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First local cases of South African variant identified

Stanford lab confirms COVID-19 variant in Santa Clara County, Alameda County

The first confirmed cases of a coronavirus variant first found in South Africa have been identified in two Bay Area counties, health officials announced Wednesday afternoon. The Stanford Clinical Virology Lab identified the two cases, one each in Santa Clara and Alameda counties, as the B.1.351 variant of SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19.

He has the mutated virus as well. "This is an important example of how public health measures can help break the chain of transmission and why it is critical that we as a community continue to avoid travel and quarantine upon return," Cody said.

L</p>
Join us for a virtual speaker series addressing the social and environmental issues we’re confronting today.

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To Palo Alto Weekly: 650-326-8210; online-paloaltoweekly.com. A membership in general circulation for San Mateo County. The Palo Alto Weekly is available to downtown. On Friday, the city plans to close select streets to cars as part of the Uplift Local program, which blocks certain roadways for customers and pedestrians to freely access support local merchants safely during the pandemic. The road closures include University Avenue between Ramona and Bryant streets and a half block of Ramona north of Hamilton Avenue. The changes build on the recent closures on California Avenue as part of Uplift Local. The city plans to hold a virtual community check-in meeting on the program on Feb. 16, 5:30-6:30 p.m. The public Zoom meeting can be accessed by dialing 669-900-6839 and using webinar ID 995 9377 6067 and passcode 312348. For more details and recordings of past meetings, visit cityofpaloalto.org/upliftlocal.

CAREER MOVES ... Notable athletes with ties to Palo Alto have recently entered new phases — and reached milestones — in their respective careers. Basketball’s Jeremy Lin this week played in his first game with the Santa Cruz Warriors, the Golden State Warriors’ G-League team, marking his return to the NBA. Lin had previously played for the Beijing Ducks in China from 2019 through last year. The 32-year-old guard also marked the ninth anniversary of Linsanity (the period during the 2011-12 NBA season when Lin’s on-court performance for the New York Knicks put the team on a winning streak). Joe Pederson, 28, is also moving forward with a new team. He has left the Los Angeles Dodgers, which drafted him in 2010, and signed a one-year deal with the Chicago Cubs. “So much has happened over those 10 years — it’s wild to think about. Of course, that baseball happened: six straight division winners, three NL (National League) pennants and one epic World Series title,” he wrote in a Feb. 5 article for The Players’ Tribune. The outfielder’s deal with the Cubs includes $7 million in guaranteed salary, according to MLB.com. And last but not least, John Lynch received what some may consider an overdue honor. On Feb. 6, the former Stanford University All-American and general manager for the San Francisco 49ers joined the Pro Football Hall of Fame. Lynch has been a Hall of Fame finalist for eight years.

If it takes us taking pitchforks to the City Council meeting, we will be there in force.

— James Cook, College Terrace resident, on the apartment complex proposed for Wellesley Street. See story on page 5.
A
n unusually lengthy investiga-
tion by the California Fair Political Practices Commission has finally conclud-
ed that Liz Kniss, a former Palo Alto City Council member who left office when the term limits kicked off shortly after Kniss was reelected to a second consecutive
reelected to a second consecutive
campaign finance laws during her 2016 campaign for reelection.

As a result, she faces $4,500 in fines, according to a stipula-
tion agreement that the agency released Monday and which the commission is scheduled to for-

The Fair Political Practices Commission (FPPC) case was ongoing.

In the stipulation, the FPPC contends that over the course of the 2016 campaign, Kniss vio-

Kniss previously told the Week-

Kniss and Collins appear to be

The FPPC approved the stipu-

The $4,500 fine is well below the

If the FPPC approves the stipu-

The $4,500 fine is well below the

Since March 2020, Gunn High school has remained virtually empty, but next month, students could be returning. The Palo Alto school district announced this week that middle and high school students will be able to go to their campuses, if they want to, as soon as March to take classes on Zoom.

Palo Alto City Council member Liz Kniss listens during the public comment period at a council meeting in 2019.

The FPPC has four months of reopening

ELECTION

Liz Kniss violated campaign finance laws, a 4-year-long investigation concludes

Former City Council member faces fines of $4,500 for reporting omissions, use of personal funds for campaign expenditures during 2016 run

by Gennady Sheyner

(continued on page 33)

Middle and high schoolers can return to campus classrooms — to Zoom

New reopening plan will take effect after county moves into red tier

by Elena Kadavy

(continued on page 33)

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(continued on page 33)
Palo Alto resident Elise Martin is living through her second pandemic. As a 3-year-old in Hartsville, South Carolina, she was sickened but survived the 1918 flu pandemic, which took the lives of her father and her baby sister.

Born in 1915, Martin marked her 106th birthday on Saturday, Feb. 6, by greeting friends, relatives and neighbors in a drive-by celebration in front of the home she shares with her daughter and son-in-law, Loretta and Bill Green.

“Oh, my goodness — it was such a beautifully done affair,” she said afterward. “I don’t know how many cars were there, but I understand it was over 50, and there were people standing in their yards and just walking along too.”

Martin has few clear memories of the 1918 pandemic but does recall watching as her father’s body, dressed up in his suit, was carried away on a horse-drawn wagon.

“T never understood why other children could have a father and I couldn’t,” she said. “That was puzzling to me because I was quite young when he died. My mother had five children, and how she managed I really don’t know, but she was always happy and smiling, and it seemed for some reason we did no wrong.”

Martin’s mother, Fannie Jones, worked as a seamstress to support the family. After graduating from cosmetology school, Martin opened her first beauty shop in Columbia, South Carolina, before the age of 20. She owned several successful beauty shops and, in 1969, became the first African American to own a business on the downtown’s Main Street when she opened a boutique there.

Martin also taught cosmetology for 27 years at Columbia’s Booker T. Washington High School. She received a call last week from a former student who told her he owns a barber shop, owns his own home and also owns the lot next door.

“He said, ‘I remember in school when you told me that I should not be shining shoes for a man. If I’m going to shine them, shine them for myself. That really made me think I needed to get out on my own.’ ”

“I thought it was so nice because he remembered what I said to him and when I said it,” Martin said. Martin was active in many Columbia civic organizations, including the zoning board and a citizens advisory committee. She spent decades as a poll worker and, at 93, was working on a campaign when then-candidate Barack Obama stopped by for a photo and a chat. She later met then-Vice-President Joe Biden as well.

Widowed, Martin moved to Palo Alto seven years ago to live with her daughter and son-in-law. She enjoys watching Jeopardy, football and basketball.

“I love basketball. Steph Curry can just stand anywhere he wants to stand — I’d say he can just turn his back and throw the ball in,” she said.

Asked for her advice on living a long and healthy life, she said: “I love people. Sometimes I’m not feeling good and people get around me and I forget I’m not feeling good. If you have people, they’re the best things to have around you.”

Martin also enjoys the company of her small dog, a Papillon she named after her first beauty shop — Vanity Fair.

Contributing Writer Chris Kenrick can be emailed at ckenrick@paweekly.com.
During a Heart Attack, Every Minute Counts

Know the warning signs:

- Chest discomfort, pain, or pressure that lasts for more than a few minutes, or that goes away and returns
- Upper body discomfort or pain, including in the arms, back, neck, jaw, or stomach
- Shortness of breath
- Lightheadedness, nausea, or vomiting
- Extreme fatigue
- Cold sweat

Chest pain is the most common symptom of a heart attack in men and women. Women are more likely to report some of the other common symptoms listed above. The hospital is still the safest place you can be in an emergency. Don’t hesitate. Call 911.

Caring for your heart is essential, even during the pandemic. Make cardiovascular health a priority starting this Heart Month by exercising, eating a balanced diet, keeping up routine medical visits, and promptly addressing signs of illness. We are prepared to safely care for you.

Learn more about cardiovascular health at stanfordhealthcare.org/heartmonth
News Digest

City prepares for 4% budget shortfall

As few as 18 months away from the COVID-19 pandemic continues to batter the local economy, the Palo Alto City Council is preparing for a fresh round of budget cuts in the coming months to account for a sharp drop in sales and hotel tax revenues.

The council members are currently expecting to see a budget shortfall of nearly $7 million in fiscal year 2022, which begins on July 1. The estimate is based on an admittedly uncertain assumption by city staff that the economic recovery will proceed at a moderate pace over the next few years.

In its first major discussion of the city’s budget, the council agreed on Monday night to adopt this “moderate” scenario for planning purposes and to take a fresh look at the city’s list of infrastructure projects to see which can be deferred or scrapped.

By a 6-1 vote, with council member Greg Tanaka dissenting, the council adopted the economic forecast from the Administrative Service Department, which assumes a 4.6% budget shortfall in 2022. The council estimates that the city will see about $30 million in sales tax revenues and $10 million in transient occupancy tax revenues in 2022. That would be up from the current year, in which the city is projecting $25 million and $4.8 million in these two two-way revenues, respectively.

While the council didn’t discuss specific projects that would be deferred, it did direct staff to return with some options for dropping or deferring capital expenditures.

— Gennady Sheyver

Levi’s Stadium opens as vaccination site

The largest COVID-19 vaccination site in the state opened Tuesday at Levi’s Stadium in Santa Clara, and Gov. Gavin Newsom and local officials took to the field to celebrate the kickoff.

The vaccination site, which opened for appointments at noon Tuesday, currently has the capacity to vaccinate 5,000 people per day, with plans to increase capacity to 15,000 people per day.

The stadium is only open to county residents or health care workers who work in the county. Currently, residents 65 years and older in addition to health care workers are eligible for the vaccine.

County Supervisor Susan Ellenberg, who attended the opening, said the site will help get residents across the county get vaccinated quicker and ensure more equitable access to the vaccine.

The Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority as of Monday started providing front-door services to the stadium and suspended fare collection on all buses and light-rail vehicles in the system.

So far, the county’s health system has provided more than 113,000 first doses and has more than 40,000 vaccine appointments scheduled in the week ahead.

— Jana Kadah / Bay City News Service

Town & Country wants medical offices

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic began to shut down local businesses last March, Town & Country Village was staring into a murky future. With online shopping on a steady rise, the shopping center has seen businesses last March, Town & Country Village was staring into a murky future. With online shopping on a steady rise, the shopping center has seen businesses

The economic shutdown that began in March has since forced many businesses to become medical offices, a use that is currently prohibited under the city’s zoning rules.

The council recently voted to modify its zoning code to allow medical offices to become medical offices, a use that is currently prohibited under the city’s zoning rules.

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— Gennady Sheyver

Housing

Housing (continued from page 5)

If the council signals its interest, Cato would then go through the city’s full environmental analysis, due to the council for official approval.

But regardless of whether the Wellesley project advances, the discussion will already have forced the council to refine its most promising zoning tool and to either reaffirm or rethink — its history is long and convoluted — the growing demand for the right to build more housing.

Cook and many of his neighbors emphasized that the project gets beyond the pre-screening.

Earlier this month, Cook was joined by about 30 other College Terrace residents at a Zoom meeting that included a discussion of the new proposal. According to various attendees, about 30 neighbors spoke out against the project, while three spoke in its favor. In a recent interview at the project site, Cook and other critics of the Cato proposal pointed to the three-story height, its general non-compliance with zoning regulations and the dangerous precedent that it would set at the Palo Alto neighbor- hoods by essentially declaring that single-family neighborhoods are ripe for dense, new developments.

“The proposal is like a punch in the face,” Cook said. “The fact that you would take two homes and turn them into 24 apart- ment’s that’s three stories to — there’s nothing like that in the neighborhood.”

Cook, a former president of the College Terrace Residents Association, said he believes most residents share this view. In all his years of attending neighborhood meetings, he has never seen so many people come out in opposition to a project as they did during the recent dis- cussion of the Cato proposal.

“The perception this community will not stand for,” Cook said. “If it takes us taking pitchforks to the council, we will be there in force and in mass, and we will hold the developer ac- countable and we will also hold our elected officials accountable if they even consider supporting something like this.”

In explaining their concerns, neighbors said they believe the new apartment complex would bring more traffic, increase parking problems and harm the neighbor- hoods’ character. Andrew Fetter- ton and Anna Lembke, who live on Wellesley in between the project site and Mayfield Park, see the development as a threat to their privacy.

It would essentially create over 100 bedrooms, single homes, cot- tage clusters and small apartment buildings that were grandfathered in when R-1 zoning was adopted.

Banes believes the three-story building fits reasonably well on a block that already has two-sto- ry apartment buildings directly across the street. (One complex has eight apartments; the other has six.)

Given the eclectic na- ture of the neighborhood, it is the R-1 zoning designation — not the Cato project — that doesn’t fit the neighborhood context, she said.

The brewing battle over R-1 zoning

The idea that single-family neighborhoods need to accom- modate more housing has become increasingly prevalent in Palo Alto, across California and in other states that are looking for ways to increase residential housing.

Some cities have taken dramatic actions to encourage that. Last month, the City Council in Sacramento sup- ported a zoning law that would al- low any single-family lot to accom- modate up to four housing units.

The move in Sacramento fol- lowed similar actions in Minne- apolis, where officials voted in 2019 to allow up to three units on a single-family lot, and in Portland, which voted to allow between four and six units.

In Palo Alto, however, council members have shown little appe- tite for such reforms. The city’s Housing Element and Compre- hensive Plan exclude single-family zones from consideration when it comes to major new housing ini- tiatives, a conspicuous omission given that such districts comprise 72% of city land.

And the council’s recent efforts to create new zoning tools to en- courage housing have generally focused on either prime commer- cial areas such as downtown and California Area or on busy corri- dors such as El Camino Real, San Antonio Road and Fabian Way.

To date, all of the planned-housing applications that the city has received, with the exception of Wellesley Housing, have targeted commercial areas. Technically, however, the city’s zoning designation could apply to R-1 blocks.

As it stands, the planned-housing zone is a concept rather than an official zoning designation. The council in February 2020 adopted rules for planned housing that func- tion more like guidelines to evalu- ate what are actually “planned community” applications. Histori- cally contentious, “planned community” zoning allows developers to exceed all sorts of zoning regu- lations in exchange for negotiated community benefits. In the past, the planned-community zone was used to construct Alma Village, Edgewood Plaza and the College Terrace Centre development on El Camino and College Avenue. But after numerous controversies in- volving the zoning, the council de- cided in 2013 to no longer use the “planned community” designation — until last year, when the council agreed the zoning would be lim- ited to housing projects. Planning Director Jonathan Lait told the council at the Feb. 3, 2020, meet- ing that the idea is to clarify that the “production of housing units,
including affordable housing units, would in fact be a public benefit.”

He also noted that the city would “limit the applicability to just commercial areas.”

“The reason being is that if you make developments from housing standards, it’s further away from single-family zones and other areas,” Lait said.

Since then, the council has received several proposals for planned-housing projects, all of which have targeted commercial areas. The most recent proposal submitted by San Hill Property Company, envisioned 187 housing units and an office complex near Stanford University, was withdrawn after it received lukewarm reviews from the council.

The second one, proposed by Acclaim Companies, would bring 113 apartments as well as 5,000 square feet of office use and 1,000 square feet of retail to El Camino Real. (The proposal was withdrawn after it received lukewarm reviews from the council.)

The third one, from Far Western Land & Investment, seeks to demolish an existing commercial building at 3997 Fabian Way, at the corner of East Charleston Road, and construct a 290-apartment complex. (The council supported the change in use but criticized the project’s proposed height and density during its Feb. 8 pre-screening.)

The Cato Investment Company proposal is the first application that is targeting a single-family district. Cynthia Gildea, Cato Investment representative, told the Weekly that she believes the planned-housing zone is perfectly aligned with Cato’s plan to adjust zoning in the R-1 district. She pointed to the site’s proximity to jobs and transit, as well as the existence of other multi-family residential blocks on the site.

Some council members, meanwhile, have indicated that they believe that extending the planned-housing zone into single-family residential neighborhoods is a step too far.

Vice Mayor Pat Burt noted that these neighborhoods are already seeing more housing because recent laws eased restrictions on the construction of accessory dwelling units (ADU). As of last October, the city has issued building permits for 146 accessory dwelling units and approved final permits for 84 of them, according to Lait.

Burt told the Weekly that just about any single-family lot can now add an ADU and a junior accessory dwelling unit (an independent living space carved out of an existing home). The laws represent a “drastic change that allows for significant increases in the number of housing units in what was formerly R-1 zoning.”

“If you look at the number of R-1 lots in Palo Alto and you say, ‘We only had a small fraction of those eligible for one ADU as of three years ago and now virtually all are eligible for two ADUs’ — that’s more than 20,000 additional housing units in terms of what would be allowed in R-1 neighborhoods.

And it’s done in a way that doesn’t drastically alter the character of R-1 neighborhoods.”

In Palo Alto’s political environment, Cato’s proposal remains the longest of long shots. The City Council’s two most passionate housing advocates — Adrian Fine and Liz Kniss — concluded their terms at the end of last year, and the majority of the current council has strongly opposed recent state laws that would have allowed greater density in residential neighborhoods.

Burt, a former planning commissioner and two-time mayor who has often been a swing vote among council members, said he believes planned-housing zoning is ever meant to include single-family neighborhoods.

“It was never the intention of the planned-housing zone (PHZ) to have that apply in R-1 zoning in any way,” Burt told the Weekly. Mayor Tom DuBois also said that he believes the new zoning tool should be restricted to commercial areas. While he did not discuss the Wellesley project specifically, he told the Weekly that he is generally not in favor of converting R-1 zones to create multi-family apartment complexes.

“I do think if there are places where we have cottage clusters or existing buildings, they should be grandfathered in,” DuBois said. “But a lot of people in Palo Alto and elsewhere in California are kind of house-rich and cash-poor, and they put a lot of their personal money into their house I think with the expectation of what the zoning is, and I think we should respect that.”

Neighbors of the Wellesley project site echoed that sentiment. During the recent meeting, several talked about the years that they had spent on planning, saving up and renovating their College Terrace homes, which involved navigating the city’s rigorous building regulations. With its proposal, they argued, Cato is looking to circumvent all the rules that help the neighborhood retain its character.

“We generally appreciate that even though (the city) forced us to follow all those rules, and we couldn’t do everything we want — that’s fine because it’s important to the neighborhood and impor-
tant to the city,” Cook said. “I just want to know that everyone who bays property here has to abide by the same rules.”

Banes, for her part, believes that the time has come to change these rules. In her view, every single-family lot should be allowed to have at least four units, and those that are located closer to jobs, transit and other services should accommodate even more. The location of the Wellesley Street project warrants a greater change, she argued, because it’s in a resource-rich neighborhood that is close to transit.

She acknowledged, however, that such an argument might not carry the day when the council re-
views the project.

“I don’t have any illusions that this council will look at R-1 zoning, and I understand that changing it even by allowing duplexes would be a dramatic change from the status quo,” Banes said. “But I think the status quo in Palo Alto is extremely toxic and demands action.”

Gildea said in a statement that Cato Investments appreciates “both the outpouring of support and constructive feedback we have received since we submitted our proposal to provide missing middle housing.”

She cited the council’s recent comments, in reviewing other projects, in support of building housing for teachers, nurses and retailers. The company, she said, is happy to see the council recognize the dire need for such housing.

She also said that the proposed project “fits with the community character.”

“We are currently undertaking a robust community outreach ef-
fort and will be holding a community meeting — all of which goes above and beyond the city requirements,” Gildea said. “We look forward to a constructive dia-
logue with the community about how best to meet the needs of the missing middle.”

Staff Writer Gennyday Sheyner can be emailed at gsheyner@pawerky.com.
Dr. Nicholas Moss, Alameda County’s health officer, said little is yet known about the case in his county other than the identity of the patient. His staff are still investigating how the person contracted the variant and whether the patient came into contact with others.

The two cases were detected through genomic sequencing. Dr. Benjamin Pinsky, medical director of the Stanford Clinical Virology Lab, said the facility has sequenced 1,708 positive COVID-19 samples in the past three weeks, mainly from patients at Stanford Hospital, its emergency department, Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital Stanford and Valley Care, or from patients under preparation for surgeries. Currently, about 16% of the sequences they receive are positive for the virus. The lab then screens the positive samples for mutations. When they find them, they run a genomic sequence on some of the samples to identify other potential variants, he said.

As of Wednesday, they’ve identified the two South African samples. In the past two weeks, they found four samples of the strain that originated in the United Kingdom and two samples of the less-concerning Brazilian P2 strain.

The South African strain and the Brazilian P1 strain — the latter of which has not yet been identified in California — are troubling because they have multiple mutations that could make vaccines and immunity from the currently dominant COVID-19 strain less effective.

The Brazilian P2 strain has only one of the mutations, so it is less concerning, according to Pinsky. (Cody said Wednesday that this Brazilian P2 strain has not been found in Santa Clara County.)

Viruses work in different ways to attack and can interact with the human body in different ways. The virus linked to COVID-19 interacts with cells by way of so-called “spike” genes. The interaction is a factor in the transmissibility of the virus. It can also affect many antibodies the body makes to fight the virus. The South African strain has many mutations in the spike genes, which could impact the efficacy of the vaccines.

Studies have found that the Johnson & Johnson and Novavax COVID-19 vaccines have a 60% efficacy against the South African variant, Pinsky said. Earlier this week, AstraZeneca also put its South African study on hold because its vaccine showed less-than-ideal effectiveness against the strain.

Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said on Monday that the U.K. variant is becoming widespread and will be the dominant strain in the U.S. by the end of March. The Moderna and Pfizer-BionTech vaccines are at least 94% effective against the U.K. variant, but are “less so” against the variant from South Africa, he said.

The vaccine showed a slightly lower level of efficacy against the South African variant, according to a study by New York University scientists, echoing other studies that have been conducted.

Moderna announced in late January that its vaccine holds up against the U.K. and South African variants. Out of an abundance of caution, it is developing a booster shot. Moss, Alameda County’s health officer, said even though the vaccines are less effective against variants, early evidence shows they will continue to provide protection for some time. Still, he and Cody are concerned that more variants might exist undetected.

Genomic sequencing must ramp up in order to stay ahead of the ever-evolving virus, they said. Stanford and Novavax’s sequence of COVID-19 positive cases are sequenced, according to Cody. The county and its partners are actively working to increase sequencing efforts, but there are hurdles.

“It reminds me of the early days of testing,” she said, when there wasn’t a unified strategy and it took a long time to gear up testing and contact tracing.

“One year ago, we were very uncomfortable — With genomic sequencing, it’s a similar story,” she said.

So far, there’s no standardized genomic sequencing nationwide. California is trying to build a standardized approach across the state, she said.

“The capacity just isn’t what it needs to be in order to identify the variants rapidly,” she said.

Santa Clara County is in a better place than some other areas, perhaps because there are many academic laboratories with equipment and skills to do the sequencing, she said. Pinsky, for example, said his lab currently runs about 100 genomic sequencing tests per week and it plans to do more.

Moss and Cody stressed that the variants make it all the more important to continue in earnest social distancing, mask wearing and other activities to protect against spreading the virus.

“The more changes the virus has to spread, the more opportunities it has to adapt and create new variants. This is a warning to all of us that we must stay on top of community transmission,” Moss said.

Cody added: “We’re still in a pretty big pickle, and that’s the truth.”

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention on Wednesday released data showing that double masking, such as wearing a cloth face covering on top of a surgical mask, is more effective at reducing transmission of the virus, virologists say. Another way to double-mask and make sure face coverings are tight-fitting, visit cdc.gov.

Staff Writer Sue Dremann can be emailed at sdremann@paweekly.com.
George Shultz, former secretary of state, dies at 100

By Stanford News Service

Former U.S. Secretary of State George P. Shultz, the Thomas W. and Susan B. Ford Distinguished Fellow at the Hoover Institution and professor emeritus at Stanford Graduate School of Business who served three American presidents and played a pivotal role in shaping economic and foreign policy in the late 20th century, died Feb. 6 at his home on the Stanford campus. He was 100 years old.

One of the most consequential policymakers of all time and remembered as one of the most influential secretaries of state in American history, Shultz was a key player, alongside President Ronald Reagan, in changing the direction of history by using the tools of diplomacy to bring the Cold War to an end.

Shultz’s extraordinary career spanned government, academia and business. He is one of only two Americans to have held four different federal cabinet posts — State, Treasury, Labor and Office of Management and Budget. He taught at three renowned universities, and for eight years was president of a major construction company.

Conolezea Rice, a fellow former secretary of state and current director of the Hoover Institution, where Shultz served for more than 30 years until his passing, said, “Our colleagues was a great American statesman and a true patriot in every sense of the word. He will be remembered in history as a man who made the world a better place.”

Shultz first joined Stanford in 1968 and had periodic affiliations with the university throughout his public service career, finally returning to campus in 1989. Always dedicated to his students and higher education, Shultz tackled some of humanity’s most difficult issues — including nuclear disarmament, climate change and democratic governance. Those issues drove him to keep working at Stanford nearly every day until his passing.

“George Shultz was a giant in foreign policy and world affairs as well as a dedicated scholar and educator,” said Stanford President Marc Tessier-Lavigne. “He was an extraordinary role model, a consummate bridge-builder in pursuit of the public good even beyond his hundredth birthday. His remarkable life and career serve as an inspiration to all those whose lives he touched at Stanford and beyond.”

In 1982, Shultz was named secretary of state at a time of heightened global tensions with the Soviet Union. Shultz implemented a foreign policy approach that eased those tensions and led to several landmark arms control treaties. Shultz also served as secretary of commerce and director of the Office of Management and Budget and secretary of state, all under Richard Nixon.

Shultz was renowned for his patient, credible and remarkably effective approach to diplomacy, most often eschewing the time-honored practice of the presidents for whom he worked. Along with his straightforward style, he had a hard-driving tendency to solving tangled policy problems and avoiding extreme partisan politics.

Shultz was born Dec. 13, 1920, in New York City and was raised in Englewood, New Jersey. Shultz earned his bachelor’s degree from Princeton University in economics in 1942. After graduating, Shultz served in the Pacific theater as a member of the U.S. Marine Corps from 1942 to 1945, eventually becoming a captain. He and his family moved to Hawaii, where Shultz met his first wife, Army nurse Helen “O’Bie” O’Brien, with whom he had five children. They were married from 1946 to 1969, at which time they divorced.

After his military service, Shultz continued his studies at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he earned a doctorate in industrial economics in 1949. Shultz was an assistant and, later, associate professor of economics at MIT until 1957, when he was appointed professor of industrial relations at the University of Chicago Graduate School of Business. He served as the school’s dean from 1962 to 1968, where he led efforts to establish the first scholarship for minority students at a major business school.

In 1955, Shultz took a leave of absence from Chicago to serve as a senior staff economist on President Dwight Eisenhower’s Council of Economic Advisors. Shultz began his association with Stanford in 1968 for a year fellowship at the Center for Advanced Study in Behavioral Sciences (CASBS). However, his time at CASBS was cut short when Nixon appointed him to join his cabinet as secretary of labor in January 1969. In 1970, Shultz went on to become the first director of the newly formed Office of Management and Budget and then in 1972 was named secretary of the treasury, a position he held until 1974.

Shultz then accepted a part-time faculty position at Stanford Graduate School of Business, where he taught in the school’s Public Management Program — the first program of its kind to examine issues of public and nonprofit management and its relationship to the business sector.

During the Reagan administration, Shultz served as the chair of the President’s Economic Policy Advisory Board (1981-87) in addition to his secretary of state position. After leaving government service in 1989, Shultz rejoined Stanford and also served at the Bechtel Group in leadership posts.

Shultz’s resolve for nuclear nonproliferation drew him to the renowned Stanford physicist and arms control expert, the late Sidney Drell, who served as deputy director for SLAC National Accelerator Laboratory from 1969 to 1998 and was a senior fellow at Hoover. They forged a productive professional partnership, becoming close friends and co-authoring numerous books and papers on how to rid the world of nuclear weapons. In 2007, they co-authored a publication with Henry Kissinger and Sam Nunn, “Nuclear Security: The Problems and the Road Ahead.”

Shultz also was deeply committed to addressing climate change. Shultz co-authored “The State Clean Energy Cookbook” — a collaboration between the Hoover Institution and the Steyer-Taylor Center for Energy Policy and Finance — that provided states with guidance on energy-efficient initiatives. He also served as chair of the advisory board of Stanford’s Precourt Institute for Energy.

Devoted to student life and scholarship at Stanford, Shultz established numerous fellowships for students, including the George P. Shultz Fellowship in Canadian Studies, The George and Charlotte Shultz Fellowship for Modern Israels Studies and The Shultz Graduate Student Fellowship in Economic Policy.

At Hoover, two fellows are also named in his recognition: the George P. Shultz Senior Fellow in Economics and the George P. Shultz. Senior Fellow in Foreign Policy and National Security Affairs.

In addition, preparation is under way at the Lou Henry Hoover Building for the construction of the George Shultz Fellowships Building, which will replace the existing structure. The new building will house Hoover fellows as well as a digital lab to serve students and scholars in new and modern ways — a lasting testimony to Shultz’s keen eye toward the future.

Shultz’s numerous honors include the Medal of Freedom (1989), the nation’s highest civilian honor, as well as many honorary degrees. He was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences and the American Philosophical Society.

Shultz is survived by his wife, Charlotte, and five children — Margaret Tilsworth, Kathleen Jorgensen, Peter Shultz, Barbara White and Alexander Shultz — as well as 11 grandchildren and 9 great-grandchildren.

OBITUARIES

A list of local residents who died recently.

Louis DeFreitas, 87, a welding teacher at the College of San Mateo, died Dec. 23. Lawrence Joseph Guglielmelli, 93, a longtime Palo Alto resident and founder of Giannelli Brothers Inc., died on Jan. 9. Alex Spiridon, 81, a Palo Alto resident and former research scientist at Stanford Research Institute, died on Jan. 31.

To read full obituaries, leave remembrances and post photos, go to Lasting Memories at PaloAltoOnline.com/obituaries.
242 Oak Grove Avenue, Atherton

Grand Atherton Estate on Over 1.3 Acres

Nestled in absolute privacy on over 1.3 sweeping acres, this grand, two-level estate of nearly 5,800 square feet offers ultimate luxury and a sought-after Atherton lifestyle. High-end appointments including detailed ceilings, intricate moldings, and oak floors wrap the home in elegance from the moment you step inside. A fireplace highlights the spectacular living room, the chef’s kitchen includes appliances from Wolf and Sub-Zero, and the family room features a fireplace all its own plus access to the grounds. Enjoy the convenience of 5 comfortable bedroom suites, including the master suite with a fireplace and private balcony, as well as a main-level bedroom suite ideal for office use to work from home in style. The grounds of the home offer incredible space for outdoor enjoyment, with a fireplace, kitchen, and pool, plus a lush, sizable lawn perfect for pick-up sports. Adding the finishing touch, this great location is just moments to downtown Menlo Park, and is close to top-ranked Menlo Park schools including Laurel Elementary and Menlo-Atherton High.

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1170 May Brown Avenue, Menlo Park

Spacious Home, Exceptional Lot in Central Menlo

Set on an exceptional lot of over 0.6 acres (per survey) in sought-after Central Menlo, this 3-bedroom, 3-bathroom home of nearly 2,900 square feet offers a tranquil hideaway on a tree-lined, no-through street. Stylish mid-century modern design elements extend throughout, with beautiful walls of glass designed to take advantage of the home’s park-like setting. Expansive spaces include the fireplace-centered living room, the office with great work-from-home space, and the bright dining room with backyard views. The stunning master suite, set beneath a soaring cathedral ceiling, includes access to the sprawling yard that envelops the property, featuring tall trees, a lawn, and ample patio space. This incredible location is mere moments to downtown Menlo Park, downtown Palo Alto, Stanford University, and Venture Capital centers along Sand Hill Road. Plus, acclaimed public and private schools are close at hand.

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Who will fix all our medical glitches?

Pesky annoyances are hurting medical clinics — and they need to be solved

by Diana Diamond

I say “Palo Alto” again after the entire list is read.

“You said Internal Medicine, Palo Alto. Is that correct?”

“Yes,” I reply.

“I’m sorry, I can’t understand you.”

“Yes,” I repeat.

“I can’t understand you. Let me transfer you to the operator.”

I was transferred, usually wait for five to ten rings before pick up, and then get a message that tells me, in essence, call 911 if this is an emergency, or if I have questions about flu or fevers press 3, or if I have questions about COVID-19, press 4, etc.

When I reach the department, I get a repeated request to call 911 or “dial 4 for our information about COVID-19,” and finally reach the department staff to make an appointment.

What if I was calling about an appendicitis attack?

I once called the president’s office at PAMF to complain and was told “Someone will look into it.”

Never heard back. And the long message never was altered.

Other medical clinics and facilities have the same telephone trials, but at least the Stanford Health Care system is quicker.

Next, I had to go to a dentist. I don’t make a six-month-in-advance appointment because I don’t know what I will be doing on Aug. 15. So they send me a card two weeks before Aug. 15, and I make my appointment and all is well. My son has a routine appointment with his car repair service a couple of miles away, and every six months gets a postcard reminder that something in his car needs routine maintenance.

But physicians don’t seem to do it that way. It’s the “Patient, you prompt the physician” problem. I love my doctor and their staff, but once I had a broken arm and was sent for physical therapy and never knew when — or if — I should report back to my orthopedist. I also had a nasty infected laceration, which my doctor treated, but I was not told to come back.

A friend of mine had a cardiac problem and was under routine care. Evidently he thought everything was OK, but then two weeks ago he had severe heart pains. The cardiac physician said, “I haven’t seen him in more than two years.”

My friend said, about making an appointment during that time, “I didn’t realize I had to — the doctor never said I should make one.”

Miscommunication, for sure.

And now on to coronavirus, which all of us, I am sure, have stories of how poorly our system is working.

Two friends had vaccine appointments through Stanford Health Care, and when they each checked a day before, Stanford had no record of them making an appointment. In another instance, a friend made an appointment for her husband and herself at Stanford. When she called, the nurse said the appointment she made for her husband registered, but hers did not. The first earliest opening is March 12. So she is waiting.

We all have too many similar stories. These vaccines, difficult as they are to be distributed around the nation, have had more problems than they should have.

Kaiser patients are still extremely concerned that their facility has been very low on vaccines.

The problem starts at the national level and ends up at the state level. Clinics need to know in advance when they will get a supply of doses — and not just given a two-day notice as now occurs.

Why is the injection rate much lower in Santa Clara County than in many other counties in the state? Why does California have the second lowest per capita inoculation rate than 49 other states in the country? One report I read said states are averaging a 10% per capita rate; California is at the 5.2% level while Mississippi, the lowest rating state, is at 4.8% per capita.

What is wrong? Who is going to fix all our medical glitches — and when?

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.

Letters

Abolish R-1 zoning

Editor,

Yet another housing debate in front of City Council with residents claiming the project is too big and will be a disaster on one side, and housing advocates making desperate pleas for the basic human need of decent housing near their work so they don’t have to choose between being unemployed or losing their minds on the other. Both are right. The developments, as planned, are disastrous. They are, as former council member Karen Holman said, warehouses for people. Not only that, but the locations are almost always terrible. Who wants to live on El Camino Real or backed up onto Highway 101?

There is a solution, but no one is going to like it: Abolish R-1 zoning.

Vice Mayor Pat Burt’s response to this possibility is that R-1 pretty much doesn’t exist anymore. What he means by this is that the equivalent of those of us who own R-1 properties can pack them to the gills with Accessory Dwelling Units, but that’s not what we need. People want to own their homes, and they want their homes to be in low-traffic neighborhoods with walkable and bikeable proximity to goods and services. If Palo Alto allows a 4,000-square-foot house on a 5,000-square-foot lot, it can allow three 1,300-square-foot condos in the same space.

Right now, Palo Alto is imploding. Allowing reasonable density to be built where people want to live, rather than in the leftover scraps of land that nobody wanted for good reason, would have prevented this. It may be an idea too late, but I still think it’s worth a try.

Deborah Goldeen

Birch Street, Palo Alto

Misleading Castilleja survey

Editor,

Castilleja School’s expansion project is likely coming before Palo Alto City Council in March. Friends around town let us neighbors know about a “survey” they received, following closely on the heels of an official city of Palo Alto survey. However, although it is titled “independent survey” about Palo Alto issues, this one is paid for by Castilleja. It is anything but impartial and gives you false choices. Very misleading questions ensure the results will be pre-ordained.

For example, if they were truly feeling out the residents, they would ask: “How do you feel about a private school in an R-1 neighborhood increasing enrollment by 30%, building a large modern building on a small bocce court and putting underground garage access on the Bryant Bike Boulevard and Emerson, a very narrow residential street?” Instead, it asks: “Would you rather have a large above-grade garage structure or an underground garage?” Please note that with a lower enrollment request, they do not need more parking than they already have on campus, per muni code requirements.

Three important points:

1: The neighbors have never been against the school re-building and modernizing; they oppose the scope of the expansion.

2: The Planning Commission did not approve or even strongly recommend the proposal; all the votes were split.

3: Castilleja is requesting exceptions to the muni code (asking for more floor area than is allowed); weeknight and weekend events that no other private schools in R-1 districts are allowed; a student-per-acre density that is already twice that of all private and public schools in Palo Alto; and an environmentally unsustainable and highly polluting underground garage that invites more traffic.

If the school had submitted code-compliant plans in 2016, lowered their demands and worked with the neighborhood, they could be re-built by now.

Andie Reed

Melville Avenue, Palo Alto

www.PaloAltoOnline.com • Palo Alto Weekly • February 12, 2021 • Page 17
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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 floor plan. 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).

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Comfortable living awaits in this spacious home, offering 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, and nearly 1,900 square feet of living space, set on a lot of 8,000 square feet on a peaceful, tree-lined street. Beautiful hardwood floors extend throughout the home’s inviting gathering areas including the living room with a centerpiece fireplace, the sitting room with backyard access, and the kitchen with a delightful dining area. The private master suite features a sliding glass door to the backyard, where colorful plantings and a covered patio offer great space for outdoor enjoyment. This great location is just moments to both Robles Park and Mitchell Park, a short drive to the amenities of The Village at San Antonio Center, and offers easy access to US 101. Plus, children may attend acclaimed schools including Fairmeadow Elementary, JLS Middle, and Gunn High (buyer to verify eligibility).

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468 EAST CHARLESTON ROAD, PALO ALTO

Stylish Eichler with Modern Floorplan

Timeless Eichler design and an open, modern floorplan combine to create an unmatched living experience in this stylish 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom home, offering nearly 1,800 square feet of bright, fresh living space on a lot of over 8,300 square feet (per legal description). Classic Eichler elements include paneled ceilings and globe light fixtures, while walls of glass allow an abundance of natural light and highlight beautiful hardwood floors throughout most of the home. The open floorplan allows you to flow effortlessly from the fireplace-centered living room, to the bright, spacious dining room, to the kitchen with an island and stainless-steel appliances. Three bedrooms include the comfortable master suite with great private space. Find great space for entertaining in the backyard featuring a patio, lush lawn, and delightful play structure. Just moments from Mitchell Park, this home is also a short trip to top-ranked schools including Fairmeadow Elementary and JLS Middle.

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All stories must be 2,500 words or less

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Filoli is going small this month.

The grand estate known for its huge gardens, immense house and large holiday festivities is taking a scaled-down approach for its latest exhibit — a collection of bonsai trees. These diminutive plants span a variety of different species, including wisteria, juniper and camellia.

Filoli has opened up its entire collection of bonsai trees for the first time, including a 400-year-old black pine. Bonsai is the Japanese art form of cultivating trees to a micro scale. When properly cared for in specific containers, a bonsai tree is essentially a miniature replica of a species that would grow much larger when rooted in the ground. Filoli’s collection, on display until Feb. 28, serves as a vivid case of a species that would grow much larger when rooted in the ground.

“Each one is a treasure,” said Jim Salyards, Filoli’s director of horticulture. Salyards has worked at Filoli for 26 years and has acted as horticulture director since 2014. In articulating the care needed for these trees, Salyards compared them to a family pet that needs an abundance of watchful attention.

Most woody trees hold the potential to become bonsai trees, with the exception of those whose leaves retain their original size (instead of minimizing along with the trunk and branches). Salyards stressed that aesthetics are important to the cultivation of a successful bonsai tree: “If a plant is stunted, but the leaves are too big, it doesn’t look right.”

Not only has Salyards monitored the growth of many of the bonsai trees at Filoli over the years, but he has also played a part in bringing a few to life. In 2011, Salyards chose to dig up a dwarfed coast live oak that sat on the hillside at Filoli. Mindful of the emphasis on cultivating California native plants at the estate, Salyards brought in the coast live oak as a way to incorporate local species into the bonsai collection.

Other bonsai trees Salyards has grown from seed include a Bhutan cypress, California buckeye and a thin grove of beech trees. Some of the other native bonsai tree species include eight juniper specimens, which have been at Filoli for nearly 100 years.

When it comes to longevity though, the crown jewel of the exhibit is their hospital. Bonsai trees, which has resided at Filoli for more than 20 years. Started in Japan centuries ago, the black pine bonsai was given as a gift to Lurline Roth (the owner of Filoli from 1936 until she opened it to the public in 1977) from the Hillsborough Estates, so that it could continue to live on with the same care it had received for generations. Also of considerable age are a set of 100-year-old wisteria trees. Their branches are sturdy yet bare at this time, as they do not flower until spring.

On the shelves in the terrace gardens, among a mini-grove of oak, olive and cypress, the Sequoia sempervirens stands tall for its bonsai stature, and is easily identifiable as the same species as those elderly 300-foot redwoods that grace the coast of California. While Filoli’s bonsai redwood is a mere 50 years old, it holds the same appearance as the ancient members of the forest.

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1342 FIELDFAIR COURT, SUNNYVALE

Bright, Spacious, with an Incredible Backyard

Set on a peaceful cul-de-sac, this 5-bedroom, 3-bathroom home offers nearly 2,800 square feet of stylish living space, plus an incredible backyard oasis perfect for outdoor entertaining. High ceilings and excellent use of glass craft a bright, airy ambiance, highlighting beautiful hardwood floors that extend throughout much of the space. A fireplace centers the living room, the dining room features outdoor access, and the expansive eat-in kitchen includes granite countertops, an island, and it opens to office space so you can work from home in style. Five spacious bedrooms include the upstairs master suite, plus a main-level bedroom configured as a media center with a ceiling-mounted projector and pull-down screen. Outside, the backyard features an inviting pool and spa, plus an outdoor kitchen, and an air-conditioned yoga room. This great location is convenient to top Silicon Valley tech firms, major commute routes, and is served by top-ranked Cupertino schools.

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Page 24 • February 12, 2021 • Palo Alto Weekly • www.PaloAltoOnline.com
Comfort and Style in Silicon Valley

Stylish living awaits in this fresh, modern home, offering 4 bedrooms, 2.5 bathrooms, and nearly 2,000 square feet of luxury living space. High ceilings and excellent use of glass craft an airy, bright ambiance, highlighting beautiful wood floors that extend throughout most of the home. Expansive gathering spaces include the living room with a centerpiece fireplace, the granite-appointed kitchen with a Viking range, and the family room with outdoor access. A vaulted ceiling crowns the master suite, while three additional bedrooms provide comfort and convenience for the entire family. Find great space for outdoor enjoyment in the backyard with a deck and built-in bar. This home enjoys a convenient location close to top tech companies including Apple and LinkedIn, and major commute routes are close at hand, putting the entire Bay Area within easy reach.

For more information, video tour & more photos, please visit:

www.343Beemer.com
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Stylish Townhome with Los Altos Schools

Stylish living awaits in this fresh, inviting townhome, offering 2 bedrooms, 1 bathroom, and an unbeatable location on the edge of Palo Alto. This corner unit home enjoys nearly 900 square feet of living space, including the open-concept main level boasting beautiful laminate floors and a wood-beamed ceiling. Highlights include the bright living room, the kitchen with a tile backsplash and stainless-steel appliances, and a private patio for al fresco enjoyment. Two spacious upstairs bedrooms each feature vaulted ceilings and share access to a balcony. Plus, this home includes carport parking, a storage locker, and access to the sparkling community pool at the center of the complex. Just moments to The Village at San Antonio Center, this home also provides easy access to Caltrain and Bay Area commute routes, and it is served by top-ranked Los Altos schools (buyer to verify eligibility).

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Penthouse Condo in the Heart of Palo Alto

Enjoy stylish living in this penthouse condo located in the heart of California Avenue, known as Palo Alto’s "second downtown." Find yourself just moments away from incredible shopping and dining experiences, multiple parks, and convenient public transportation. Plus, you will be just a short drive to University Avenue, Stanford, and Bay Area commute routes. This 1-bedroom, 1-bathroom home enjoys a bright, airy atmosphere and features a living room with fireplace, a quartz-appointed kitchen, a private balcony with peaceful views, and conveniences including in-unit laundry, a pool, and underground parking.

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-Brenda T.

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Every order matters

This 18,000 member Facebook group’s goal is to support local eateries

by Elena Kadvany

The otsumami box from Ranzan in Redwood City includes wagyu steak, free-range chicken karaage with amazu, sweet egg omelet, ikura, blue shrimp and an assortment of vegetables. Photo courtesy Ken Ko.

D uring shelter-in-place last April, Shane Cheng casu-
ally created a Facebook group for friends and family to share updates on local restaur-
ants’ offerings and hours.

It was partly out of self-interest — in the early throes of the pan-
demic, it was hard to figure out which of his favorite spots were still open and when, particularly mom-and-pop eateries with lit-
tle to no online presence — but it quickly became something much more. One member cre-
ated a Google map of Bay Area restaurants open for takeout. More people started joining, in-
cluding restaurant owners, com-
pletely through word of mouth, and sharing what they were eat-
ing. A grassroots, serious food
community was born with an
aim to keep it as organic and natural as possible.

Cheng, a food lover and Mill-
brae real estate agent, never thought Bay Area Eats would get this big. He eventually asked a friend, Veronica Chan, along with Huang and another super-
active member to become mod-
erators, but the respectful and positive group mostly makes their job easy. Members by and large follow the group rules (don’t do “anything that would get you put on notice”); the “only thing we ask is: Put the restaurant first as the purpose of the post,” Cheng said.

Pre-pandemic, Chan went out for food and drinks at least three times a week, forming close relationships with people in the industry. She’s the kind of per-
sion who plans travel itineraries around meals and documents it all on Instagram. Born and raised in San Francisco, she’s watched with heartache in the last 10 months as more and more mom-
and-pop restaurants have gone dark.

But Bay Area Eats gives those restaurants a voice, she said, and the power to reach — for free — thousands of potential customers. “Local restaurants are incred-
ibly important to me. So many of my friends earn a living, feed their families, put themselves and/or their children through school working for these restaur-
ants,” Chan said. “I want to see them not just survive this trying time, but I’d love if they could thrive as well.”

Ken Ko is one of Bay Area Eats’ most frequent posters. For
him, local restaurants are the “bread and butter of any commu-

nity,” places to learn about other cultures and meet people.

“Some businesses are truly under-represented, undervalued, and under-appreciated, so this forum and those who are like-minded help showcase the need to keep our local restaurants going,” Ko said. “We all end up learning from each other in one form or another, as well as immediately get a pulse on what’s going on out there in the restaurant world.”

Standout meals Ko discovered through Bay Area Eats include Taqueria San Bruno and ube des-
erts from Hula Hoops, a tiki bar in South San Francisco.

Cheng delighted in finding Tarts de Feybesse, a home-based pas-
try business, and eating Japanese sandwiches outside Yubu by The Shota in San Francisco with Ko, the chef and general manager. For Lunar New Year, she ordered from S+S Gastro Grub Catering in Oakland, which pivoted to meat delivery during the corona-
virus shutdown and often posts to Bay Area Eats.

“Seeing their resilience and drive has been so humbling,” she said of the couple who owns the catering business. “I often won-
nder what I would do if I were in their shoes.”

Cheng, for his part, still thinks about the fresh sashimi he picked up from Suruki Supermarket in San Mateo after seeing another member post about it.

“It’s a great community,” Cheng said. “We have a lot of regulars. I just don’t know them in person.”

Local restaurant owners say the group has brought them increased business during a time when every order matters.

“You’re really giving exposure to these places,” Yuka Ioroi, who owns Cassava in San Francisco, said during the Q&A. “Some of these are older Asian restaurants that might not have any digital presence. … The next thing they know, all of a sudden they might have a line outside. You can’t put any words to a feeling like that.”

Last fall, Huang found Dim Sum King in Sunnyvale, which was do-
ating meals to people who had been displaced by the wildfires burning in the Santa Cruz Moun-
tains. He’s since become a regular.

“I will always go back to them now whenever I want dim sum,” he said. “It’s these cool little threads that bind us all together. It’s the best power that food brings for all of us.”

Find Bay Area Eats on facebook. com by searching its name.

Staff Writer Elena Kadvany can be emailed at ekadvany@paweek-

Local meals shared on the Bay Area Eats Facebook page, from left, include: the truffle duck fried rice from Palette Tea Garden in San Mateo; futomaki from Sushi Yoshizumi in San Mateo; and the “Crobster” roll from New England Lobster Market & Eatery in Burlingame.
Stylish, Private Condo in Sharon Heights

With the rolling hills of the Sharon Heights Golf and Country Club serving as the backdrop, this stylish 2-bedroom, 2-bathroom, end-unit condo offers luxury, privacy, and an unbeatable location in one of Menlo Park’s most sought-after neighborhoods. Beautiful wood floors extend throughout expansive gathering areas, while floor-to-ceiling windows and sliding glass doors in every room fill the home with natural light and bring the outside in. Entertain guests in the large living room, craft delicious meals in the kitchen with stainless-steel appliances, and enjoy al fresco dining on the covered patio. This serene location offers an inviting retreat, yet you will still be just a short trip to downtown Menlo Park, downtown Palo Alto, and Stanford University, while Sharon Park is less than one mile away. Adding the finishing touch, this home is served by top-ranked Los Lomitas schools.

For more information, video tour & more photos, please visit:

www.1100SharonParkDr.com
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中文諮詢請聯繫Audrey Sun, DRE #01933274 電話: 650.785.5822 | www.deleonsrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
Supreme privacy awaits in this refreshed 3-bedroom, 2-bathroom home, set on an incredible lot of over 2.2 acres in Los Altos Hills. Offering nearly 1,400 square feet of living space, this home enjoys updates including new paint and beautifully refinished hardwood floors. Spacious gathering areas include the fireplace-centered living room, the bright dining room with outdoor access, and the kitchen with a cozy breakfast nook. The incredible, sprawling grounds offer an inviting retreat from the hustle and bustle of Silicon Valley, yet you will still find yourself just a short trip from downtown Palo Alto, Stanford, downtown Los Altos, and top tech companies including Tesla and VMware. Plus, this home enjoys access to top-ranked Palo Alto schools (buyer to verify eligibility).

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Luxurious Los Altos Square Townhome

38 Los Altos Square | Los Altos

SPECTACULAR REMODELED TOWNHOUSE with abundant light, two patios, a large deck, and a wine room. Custom cabinetry, crown molding, bamboo flooring throughout, and custom closet organizers makes this a unique opportunity to own a great townhouse close to community pools, Whole Foods, and the Village at San Antonio Center.

3 bedrooms, 2.5 remodeled baths (including 2 bedroom suites)
Fabulous 1,440+/- sq. ft. in this warm and inviting home, freshly painted
Large and light-filled living room with marble fireplace, wine room with wet bar, and bamboo floors throughout
Remodeled granite-appointed kitchen with breakfast bar
Convenient main-level bedroom, perfect for office or exercise

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Upfront

Kniss

(continued from page 7)

works to ensure that every investigation is both thorough and timely but would not comment specifically on Kniss’ case.

In February 2019, Wierenga said that collecting facts and evidence and contacting witnesses, especially uncooperative ones, takes time. However, he noted, the FPPC completes more than 80% of its cases within a year. ■

Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner can be emailed at gsheyner@paweekly.com.

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Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner can be emailed at gsheyner@paweekly.com.

Kniss

(continued from page 7)

for state Assembly. He was fined $2,000 for the violation. In recommending a $2,500 fine for Kniss, the FPPC cited her extensive experience in politics. While Bigelow was seeking his first re-election in 2015, Kniss was first elected to office in 1985 and had served in various public positions, including on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors, the FPPC noted in explaining its recommendation of the higher fine.

While the anonymous complaint that triggered the FPPC investigation focused on her late reporting of developer contributions, Kniss noted that her campaign had sought a legal opinion from the Legal Division of the FPPC. It was advised that because Collins was rehabilitating from surgery and did not open the contributions, they were not considered “received.” Collins died in May 2020.

While the Legal Division functions separately from the Enforcement Division, Kniss suggested that the legal opinion influenced the Enforcement Division’s decision not to pursue that as a violation.

Kniss told this news organization she wasn’t aware of the state’s “one bank account” rule and suggested that it’s not uncommon for candidates to pay for campaign expenditures upfront out of their personal accounts with the expectation of being reimbursed.

Kniss was represented in the FPPC case by Gary Winuk of Kaufman Legal Group, who served as chief of the FPPC’s Enforcement Division from 2009 and 2015. She said she was informed by her attorney that the violations she was cited for by the FPPC are among the most common. She also suggested that the anonymous complaint that was filed against her was politically motivated and characterized it as a sign of the city’s polarization.

“This is done to really discredit someone, which is most unfortunate,” Kniss said. “It’s going to continue in Palo Alto because we’re so divided as a community now.”

Neither the FPPC nor Kniss offered any explanation as to why the investigation took four years and is set to conclude one month after Kniss left office. The agency’s 2017 investigations against then-council members Adrian Fine and Greg Tanaka were each resolved within a few months of being opened. (Fine was given a warning, and Tanaka was fined $733 for three reporting violations that he called “clerical errors.”)

When asked in January 2018 about the length of time the Kniss probe was taking, FPPC spokesman Jay Wierenga said the agency

Answers to this week’s puzzles, which can be found on page 39.

Employment

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**Upfront Rental relief (continued from page 5)**

**business owners, are looking for rent relief on spaces they aren’t using, and landlords should avoid further cutbacks on top of other cutbacks. Landlords and property managers have little to no choice but to work with tenants to avoid souring what can already be complicated relationships and risking vacancies that will be difficult to fill.**

“Everybody’s been working together because it’s obvious there’s nothing you can do about this,” Goldman said.

While state and local ordinances have mostly leaned toward the side of the commercial tenant for effectively halting evictions, regulations have done little to alleviate fears of legal repercussions against the smaller occupants struggling to pay rent payments to their landlords or, on the more extreme side, to prevent business operators like Nichols from shutting down permanently. (California) has issued an involuntary Bay Area exit.

Sally Hayman, a longtime psychotherapist in Palo Alto, for more than half a dozen years, said the rent on her California Avenue suite but with little results. She and three of her colleagues, who are also licensed as social workers and work out of the same office, are currently paying for a space that hasn’t stopped in step with McCann and other services started to go virtual.

It’s not just due to health concerns stemming from their age; they’re all older than 65 — but from the layout of the office suite, which Hayman said includes a shared waiting room that can’t hold multiple clients at 6-feet distance, rooms with windows that only open while they meet with clients, and a raining HVAC system that of the tenants are sure has been improved or looked at by the property manager.

Hayman’s revenue has fallen in less than six months. She is booking fewer sessions for her remaining patients, and gave a few people decreased rates, so she manages to pay rent on time, as she has done for the past 20 years. Already lowering her expectations, Hayman has asked the property managers at Alkhouse Deaton, which received a $450,000 PPP loan, for a 15% discount. The most the property management company offered was to reduce rent by half for June and July, 2020, but Hayman also believes that social workers and work out of the same office, are currently paying for a space that hasn’t stopped in step with McCann and other services started to go virtual.

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and property managers, or at least situations where they have been more sympathetic to their circumstances.

Nichols, who pays $1,200 a month for her office on Oak Grove Avenue in Menlo Park, said she believed her landlord handled the situation as fairly as possible — at least to her immediate knowledge. A few generous clients have either continued to pay Nichols as if they were still receiving her services or made donations, but the lifelong Bay Area resident still had more expenses than income.

“My savings are gone,” she said.

‘This crisis has just begun’

In the fourth quarter of 2020, eight leases by a handful of Silicon Valley corporations like Alphabet Inc. in Mountain View, Facebook in Menlo Park and Amazon, which has a lease in East Palo Alto, were responsible for what Colliers International, a real estate service and investment management company, characterized as a “signaling (of) confidence in Silicon Valley’s future.”

Even after her landlord waived one month’s rent, Menlo Park massage therapist Linda Nichols says she can’t afford to keep her business open during the pandemic. By the end of March, with her savings depleted, she’ll be leaving the Bay Area to stay with her family in Texas.

Jon Goldman, co-president of Premier Property Management, is photographed outside the firm’s offices in Palo Alto.

Even after her landlord waived one month’s rent, Menlo Park massage therapist Linda Nichols says she can’t afford to keep her business open during the pandemic. By the end of March, with her savings depleted, she’ll be leaving the Bay Area to stay with her family in Texas.

Even when employees and (continued on page 39)
Hello Silicon Valley.

Nice to meet you.

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Rent relief
(continued from page 37)

Companies are willing to come back to their offices, Goldman feels Palo Alto in particular will have delays filling in the leases, the consequence of a market impacted by a “micromanaging” City Council and increasing vacancy rates pre-pandemic. Office vacancy rate was 5.2% in the third quarter of 2018, according to a report by the San Francisco Business Times, and increased to 7.2% the following year.

In the meantime, Goldman said his firm has emphasized working with their tenants, trying to renegotiate leases based on their unique circumstances, whether that be restructuring a lease that charges rent based on a percentage of sales or providing a business looking to extend their lease with a good rate.

What Goldman emphasized Premier Properties won’t do is having a landlord threaten a tenant to pay rent or be taken to court or collections.

“We don’t do that,” Goldman said. “Especially in COVID.”

John McNellis, founder of McNellis Partners, which maintains a portfolio of neighborhood shopping centers, supermarkets and drugstores, echoes the sentiment and believes that’s just good business sense.

“You don’t have to be a Mother Teresa or Gandhi, as a retail or office building owner, to be cutting rents or to be giving forgiveness because the demand is way down,” he said.

Unlike in downtown Palo Alto, McNellis has seen 75% of his tenants thrive during the pandemic since his firm mostly focuses on outdoor shopping centers and grocery stores. But other sectors of retail — in particular personal care services such as hair salons and massage parlors — have suffered since the beginning of the pandemic and continue to suffer today, he said.

But it’s not always the case that a dying business is dependent on the mercy of a towers landlord with all the “financial muscle,” as he puts it. During the pandemic, some “multi-billion dollar” tenants, whom McNellis chose not to name, have leveraged their positions as companies with plenty of money and hundreds of locations and threatened to move out unless they receive a 20% rent reduction.

“In a crisis like this, people’s, unfortunately for better or worse, characters come out,” he said. “We have people like the little massage center guys who are truly down hearted. ... And we also have people who try to take advantage of this.”

State and local eviction moratoriums have given landlords little recourse to enforce rent, McNellis said. But he isn’t expecting anyone to try for him or his firm.

“Nobody in the world feels sorry for landlords,” he laughed. “It’s properly viewed as kind of comical, and it’s the cost of being a landlord I guess.”

Editorial Assistant Lloyd Lee can be emailed at llee@paweekly.com.

Public Agenda

A preview of Palo Alto government meetings next week

CITY COUNCIL ... The council has no meetings scheduled this week.

COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE ... The committee plans to discuss preliminary financial forecasts and rates for electric, gas, water and wastewater utilities. The virtual meeting will begin at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, Feb. 16. Those wishing to participate by Zoom can do so by dialing 669-900-6833 and using Meeting ID: 986 4526 8157.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD ... The board plans to discuss objective standards for architectural review and consider a request for in-channel creek bank stabilization at 650 Clark Way. The virtual meeting will begin at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, Feb. 18. Those wishing to participate by Zoom can do so by dialing 669-900-6833 and using Meeting ID: 992 2730 7235.

CITY/SCHOOL LIASON COMMITTEE ... The committee plans to meet at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, Feb. 18. The agenda was not available by press deadline.

PUBLIC ART COMMISSION ... The commission plans to discuss temporary art work at the construction site for the public safety building. The virtual meeting will begin at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Feb. 18. Those wishing to participate by Zoom can do so by dialing 669-900-6833 and using Meeting ID: 972 2539 1247.
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