fair Isaac instead, helping to develop the FICO score.

After Paul retired at the age of 72, he and Jessie traveled to Canada on some epic road trips, visited China and France and cruised South America. In his free time he learned Tai Chi and enjoyed fraternizing with fellow veterans at his local chapter of the American Legion.

Paul is survived by his wife of 64 years, Jessie Tuan; children Linda (Gerold Firl), Steven (Tanya), Brian (Debbby); grandchildren Alana and Alrik Firl, Vera and Bruce Tuan, Joyce Tuan (deceased); sister Pansy Tuan (Debby); grandchildren Alana and Alrik Firl, Vera and Brian (Daughters Tuan (Gwynne), Ben Tuan (Caroline), Bau Shing (deceased (Sue), and many nieces and nephews.

Services were held December 14.

POLICE CALLS

| Encina Avenue, 12/16, 9:08 a.m; battery |
| Colorado Avenue, 12/17, 9:10 p.m; sex crime |
| Colorado Avenue, 12/18, 1:59 a.m; assault w/ deadly weapon |

Thief related
Commercial burglaries ...........................................7
Grand theft ..........................................................22
Identity theft .........................................................2
Petty theft ............................................................22
Residential burglaries .............................................17
Shoplifting ............................................................3

Vehicle related
Abandoned bicycle ..................................................0

Answers to this week’s puzzles, which can be found on page 23.

1 6 5 2 9 7 3 4 8
5 2 8 1 3 7 9 6
4 3 7 9 8 4 2 1 5
8 4 7 3 1 5 6 2 9
2 3 6 9 7 4 5 8 1
9 5 1 6 8 2 4 3 7
7 9 3 5 2 1 8 6 4
5 8 2 4 6 9 1 7 3
6 1 4 7 3 8 9 5 2

SANTOS DAME LAMAR PERIPHERY MYERS

PULSE

A weekly compendium of vital statistics

Palo Alto

Dec 16 - Dec 22

Violence related
Suzanne Court, 12/28, 2:33 p.m; child abuse/physical
Colorado Avenue, 12/6, 10:35 p.m; robbery
El Camino Real, 12/1, 10:2 p.m; robbery
Green Road, 12/4, 1:14 p.m; suicide attempt
High Street, 12/2, 10:18 p.m; arson
Pasture Drive, 12/15, 9:19 p.m; elder abuse/financial

Property related
Break-in ......................0
Auto theft .....................4
Bicycle theft ..................10
Driving w/ suspended license ..........0
Hit and run ......................3
Lost property ..................3
Parking/driving violation ..........0
Theft from auto ..................0
Stolen catalytic converter ...........0
Vehicle accident/minor injury ........0
Vehicle accident/prop damage ......0
Vehicle theft ...................0

Miscellaneous
Found property ................3
Locate missing person ............1
Lost property ..................3
Psychiatric subject ...............4
Suspicious circumstances ........1
Vandalism ........................1
Warrant/other agency ............14

Menlo Park

Dec 18 - Dec 24

Violence related
Hollyburne Avenue, 12/17, 12:43 a.m; robbery
Mills Street, 12/21, 1:32 p.m; assault

Theft related
Bicycle theft ..................0
Petty theft ......................0
Residential burglaries ..............0

Vehicle related
Auto theft .....................0
Bicycle theft ..................0
Driving w/ suspended license ..........0
Hit and run ......................0
Locate missing person ............0
Parking/ID violation ..............0
Stolen catalytic converter ...........0
Theft from auto ..................0
Vehicle accident/minor injury ........0
Vehicle accident/mo injury ........0
Vehicle tow .....................0

Miscellaneous
Alcohol or drug related ............0

Drunk in public ..................0
Drug activity .....................0

OBITUARIES

A list of local residents who died recently:

Cristobal (Chris) Sanchez, a Palo Alto resident for 64 years, died at his home on Dec. 10. He was one month shy of his 95th birthday. Jean Drummmond, 94, was a longtime Palo Alto native. After raising her family, she returned to school and became a social worker. She died on Dec. 14.

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

Employment

The Palo Alto Weekly offers advertising for Employment, as well as Home and Business Services.

If you wish to learn more about these advertising options, please call 650.223.6582 or email digitalads@paweekly.com.

Ann Marie Hmelar  
**May 30, 1932 – November 18, 2020**

Ann Marie (Sheridan) Hmelar, aged 88, passed peacefully on November 18, 2020, at her home in Palo Alto, California. She was born Kirstin Lynn Eliason, in Palo Alto, California, on May 30, 1932, the eldest daughter of Frank and Gertrude Sheridan. In 1954, she received a bachelor of science degree in nursing from St. John’s College (now part of the Breen School of Nursing at Ursuline College) in Cleveland. She is survived by her seven children: Steve Hmelar (Hui “Debra” Cen) of Palo Alto, California; Frank Hmelar (Christine) of Palo Alto, California; Tim Hmelar (Monica) of Palo Alto, California; Ann Hmelar (Muralidhran Madan) of Durham, North Carolina; Lisa Hmelar of Palo Alto, California; Michael Hmelar (Marion) of Palo Alto, California; and Sue Hmelar Queisser (Andrew Queisser) of Corvallis, Oregon. She is also survived by fourteen grandchildren: Christopher, Ashley, Marissa, Justin, Emma, Fe, Amanda, Isabel, Seattle, Thomas, Gracie, Olivia, Cody, and Natalie. She was predeceased by her husband of 54 years, Stephen Louis Hmelar, Sr., and her granddaughter Katelyn.

Ann Marie took great pride in raising her family. She listened attentively to learn about each child and grandchild. She offered up loving advice, far too many human biology and anatomy lessons, and the best hugs ever. An avid world traveler, she also passed on a keen interest in other people and cultures.

Ann Marie was a joyous, kind, and loving woman who brought deep curiosity and a healing touch to almost every encounter. Her circle of loved ones extended well beyond her immediate family and included “the adopted” – the young men and women, mostly from the East Coast, who were friends of her children. An adopted would come for a short visit to California and end up living—sometimes for years—in her Palo Alto home. The space Ann Marie (and her beloved, Steve) created for these young people further exemplified a generosity and acceptance that could be transformative.

In addition to her devotion to family, she had tremendous passion and energy for her role as an RN, as a nurse educator, and in service to public health. In clinical settings, her work took her to hospital wards as a nurse educator, and in service to public health. In 1954, she received a bachelor of science degree in nursing from St. John’s College (now part of the Breen School of Nursing at Ursuline College) in Cleveland.

On December 13, 2020 the world lost a super hero. Her super powers included the ability to navigate the haystacks of paperwork without GPS; an unparalleled talent to impeccably name the designer of every piece of fashion on the screen or street; being the best listener and always able to say or not say just the right thing; and most powerfully, the unique ability to make every person she touched the best version of themselves by unwaveringly believing in them more than they believed in themselves.

Kirstin loved fashion and regional account manager her garage was filled to Fendi and finally to Lancome; where as the promotional items than any makeup loving girl wall to wall with more full sized samples and transformative. So the irony of the timing of her passing leaves those that knew her hearing her saying sarcastically “Of course THOMS **** would happen NOW!”

As the children grew older and demanded less time, she scratched her itch to get back to fashion. Not wanting to leave family life she jumped back into the workforce close to home as a personal shopper at Neiman-Marcus, where she also doubled as the Gucci, then Akris rep. She seamlessly multitasked between new season fashion lineups, helping the girls through their teenage years, and being a basketball mom to hundreds of Palo Alto Midnight players. Next came lovingly moving the girls into their college dorms, sending too many care packages, and all the while keeping her husband grounded as he juggled the stresses of start-up life. She embraced the “best wife ever” mug that Ryo gave her like a legal doctrine, brandishing it proudly to settle any disputes. With her daughters successfully launching their student-athlete lives at UCSD/Keio (Japan) and NYU, she was ready for her next adventure. Passionate about animal rescue, she launched Poochi-foods, a handmade dog food business, whose proceeds would benefit animals in need.

Kirstin was put to rest, along with her son Brodie and her loving pets: Heidi, Sunny, Percy, Cooper, Chopin, Doraeemon, Kiki, and Kuma. An informal virtual remembrance was held on Sunday December 20, 2020. Please email kirstin@koyama.net to receive a link to the recording.

As Kirstin always put: “You only get one life, so live it well. Make the most of it.” She was a n unparalleled talent to impeccably name the designer of every piece of fashion on the screen or street; being the best listener and always able to say or not say just the right thing; and most powerfully, the unique ability to make every person she touched the best version of themselves by unwaveringly believing in them more than they believed in themselves.
Eating Out

The nine most memorable meals of 2020

Looking back on a fraught, but hopeful, year in dining on the Peninsula

Story and photos by Elena Kadvany

I t’s hard to feel anything except deeply despondent about this year in the local food industry. Beloved restaurants closed after decades of business, and the pandemic put many waiters, cooks and dishwashers out of work. Other owners decided to go into hibernation to hopefully preserve their businesses, though they have yet to reemerge.

Looking back at the meals I ate (one too many in my car) and the stories I wrote reminded me that it was also a year of resiliency, hope and truly outstanding food made in the face of enormous obstacles. Restaurateurs pivoted to meal kits and became retail operations to stay alive. New restaurants defined the odds to open, and pop-ups thrived. Numerous Bay Area regions, including San Mateo and Santa Clara counties, helped bring attention to the prohibitively costly delivery fees third-party apps charge restaurants by imposing caps on those fees.

The nine meals on this list were memorable in more than one way. They were all delicious but also represented something meaningful about this year in local food, whether it was mapo tofu at the Sichuan restaurant that almost closed due to early coronavirus fears or the out-of-work chef slinging standout fried chicken sandwiches from his backyard.

All but one of the food businesses mentioned here are still open; order takeout from them —directly, not on an app! — and tip generously.

Mapo tofu at Taste

On March 11, I unwittingly ate what would be my last sit-down meal inside a restaurant for the rest of the year. The day before, I had published a story on Taste, a Sichuan restaurant in Palo Alto. Taste was on the verge of closure after weeks of declining business due early fears about the coronavirus — and unfounded ones in particular hurting local Chinese restaurants. I ordered the mapo tofu lunch set and watched as the dining room filled up over the lunch hour, a solo waitress rushing to take orders and fill water glasses.

Owner Sandy Liu told me later that diners had come in because they heard Taste could close and wanted to support the restaurant. I felt genuinely uplifted and hopeful.

Despite the fact that things got a lot more grim than I could have ever imagined over the next nine months, Taste survived a lot longer than Liu thought it would. And that mapo tofu was truly excellent; I’ve craved its peppery, comforting notes more times than I’d care to admit.

Taste, 423 University Ave., Palo Alto; tastepaloalto.com

Tonkatsu curry at Curry Hyuga

Burlingame’s Curry Hyuga made headlines in late March as one of the first new restaurants to actually open during the shutdown. The owners reportedly got their business license 30 minutes before City Hall closed down.

The restaurant specializes in Japanese curry, served over rice with cabbage, fuku jinzuke (pickled vegetables) and your choice of protein, including pork and chicken katsu, chicken karaage and korokke (a fried potato croquette). I thoroughly enjoyed the tonkatsu, aged separately from the velvety, rich curry sauce to avoid a soggy fate, from the front seat of my car. (I definitely ate more food in my car in 2020 than in any year prior, and really hope I won’t need to stash as many napkins and stain remover wipes in the glove compartment in 2021.)

Curry Hyuga, 1204 Broadway St., Burlingame; curryhyuga.com

Korean fried chicken at Maum

When Maum in Palo Alto reopened for takeout this spring, one of the menus paid homage to Korean fried chicken and KFC combo meals. I still think about the perfectly crispy-on-the-outside, juicy-on-the-inside half chicken with beef and anchovy rice, a seaweed biscuit with honey butter, pickled Korean radish and kimchi. Sadly, it’s a reminder of the restaurant experiences we lost to the pandemic. The owner of Maum later parted with the Korean restaurant’s much-lauded chefs and tried to pivot before closing for good (at least for now).

All the pizza at Pazzo

I can’t believe it took me until this year to get to Pazzo, which churns out standout wood-fired New Haven-style pizza in San Carlos. Andy Gambardella of the now-closed Gambardella’s in Menlo Park opened Pazzo in San Carlos in 2014 in homage to the pizza of his youth growing up in New Haven.

The San Marzano and baby clam pies will, guaranteed, embed themselves into your taste memory — the blistered bottoms, the hint of dried oregano and full-flavored toppings. Also, you do not want to miss the cannoli here.

Pazzo, 1179 Laurel St., San Carlos; pazzosan Carlos.com/home.html

Double softee with rainbow sprinkles at Mister Softee

This might have been my most joyful meal of 2020: a double softee swirled with vanilla and chocolate soft serve, dripped in rainbow sprinkles. I ate it after chasing down a Mister Softee truck, which made for an incredibly fun story about the beloved East Coast soft serve company, that iconic tinkling music that triggers an almost Pavlovian response and the delightful pursuit of...
Eating Out

Page dimensions: 731.8x992.0

Eating in the bustling dining room at Sushi Sam’s in downtown San Mateo in January feels like a distant memory, but I can still taste the luxurious seared toro. The hefty piece of fatty tuna is lightly seared and brushed with yuzu and sea salt, draped over perfectly cooked rice. Not to be cliche, but it really does melt in your mouth. It’s not cheap at $18 for two pieces but after this year, we all deserve a little indulgence.

Sushi Sam’s Edomata, 218 E. 3rd Ave., San Mateo; sushisams.com

Elena Kadvany at ekadvany@paweekly.com.

Fried chicken sandwich at Cocina Canares

We were inundated this year with fried chicken, and sandwich-es in particular. My favorite of them all is the one Mel Canares es in particular. My favorite of Fried chicken sandwich A corporate chef who got laid off during the shutdown, he, like many out-of-work cooks, turned to what had previously been a side hustle — selling food out of his home — into a full-time gig. His fried chicken sandwiches are his bestseller, and for good reason. Canares double-dredges chicken thighs in a buttermilk and hot sauce marinade for super-crispy chicken, tops it with slaw and a smoky mesquite sauce and serves it on a toasted brioche bun.

He’s part of the under-the-table economy of home-based food businesses across the Bay Area, which surged during the pandemic and brought us some of the most interesting eats of the year. Some of these home cooks became successful enough that they won’t go back to their pre-pandemic jobs, including Perpe of Chef Pops Kitchen in East Palo Alto, who sold enough quesabirria and tacos to purchase a food truck this fall.

Weekly pop-up on Sunday in South San Francisco; check instagram.com/fuckinmel for details.

Hết Sây pop-up

I first tried Hết Sây in the “Before Times,” about a month before the pandemic hit. I stumbled onto the San Jose pop-up’s Instagram and was immediately drawn in by what turned out to be some of the most inventive and delicious takes on Vietnamese food I’ve had, like pâté vit ốp-la, a breakfast dish with homemade duck liver pâté, spiced sausage, pickles, a fried egg and salmon roe that you scoop bites of using toasted levain bread from Midwife and the Baker.

Owners Duy An and Hieu Le’s plans move into a new space this spring were obviously upended but they persevered during the lockdown, hosting pop-ups as they could and offering weekly pickup and delivery. Their Instagram feed still hooks me as much as it did that first time, the food photos as much as the detailed captions explaining each dish’s ingredients and significance — just look at this pandan waffle stuffed with caramelized banana or this galangal pork vit (chicken ragu with duck liver pate).

Hết Sây, 695 Lucretia Ave., San Jose, hetstorysquare.site

Bakers Against Racism pastries

Some of the best pastries I ate this year were also for a good cause. This summer, Backhaus in San Mateo and Love for Butter in Palo Alto participated in Bakers Against Racism, an international campaign to sell baked goods to support nonprofits that fight racial inequity. A grassroots response to the murder of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police, thousands of professional and home bakers participated in the effort.

John Shelesta of Love for Butter raised $3,000 for the Ecu-

omicals

O

EC

H

A

N

D

F

E

F

L

D

F

E

S

H

M

Ecological Food Co-op

Open Daily 8am-7pm • Prices Effective 12/29 thru 1/5

www.PaloAltoOnline.com • Palo Alto Weekly • December 25, 2020 • Page 19

For information, go to face-

book.com/softenorcal

sugary nostalgia. I loved the impassioned responses I got from people who grew up on Mister Softee and were so excited to discover that it’s available in the Bay Area.

“Of course with the Covid there were no trips to Brooklyn this year,” one reader wrote. “I miss my family, but I had a little taste of Brooklyn thanks to your article.”

Top: Pazzo in San Carlos offers New Haven-style pizza. Bottom: East Coast company Mister Softee serves soft-serve ice cream from a truck.
hidden Villa (continued from page 5)

boxes filled with 14 envelopes, one for each day for two weeks. The boxes were filled with a variety of craft supplies and bits of nature collected from the farm. Much like the traditional camps, the new program blend recreation and education. The lesson on LGBTQ+ taught students about pronouns and required them to create Shrinki-Dinks incorporating images that they identify with. An exercise on giving and appreciating others included a mix of herbs pulled from the Hidden Villa garden, Jones said. Recipients were encouraged to mix these herbs, put them in a sachet, decorate it and give it as a gift to someone.

“We were really trying to focus on making sure the stuff we’re sending isn’t just stuff, it can really connect them to the farm,” Jones said. “Sending little twigs from Hidden Villa felt really special.”

Hidden Villa sent out boxes to 40 participants in its Summer Seeds program, said Nicky Crummett, senior director of programs. It sent out an additional 95 boxes to its three long-time nonprofit partners that work with families in need: West Valley Community Services, which is based in Cupertino; Seven Tepeys Youth Program, based in San Francisco; and the St. Francis Center, which is based in Redwood City and works with youths and families in the Midpeninsula region.

The program was supported by a $5,000 grant from the Palo Alto Weekly’s Holiday Fund. In prior years, the grant has helped Hidden Villa provide financial assistance to young campers, a key part of the nonprofit’s mission of inclusiveness. This year, the Holiday Fund grant helped the organization supply Seeds of Summer boxes to its partners.

The program offered participants something a little different from the typical online offering, said Jessica DuVal, Hidden Villa’s director of communication. Some organizations and campers were wary of participating in yet another virtual activity that requires screen time.

“They were really excited to have a different kind of activity because, all of a sudden, they are doing so much more than they’re used to, with school being out,” DuVal said. “So they were really excited also to have something that wasn’t behind the screen and was a hands-on experience and a fun, different activity for participants to participate.”

Prince, who has participated in Hidden Villa’s summer camp programs for the past four years, concurred. The summer program did not in any way replace the actual experience of attending in-person Hidden Villa camps, with their cherished traditions, forged friendships, fun games like “rainbow tag” to win, you have to chase various people at the camp and have each of them swipe you with their colored marker and, of course, fluffy animals. They did, however, provide a welcome and valuable respite this summer.

Prince opened her daily envelopes, plucked the seeds that Hidden Villa had sent to her, perused the journal and participated in the exercises. For the LG-BTQ+ lesson, which focused on pronouns, she used her Shrink-a-Dink kit to create a heart, a star and a circle and turned them into a necklace.

“It was really nice for it to not be online. But I was kind of feeling like I need some person there to motivate myself,” Prince said, noting that it took her about three weeks to complete all the exercises.

Hidden Villa did provide some online opportunities for campers to check-in with counselors and with one another. Now, the organization is looking ahead to the summer of 2021, when it hopes to welcome campers back to its 1,600-acre classroom in Los Altos Hills. In August, it hosted a focus group with past participants to get their feedback on the future Hidden Villa experience. Crummett said the organization is in the process of putting together a group of experts, including leaders in the camp industry and pediatricians, to come up with plans for safe in-person operations.

Unlike in March, when the sudden onset of the COVID-19 pandemic combined with shifting health orders forced all businesses and nonprofit groups to scramble, Hidden Villa now has the luxury of having a bit more time to make an informed decision. Even in person, though she notes that things will look very different in 2021 from a normal year, with limited program, smaller groups, ample personal protective equipment and new safety protocols.

Amadeo Domikos, 10, hopes Hidden Villa can safely bring back the camp. A student at Encinal Elementary School in Atherton who participated in the August focus group session, said Hidden Villa has taught her important lessons about taking responsibility and always being kind to others. She has made friends at the camp with whom she has continued to keep in touch during the era of social isolation. But her favorite part of the experience — and one she hopes to return to next year — is petting and feeding the chickens, goats and sheep on the Hidden Villa farm.

“If it does get better, I do think we should meet in person and try to be as safe as possible,” Domikos said. “I think it’s a big part of Hidden Villa for me is being able to go and see the animals and pet them.”

Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner can be emailed at gsheyner@paweekly.com. For information on the Holiday Fund, see page 8 of this edition.

Ambulance (continued from page 5)

money, even if it’s over a long time.”

Fire Department leaders acknowledged that many people will choose not to opt into the program because their ambulance costs will go up, a shift mandated by their existing insurance policies. Individuals who are covered by Medi-Cal or Medicaid have no co-pay at all, while those on Medicare face a co-pay of between 10% and 20%, according to Amber Cameron, a business management analyst for the city.

The cost is higher for those with commercial insurance, for whom the co-pay is about 27%, which typically amounts to between $385 and $650 per trip.

The full $2,460 fee typically only applies to people with no insurance, who make up about 11% of the department’s ambulance transports. In many cases, the department does not recover the costs associated with the transport.

The Fire Department collects about 41% of the fees, Cameron said, and the ambulance service operates with the balance.

The idea of ambulance insur- ance is far from new, according to city officials. Back in the late 1990s, Mayor Tom DuBois called the proposal “real creative” and encouraged staff to include in its marketing materials a comparison between the fees customers would be paying to participate and the costs they would incur under their existing insurance policies. Council member Liz Knis also lauded it, though she noted that the city will probably need practical experience with the new program before finalizing some of the details.

Council member Greg Tanaka, who chairs the Finance Committee, was more skeptical and said he would not support the program unless staff provided a “distribution analysis” with information about individuals who currently use the ambulance service and who would likely enroll. The information isn’t critical, he said, to avoid a situation in which only those who frequently use the ambulance service sign up for coverage.

“If insurance really works well when it’s a random distribution,” Tanaka said. “It doesn’t work well when you have highly c penetrating usage.”

Fire Department staff aren’t particularly concerned about facts. Undoubtedly, Cameron noted that most of the people who are heavy users tend to be elderly residents who are covered by Medi- care. As such, they are unlikely to enroll in the insurance program. A more likely participant would be someone who is on commercial insurance such as Kaiser Permanente or Blue Shield of California, which cover some of the ambulance cost but still leave a patient with a bill totaling hundreds of dollars.

“The more random events, where someone breaks their leg or gets in a car accident, those folks will be more likely to be the ones to have commercial insurance, who are currently working and receiving personal protective employment compensation,” Cameron said. “We have a great deal of hope for the success of this program because we do think this is an in-person camping, Domikos said, things will be different from the ones in 2021 and commercial insurance, who are currently working and receiving personal protective employment compensation.”

Palo Alto residents and businesses may soon have the option of paying a monthly fee to insure them from paying fees if they need transportation by ambulance.

Upfront
I think you are doing a fabulous job under incredibly difficult circumstances. Thank you for your amazing dedication and professionalism!

- Joy R.

Will you join the thousands of others supporting local journalism?

Now’s your moment to step up when we need you the most.

Subscribe now at PaloAltoOnline.com/join

You can also subscribe for one year by mailing a check for $120 ($60 for seniors and students) to us at 450 Cambridge Ave., Palo Alto 94306.
Vaccine (continued from page 5)

The staff and residents are excited about it. The vaccine will help with the worry of family and residents and staff. We are very eager to relieve them of their concerns," she said.

Walgreens said in a statement that the company plans to administer the vaccine to about three million residents and staff in 35,000 long-term care facilities nationwide. Teams have been specially trained to properly handle the vials, which must be kept at sub-zero temperatures and transported in specific ways. Moderna’s vaccine, for example, can only be transported frozen to avoid shaking the vials.

The company has set up 100 strategic hubs around the country to store the vaccines. Pharmacy teams will make three visits to each long-term care facility to ensure residents and staff receive their initial shot and the critical booster.

"The majority of residents and staff will be fully vaccinated three to four weeks after the first visit, depending on which vaccine they receive. CVS Health expects to complete its long-term care facility vaccination effort in approximately 12 weeks," the company said.

The long-term care facility vaccination program is the first step toward the eventual availability of COVID-19 vaccines at all CVS Pharmacy locations throughout the country — subject to availability and prioritization of groups — which is based on states’ decisions. CVS expects to have the capacity to administer 20 to 25 million shots per month once the doses become available to everyone, the company said.

The roll out of the vaccination programs come as the deadly coronavirus has killed more than 22,923 people in California as of Dec. 21 and 615 people in Santa Clara County as of Tuesday, and has taken its largest toll on vulnerable seniors in congregate-living communities, according to state and county health leaders.

In Santa Clara County, this vulnerable population makes up about 5% of positive cases but bears 45% of the deaths, county Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody said.

Since Thanksgiving, those numbers are again spiking. Palo Alto’s Webster House Health Center has had 20 residents and six staff members test positive for the coronavirus since the holiday, according to McMullin.

Don’t Go It Alone for The Holidays

You are not alone. This time of year can normally be very stressful, let alone during a pandemic when we are asked to shelter in place and minimize contact with family and friends.

If you are struggling, you can turn to Avenidas Care Partners (ACP) for help.

Call (650) 289-5438 to request a crisis intervention, an elder care consult, family mediation and emotional support during these challenging times.

We are here for you.

Federica Armstrong

LOCAL NEWS

Join today: SupportLocalJournalism.org

Staff Writer Sue Dremann can be emailed at sdremann@pawweekly.com.
Ada’s Café
(continued from page 10)
food service industry.
During the lockdown, Ada’s pivoted to offering-to-go meals out of a Mountain View commercial kitchen. Employees who felt comfortable coming into work made jams, cakes, and corporate baskets. Foley-Hughes organized Zoom meetups and virtual cooking classes to keep her staff engaged and connected as possible under the circumstances.
“They really benefit from being at work for the social aspects of it (and) the constant repetition and teaching that goes on all day long when they’re at work. Many of them are just really lonely during the lockdown, she said.
“The employees that have been working are absolutely extraordinary,” she added. “If you can imagine what it might be like to have a processing disability and add to that the need for a plexiglass wall, a screen, masks on the customer and then masks on the employee — it makes communication and engagement really tough.”
The Palo Alto cafe reopened in October for takeout and outdoor dining, but foot traffic has been slow. On a normal weekday pre-pandemic, the cafe would have about $1,200 in sales, Foley-Hughes said. Rent at the commercial kitchen is also costly. Once that lease is up at the end of May, Ada’s will no longer offer catering and the cafe menu will be smaller, but downsizing will help the business survive, Foley-Hughes said. Ada’s is still offering takeout meals out of the Mountain View kitchen and holiday gifts, revenue from which is helping to keep the six remaining staff members employed.
“We’re in it to maintain it and to get to the other side of this,” Foley-Hughes said. “We plan to be here in 2021 and beyond.”

The online auction includes items such as lunch prepared and hosted by Ada’s employees, antique art, signed books, a weekend at the Squaw Valley Lodge and opportunities to meet (in person or virtually) movie director Jessica Yu and well-known authors. People can also donate directly to Ada’s or purchase gift cards. Dumas is auctioning her grandmother’s antique Persian silver set “in honor of all the people who are forced to live in the shadows.”

In the item description, she recounts a childhood memory: She was with her family at the home of a fortune teller in Iran when a young boy burst into the room. The fortune teller, “apologetic and ashamed,” quickly took him out of the room.
“I hope that someday, there will be Ada’s Cafes all over the world, where everyone has a chance to be Ada’s Cafe for their community, and to feel like they belong in the living room with the rest of us,” she wrote.

The council was scheduled to approve allocations of Community Development Block Grant funds totaling $354,550 for the Ravenswood Family Health Network and $54,332 for LifeMoves. The vote took place after the Weekly’s press time.
COMMITTED TO TRANSPARENCY
2.5% Commission Paid to Buyer’s Agent • Waived if DeLeon Buyer’s Agent

35 Edge Road, Atherton
6 Bd | 4 Bth
www.35Edge.com

$6,988,000

922 Lundy Lane, Los Altos
3 Bd | 3.5 Bth
www.922Lundy.com

$4,800,000

984 Monte Rosa Drive, Menlo Park
6 Bd | 5 Bth
www.984MonteRosa.com

$3,988,000

250 W. Floresta Way, Portola Valley
4 Bd | 3 Bth
www.250WestFloresta.com

$3,688,000

103 Stanford Ave., Menlo Park
4 Bd | 3 Bth
www.103Stanford.com

$3,988,000

2938 Ross Road, Palo Alto
5 Bd | 5.5 Bth
www.2938Ross.com

$4,988,000

2128 Vera Avenue, Redwood City
4 Bd | 4.5 Bth
www.2128Vera.com

$2,988,000

582 Manzanita Avenue, Sunnyvale
4 Bd | 3 Bth
www.582Manzanita.com

$1,498,000

1515 Topar Ave., Los Altos
6 Bd | 5 Bth
www.1515ToparAve.com

$4,988,000

580 Addison Ave., Palo Alto
5 Bd | 5 Bth
www.580Addison.com

$4,488,000

1160 Channing Avenue, Palo Alto
4 Bd | 3 Bth
www.1160Channing.com

$3,988,000

2797 Ross Road, Palo Alto
4 Bd | 3.5 Bth
www.2797Ross.com

$5,988,000

4152 Baker Avenue, Palo Alto
5 Bd | 7 Bth (5 full, 2 half)
www.4152Baker.com

$4,888,000

27500 La Vida Real, Los Altos Hills
5 Bd | 12 Bth (7 full, 5 half)
www.27500LaVida.com

$39,998,000

237 Mapache Drive, Portola Valley
5 Bd | 7.5 Bth
www.237Mapache.com

$12,995,000

3787 Woodside Rd, Woodside
6 Bd | 5.5 Bth
www.3787Woodside.com

$11,988,000

Please visit our website (DeLeonRealty.com) to see the Virtual Tour of the homes, or call 650.900.7000 to schedule a showing.

Michael Repka | 650.900.7000 | DRE #01854880
michael@deleonrealty.com | www.deleonrealty.com | DRE #01903224