City looks to maintain single-family zoning

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Palo Alto's Parking Shakeup

City looks to charge drivers who want to park in popular spots

Page 5

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Palo Alto eyes another parking shake-up

To encourage drivers to park in garages and lots rather than neighborhoods, city calls for new pricing plan

By Gennady Sheyner

Even before the COVID-19 pandemic shook up local commuting patterns, Palo Alto’s parking policies were in a state of flux.

Over the past five years, the city has been creating — and modifying — residential parking programs, revising its strategies for where employees park and planning for new garages. While these efforts have lessened parking congestion on residential streets, particularly in downtown’s and California Avenue’s residential neighborhoods, visitors to the city’s commercial districts still confront a dilemma: Park for free for two or three hours or spend $25 for an all-day parking permit?

Now, with pandemic restrictions loosening and traffic expected to return, the city is taking a new approach. In the coming months, the Office of Transportation plans to advance what it’s calling a Parking Action Plan, an effort to make parking policies throughout the city less rigid and more convenient.

In this endeavor, the city will have several new tools at its disposal: a new, six-level garage near California Avenue that was constructed during the pandemic; a recently hired city parking manager; and freshly purchased automatic license plate readers — technology that enables the city to monitor parking levels in residential areas, evaluate whether policies are working and make further adjustments as needed.

One parking-management model that the city is looking at is in Seattle, where prices for on-street curb spaces vary based on usage trends. If parking levels in a particular zone fall below 75%, the hourly rate falls by 50 cents;

(continued on page 10)

Peninsula Creamery Dairy Store, Rick’s Ice Cream ransacked two days apart

Family ashes, more than $4K in employee tips among valuables stolen in store burglaries

By Sue Dremann

The ashes of two members of a longtime family ice cream business were stolen during a burglary last Saturday at Peninsula Creamery Dairy Store and Grill in downtown Palo Alto. The burglar also took $4,000 belonging to a husband and wife who work there, business owner James Santana said.

The April 3 burglary was the second break-in in the space of two days to hit local ice cream stores. Rick’s Rather Rich Ice Cream at 3946 Middlefield Road was burglarized on April 1, resulting in significant property damage and the theft of employee tips, cash and iPads, the manager said.

The burglary of Peninsula Creamery Dairy Store at 900 High St., a popular lunch spot for downtown workers, occurred between Friday at 11 p.m. and Saturday at 5 a.m., Santana said. The thief or thieves kicked in a door to the kitchen and ransacked the office. Store cash and a jar of the ashes of Santa’s father, John Jr., who died in 2018 and brother, Mark, who died in 2004. Both had worked at the family store.

The burglars removed the bags containing their ashes from their memorial boxes but left the boxes in the store. One bag was later

(continued on page 13)

CRIME

State sets June 15 goal for full reopening

Masks would still be required

By Ana B. Ibarra and Barbara Feder Ostrov

As the pace of vaccination picks up, California state officials on Tuesday announced the date they plan to fully reopen the state’s economy: June 15.

Reopening by then will largely depend on two criteria: Vaccine supply must be sufficient for anyone 16 and older who wants a shot and hospitalization rates must remain low and stable. The mask mandate would remain in place, however.

“It is incumbent upon all of us not to state ‘mission accomplished,’ not to put down our guard, but to continue with vigilance that got us to where we are today,” Gov. Gavin Newsom said April 6 from San Francisco.

The move would eliminate the complex web of county-by-county tiers and replace it with a statewide reopening of businesses. Businesses would open up to full capacity, although individual counties could still opt to have more restrictions depending on their circumstances.

Schools would be allowed to reopen to all in-person learning; however, the school districts will maintain control.

Dr. Mark Ghaly, the state’s health secretary, said he feels comfortable allowing businesses to operate at full capacity in mid-June because the state will continue to track local conditions.

“We could see is fully

(continued on page 11)

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quote of the week

I don’t want to ‘defund’ the police but I do want to hold them accountable.

— Rita Vrhe, Palo Alto resident, on encryption of police scanners. See story on page 7.

around town

I SPY WITH MY EYE... Instead of hunting for colorful plastic eggs on Easter at Bol Park, locals searched for a different prize that’s representative of the open space: small vinyl donkeys. Barron Park Donkey Project coordinator Jenny Kirlati and her husband woke up early on April 4 to hide 60 figurines on tree branches, fences and greenery throughout the park, which is home to community donkeys Perry and Buddy. They also posted signs about the hunt and promoted it online on Nextdoor and through the Barron Park Association. When the couple returned later that afternoon, they saw families continuing to search for the figurines at about 4 p.m. Kirlati and her husband collected the remaining donkeys that were scattered across the park. “Some were easy to find, some were hard to find and some we couldn’t find at all,” she said. The couple started the tradition last year soon after stay-at-home orders were first issued to help bring joy to children, Kirlati said.

TURNING A NEW CHAPTER... Palo Alto’s city libraries will return to some normalcy starting Tuesday, April 13, when the Children’s Library reopen to the public for people with appointments, which are now available to book. Additional hours will run at the Rinconada Library on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays as of Tuesday, April 13. The opening hours will be 1-5 p.m. and Saturdays will run at the Rinconada Library on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Saturdays. As of Tuesday, the local library system will place all returned books and other items under 24-hour quarantine as a public health precaution. People can expect to wait up to four days for returned items to be deleted from their account. While borrowers currently don’t face late fees, the library system has asked them to return any overdue items for the benefit of other customers. The city plans to reopen the Mitchell Park and Rinconada branches on a limited basis in May, though no dates have been set yet. Anyone who plans to visit a branch must follow Palo Alto’s face covering requirement for those ages 3 and older and maintain 6 feet of distance from other visitors. As more branches resume operations, the library’s Sidewalk Service will also undergo changes. The service continues to be available at the Mitchell Park location on Tuesdays through Saturdays from noon to 5 p.m. Starting April 13, the service will run at the Rinconada Library on Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays from noon to 5 p.m. and Saturdays from 10 a.m. to noon. CULTIVATING CREATIVITY... The COVID-19 pandemic hasn’t stopped all annual traditions from taking place, such as Rep. Anna Eshoo’s Congressional Art Competition. The contest is open to high school students for the state’s 18th Congressional District, which includes Palo Alto and neighboring cities. While the competition will be held virtually, the reward remains the same: The winning work will be put on display in the U.S. Capitol building in Washington, D.C., for all to see. “For over 30 years, the Congressional Art Competition has recognized and encouraged artistic talent among young people across our country,” Eshoo said in a press release. “I’m proud to keep this tradition flourishing, even amid such challenging times, by launching this year’s competition virtually so students can participate in a safer manner. It’s important to support self-expression through art, and I encourage all young artists in California’s 18th Congressional District to use this opportunity to express their experiences over the last year and reflect on the resiliency of our community.” Entries can come in many forms, including paintings, collages and photography. Contestants are required to submit their work as a high-quality photo paired with a student information and release form by email to artcompetition@mail.house.gov by 5 p.m. PST on Friday, April 23. The Palo Alto congressman plans to hold a reception in her district later this year to announce the winner and recognize all of the participants. For more information, call 650-323-2964 or visit eshoo.house.gov/services/art-competition.

Upfront

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HOUSING

Facing residents’ concerns, Palo Alto looks to reassert commitment to single-family housing zones

By Gennady Sheyner

Council may ban use of new zoning tool in R-1 neighborhoods

Since Palo Alto launched the “planned home zone” last year to encourage developers to submit more housing proposals, it has seen a steady increase both in housing-project applications and in neighborhood concern.

By some measures, the program has been a success. Since the new zone was created in February 2020, the city has reviewed three “planned home” applications that collectively propose 593 housing units. In the coming months, staff is expecting to bring for the council’s consideration additional applications that collectively propose 500 more, according to a new report from the city. For a city that has produced only a fraction of its state-directed affordable-housing obligations and that is nowhere close to meeting its own goals for housing production, the recent surge of interest from residential developers is, in itself, a welcome development.

But the new zoning designation — which allows residential developers to exceed zoning regulations on height, density and parking and other development standards — has also prompted uncomfortable conversations about what kind of housing should be allowed and where it should go. In the College Terrace neighborhood, where developer Cato Investors has proposed a three-story, 24-apartment building on Wellesley Street, the battle has been particularly fierce.

While Jefferey Colin, principal of Cato Investors, will continue in the application that rezoning two lots at 2239 and 2241 Wellesley St. is “consistent with and will assist in meeting the city’s housing goals,” dozens of College Terrace neighbors have indicated in recent weeks that they strongly disagree. On March 10, the College Terrace Residents Association (CTRA) submitted a letter of opposition, which argues that the project does not belong at the proposed location.

“Our intentions are clear: We welcome new residents with open arms and seek housing projects better suited to the space and the neighborhood,” the letter states. “The CTRA strongly advocates for more affordable housing but views this proposal as ill-suited to both the space and the community.”

Rhetoric heated up after a housing advocate from the group Peninsula for Everyone put up flyers in the neighborhood that analogized residents who oppose the Cato project to former President Donald Trump and the gun-toting McCloskey couple from St. Louis, Missouri. One flyer depicts the McCloskeys with their guns drawn and a caption coming out of Patricia McCloskey’s mouth that reads, “They want to abolish the suburbs altogether, by ending single-family zoning.”

On Monday night, the council plans to step into the debate by narrowing the intentionally wide parameters of the planned home zone in a way that could effectively kill the Wellesley project.

The biggest question that the council will consider is: Should the new zoning designation be allowed in single-family residential (R-1) zones?

Most council members — including Mayor Tom DuBois, Vice Mayor Pat Burt and Lydia Kou and Greer Stone — have already indicated in interviews and during public comments that they believe the answer is “No.” The April 12 hearing will give them a chance to officially revise the policy and exclude R-1 zones from consideration for major new housing projects.

The city’s planning staff has recommended instituting the restrictions. According to the new report, the planners advised Cato that its application “was not consistent with the intent of this program,” even though the law clearly allows the developer to submit an application for a “prescreening” by the council.

“Going forward, staff recommends PHZ applications be considered for all commercial, industrial and multifamily districts,” the report states.

City staff is also recommending that Palo Alto continue to give developers flexibility when it comes to a building’s height and density. While the city has a 50-foot height limit for new buildings, many developers are interested in buildings that exceed 60 feet, the..."
State and federal funds will help local school districts with reopening costs

Money can be used for learning support, counseling, staff training

By Angela Swartz and Elena Kadvany

S tate and federal funds will soon flow to local school districts to cover their additional reopening costs during the pandemic. These costs include not only safety precautions needed to welcome students back to campuses, but additional programming expenses that are resulting from the emotional and academic impact on children who’ve spent the better part of the last year confined to their homes.

The earmarked state funds are through Assembly Bill 86, the nearly $6 billion COVID-19 relief package, aimed at accelerating a safe return to in-person instruction and provide schools with resources to expand academic, mental health and social-emotional support.

The federal American Rescue Plan provides more than $122 billion to help K-12 schools reopen, with $7.5 million to come in from the school community. Ravelo said, but additional proposals from staff include using the state money for new instructional materials, an expanded summer school program, teacher training and classroom ventilation, among other items.

Palo Alto Unified is also one of the selected districts to receive $2.3 million in federal stimulus funds.

The Sequoia Union High School District, which has about 9,300 students and is home to Woodside and Menlo-Atherton high schools, along with TIDE Academy, will receive nearly $9.1 million. Sequoia classrooms reopened Monday, April 5, to students.

The Menlo Park City School District, which reopened this past fall to those of its 2,932 students who wanted to come back to campuses, is set to receive $2.4 million. District officials are appealing a decision by the U.S. Department of Education to remove funds and services from the district because of erroneous census data, according to a preliminary proposal from staff.

The March 25 school governing board presentation.

The K-8 Ravenswood City School District, which only recently approved a plan to reopen schools districtwide starting April 12, is set to receive $2.4 million from the state for expanding learning opportunities and is eligible for $750,000 for in-person learning. The district is looking at investing in summer school, extending the school day or year and additional interventions like tutoring and mental health counseling for students, Chief Business Officer William Eger said, but is continuing to solicit feedback from the school community.

Ravenswood is also expecting about $7.5 million to come in from the new federal stimulus package.

The district is looking at the injection of one-time funds with a longer-term view. Eger pointed to a new Education Resource Strategies study on COVID-19’s financial impact on K-12 schools that estimates districts should plan on spending $12,000 per student over a five-year period post-pandemic. In Ravenswood, that would cost about $18 million, according to Eger.

“We’re a relatively high-need district,” he said. “The amount of stimulus money we’ve received plus money from REF (the Ravenswood Education Foundation) gets us into that ballpark, but we’re not thinking about this as spending that we need to do just to bring students back safely. We’re thinking about this as a five-year learning acceleration initiative.”

Email Staff Writer Angela Swartz at aswartz@almanacnews.com.

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Parking
(continued from page 5)

if more than 85% of the spots are taken, rates go up by 50 cents.

If Palo Alto adopts this "performance pricing" approach, rates would go up or down in specific zones, lots or garage floors based on their location and the time of day, according to a report from the Office of Transportation.

With the change, staff is hoping to create a more dynamic and flexible model than the one that exists today. The action plan, which the Planning and Transportation Commission discussed last week, stops short of installing parking meters in all commercial spaces — an option that the council had flirted with in the past. It would, however, create a hybrid system in which the city can charge for certain on-street parking spaces while still being a more dynamic and flexible model than the one that exists today.

One of the major goals is to make parking easier for visitors during peak periods, said Nathan Baird, the city’s recently hired parking manager.

“Folks who are aware of Palo Alto pre-COVID understand that at lunch and during dinner hours, it was very hard to find parking in our commercial areas,” Baird told the commission on March 31. “While COVID has had a huge impact on that, we do expect those peak parking times to continue to be well-served by our current system.”

In addition to injecting flexibility into parking policies, staff is also looking to direct drivers away from residential streets and toward the city’s often underutilized garages. In the California Avenue area, this means gradually reducing the number of permits that are sold to employees in the Evergreen Parking/Mayfield residential parking program — an endeavor made easier by the new garage at 350 Sherman Ave.

Through the new policies, the city wants to encourage visitors to head for public lots and garages rather than circling around in search of on-street parking, according to transportation staff. And by allowing those who park in lots and garages to extend their stays by paying in increments, the new policy would obviate the need for visitors to face the all-or-nothing dilemma that they currently have to confront.

Chief Transportation Official Philip Kamhi suggested that the added flexibility will become more critical in the post-COVID-19 era, as more companies allow low- and part-time employees to work remotely at least part time.

“This is a time where we’re going to see that happen more, with people doing more flexible hybrid work schedules,” Kamhi said at the March 31 meeting. “Part of what we’re trying to do is adjust what we consider our inflexible current system and create more flexible options. We’re trying to make sure we have more options available.”

The changes in the commercial districts are just one component of the broad parking action plan. Other policy proposals include giving employees more flexibility when it comes to the duration of their parking permits (currently, they are required to commit to a six-month permit), improving the city’s employee parking permits about Residential Parking Permit (RPP) zones that have ample available parking, and raising costs for employee permits in the residential zones to create another incentive for workers to park in garages. With the addition of employees-only spaces in garages, RPP employee parking permits will be reduced commensurately.

For some residents near the commercial districts, the change is overdue. Carol Scott, a resident of Evergreen Park, urged the city to go even further and simply prohibit all-day parking for area employees on residential streets.

“Commercial parking does not belong in a residential neighborhood, and the standard for commercial parking there should be zero,” Scott said.

Commissioner Doria Summa shared that sentiment and suggested that the city should do whatever it takes to keep commuters from parking their cars in residential neighborhoods.

“I’d like to optimize parking in the garages, including new garages, as soon as possible, understanding that it wasn’t — even pre-COVID — anywhere near 100%,” Summa said. “That’s a big priority for me. Any of the reasonable technologies that we can use ... let’s try them out and use them.”

While the planning commission didn’t take any formal actions on the parking plan, members lauded staff’s approach, including its near-term goal of adding new options for visitors to the city’s two primary commercial districts. Commissioner Ed Lauing suggested that the city should do more than two options for parking, while Commissioner Michael Alcheck called the plan to offer some free parking while allowing customers to pay to extend their stay a suitable compromise.

“I’m generally in the camp that we should be charging for parking,” Alcheck said. “But I also believe that our local retailers will probably not be excited about that. This is a good middle ground.”

Email Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner at gsheyner@paweekly.com.

About the cover: The city of Palo Alto’s new garage at 350 Sherman Ave. could help relieve parking in surrounding neighborhoods. Cover design by Douglas Young. Photo by Magali Gauthier.
News Digest

County: Seek vaccine despite shortage

In a continued race to vaccinate residents quickly and stay one step ahead of the mutating coronavirus, health officials from Santa Clara and San Mateo counties are urging residents who don’t find a vaccination appointment right away to keep trying.

One area of concern is the shortage of vaccines, and on Thursday, the county signup page at COVID-19 vaccine appointments, according to a county public-health officer Dr. Sara Cody told the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday.

The variants currently in Santa Clara County that are on the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s “variants of concern” list include the United Kingdom B.1.1.7, the South Africa-origi- nated B.1.351, the Brazil-based P.1, and two variants originally found in California, B.1.427 and B.1.429 — all of which are more transmissible and some of which can cause more severe symptoms, county Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody told the Board of Supervisors on April 6.

In San Mateo County, health officials also continue to face a shortage of doses. They were forced to curtail their mass-vacci- nation events at the San Mateo County Event Center to just one this week, which was “very disappointing,” Health Chief Louise Rogers told the Board of Supervisors on Tuesday morning.

— Sue Dremann

Former math tutor charged with 52 lewd acts

Prosecutors in the case against former Palo Alto math tutor Mark Allan Hodes filed additional charges of lewd conduct against him on April 5, upping the number of felonies he faces five-fold — from nine to 52. He allegedly harmed 16 girls, according to court documents.

Hodes, 75, operated Peninsula Tutoring Service from his Manu- ela Avenue home since 1970, teaching students mathematics at the primary and secondary grades and university levels, according to his LinkedIn profile.

He was arrested by Palo Alto police on Aug. 25, 2020, for alleg- gedly molesting multiple female students. The Santa Clara County District Attorney’s Office originally charged him in September 2020 with nine felony counts of lewd acts with a minor aged 14 or 15 years old. Those charges were related to three underage girls, according to court documents.

The amended complaint filed on Monday includes 42 counts of lewd or lascivious acts on a 14- or 15-year-old child with the defen- dant being 10 years or more older than the victim; and 10 counts of lewd acts on a child under 14 with no force used.

Hodes is currently out of custody. On Monday, prosecutors sought for him to be remanded to jail without bail, considering the breadth of the new charges and out of concern he might flee.

Hodes’ attorney, Daniel Barton, argued in court that Hodes has not continued tutoring under any assumed name and that he has been cooperative and isn’t a flight risk. The court will formally hear those arguments on April 27 when Hodes is scheduled to enter a plea.

— Sue Dremann

Vaccine eligibility expanded to 16 and up

Santa Clara County residents and workers who are 16 years and older are now eligible to sign up on the county’s website for COVID-19 vaccine appointments, according to a county public-information officer. Dr. Marty Fenstersheib, director of COVID-19 testing and vaccinations, said on Tuesday that there continues to be a shortage of vaccines, and on Thursday, the county signup page at sccfreevax.org noted no appointments were available. A spokes- man on Thursday afternoon confirmed the reason is the shortage; however, people should keep trying to get an appointment, as more will open up as more vaccines become available. The state expects the supply to increase later in April and May.

Those having difficulty making appointments can opt to sub- scribe to the Bay Area Vaccine Hunters Facebook page, which provides additional information on when appointments slots at health care centers and pharmacies become available.

— Palo Alto Weekly staff

Blueprint

(continued from page 5)

occupied settings, but yet still with masks,” Ghaly said Tuesday.

Until at least Oct. 1, events at large settings like convention centers will only be allowed if or- ganizers can show that attendees are either vaccinated or are tested. There is still no plan, however, for large, multi-day events like music festivals to take place, Ghaly said.

As of Monday, the state had ad- ministered more than 20 million vaccines — more than entire coun- tries. That includes 4 million doses in the state’s hardest hit ZIP codes. This progress allows the state to move forward and leave behind its colored blueprint that has been determining reopenings by county.

State leaders chose the June 15 date because it is eight weeks af- ter April 15, when everyone 16 and older becomes eligible for vacci- nations. That gives people three weeks to find an appointment, another three weeks in between their first and second dose and two more weeks after their second dose to acquire full protection.

“It makes sense to me,” said Dr. George Rutherford, an epide- miologist at UC San Francisco.

“The on hand, vaccination is going gangbusters — I think that will give us the out — but we also have to see what happens with the variants and if people who are vaccinated are getting infected.” Infections are skyrocketing in other parts of the country, some linked to new variants of the vi- rus. But California has been able to keep its positivity rate under 2% for several weeks now.

Ana B. Ibraa and Barbara Feder Ostrov report for CalMatters.

Public Agenda

A preview of Palo Alto government meetings next week

CITY COUNCIL ... The council plans to convene as the board of directors for the Palo Alto Public Improvement Corporation to approve the corporation’s fiscal year 2020-2021 financial report. It will then reconvene as council to consider adjustments to impact fees pertaining to parks, community centers and libraries; consider changes to the applicability of “planned home” zoning for new development proposals; and consider a colleagues memo about creating a new skate park. The virtual meeting will begin at 5 p.m. on Monday, April 12. Those wishing to participate by Zoom can do so by dialing 669-900-6833 and using Meeting ID: 262 027 239.

COUNCIL POLICY AND SERVICES COMMITTEE ... The committee plans to accept the city auditor’s quarterly report; consider rent forgiveness for city tenants; and discuss the potential reengeance of investigations of discrimination, harassment and retaliation by police officers to the Independent Police Auditor. The virtual meeting will begin at 7 p.m. on Tuesday, April 13. Those wishing to participate by Zoom can do so by dialing 906-900-6833 and using Meeting ID: 923 018 049.

PLANNING AND TRANSPORTATION COMMISSION ... The commission plans to review the board and commissioners handbook and consider renter protection policies. The virtual meeting will begin at 6 p.m. on Wednesday, April 14. Those wishing to participate by Zoom can do so by dialing 669-900-6833 and using Meeting ID: 823 018 049.

ARCHITECTURAL REVIEW BOARD ... The board plans to discuss the nursing pod expansion at Stanford University Medical Center, discuss objective design standards pertaining to height transition and review sign locations Stanford Shopping Center. The virtual meeting will begin at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, April 15. Those wishing to participate by Zoom can do so by dialing 669-900-6833 and using Meeting ID: 906-900-6833.

PUBLIC ART COMMISSION ... The commission plans to discuss equity focused public art at King Plaza and the newly adopted commissioner handbook. The virtual meeting will begin at 7 p.m. on Thursday, April 15. Those wishing to participate by Zoom can do so by dialing 669-900-6833 and using Meeting ID: 971 9601 1388.

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Upfront
Housing

(continued from page 7)

report states. In some areas of the city, additional height may be es-
pecially helpful, particularly when these projects are far away from
sensitive land uses or single-family neighborhoods, the report states.
Another key question that the city will consider is: Should they
allow planned-home projects to include any office space? Under
the framework that the council approved last year for the zon-
ing designation, some office use is allowed, though any project
that adds jobs is required to pro-
vide enough housing to offset the
residential demand that these jobs
would generate.

Several developers have fol-
lowed this direction. Acclaim
Companies received generally
positive reviews from the coun-
cil in January for its proposal for
a lot on El Camino Real and Ol-
ive Avenue, which includes 119
apartments, 5,000 square feet of
office space and 1,000 square feet of
retail space. Meanwhile, devel-
oper Lund Smith is proposing a
planned-home project at 123 Sher-
man Ave, that includes 75 apart-
ments and 35,996 square feet of
office space at a commercial site.

Some council members, in-
cluding DuBois and Kou, have
suggested in the past that the
new zone should primarily apply to
projects that consist almost entire-
ly of housing — particularly af-
fordable housing. Last June, when
the council was considering the
city’s first planned-home propos-
al, which included 190 apartments
and 55,153 square feet of office
space in Stanford Research Park,
DuBois said he is “not supportive
of additional office space.”

That approach, however, has not
had the desired effect. Following
the hearings, Sand Hill Property
Company withdrew its application for a
mixed-use project at 3300 El
Camino Real. Instead of offering 190 apartments, it is now moving
ahead with a zone-compliant proj-
et that consists of 52,872 square
feet of office space and no hous-
ing at all.

Given the tension between the
developers’ wishes for more lus-
tive office space and the council’s
housing goals, city planners have
proposed several possible ap-
proaches, including limiting office
space to one-third of the project’s
floor area and revising the coun-
cil’s criteria for the jobs-housing
ratio for planned-home projects.

“To encourage a property owner
to build housing with inclusionary
(residential) units where office
is allowed by right, the city’s hous-
ing incentives must be significant
enough to support that financial
decision,” the report states.<ref> Email Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner at gsheyner@paweekly.com</ref>
Burglaries
(recovered after someone found it next to the road at Colderidge Avenue and Cowper Street. The other bag is still missing, he said.)

“It’s more psychologically upsetting that someone invades your place” than that money was taken, he said.

Santana’s daughter, Brooke, organized a GoFundMe page for employees Yolanda Loaiza and her husband, who saw all of their tips for 2021 vanish in the burglary.

“The were using the tip jar as a kind of piggy bank, trying to save the tips for their family,” James Santana said.

DuBois, manager and co-owner with her family of Rick’s Rather Rich Ice Cream in the Charleston Shopping Center in south Palo Alto, said her employees also lost tips. They were stolen after a lone burglar gained entrance through the rear of the locked building and smashed a door window to access a locked office.

The man, who wore a beanie and had a neck gaiter pulled up over his face to conceal his identity, was captured on surveillance video. He ransacked the business and threw everything onto the floor. He took the employee tips, coins the business used for change and two iPads.

“Yup, that’s about $3,000 to $4,000 in cash or change,” Khosla said.

The business doesn’t usually keep that much cash on hand, but it accumulated during the pandemic, she said.

Besides the theft, the store also incurred costly damage. The burglar not only smashed the office door window, but he damaged computers and other electronics.

He also detached a secured safe and carried it out the back door before abandoning it. The break-in was recorded on April 1 at about 12:30 a.m.

It was discovered at about 10 a.m., with the shop’s doors wide open and the safe outside, she said.

The theft and damage came after a year of hardship due to the COVID-19 pandemic, she said.

“The business is definitely greatly impacted. We’re a small, family-run business with only one store. It’s our bread and butter here,” she said.

The pandemic closures, coupled with an ice cream store being a mostly seasonal business, caused the store to not be able to pay rent and utilities during winter. A GoFundMe page was set up last year to help with costs, she said.

“With this happening, it’s more like a safety concern,” she said. “We felt so safe in this neighborhood.”

Now Khosla’s worried about her girls on staff.

“It doesn’t feel safe to be here physically. We’re asking people to keep an eye out,” she said.

Four days after the break-in, the ice cream store was open but workers were still cleaning up and repairing the damage.

“There is so much damage in the office. It’s very disheartening,” she said.

Both store owners reported the crimes to the Palo Alto police, according to daily police logs.

A third ice cream store, the Palo Alto Baskin-Robbins at 2615 Middlefield Road, was held up at gunpoint about two weeks ago on March 22. Police arrested a man on March 24 for the robbery, which they said is related to 12 other armed robberies of Baskin-Robbins and Subway stores throughout the Bay Area. • Email Staff Writer Sue Dremann at sdremann@paweeekly.com.

City Council (April 5)

Police: The council held a study session to discuss various policies pertaining to policing, including radio encryption and the scope of the independent police auditor. Action: N/A.

Unhoused: The council held a study session to discuss local and county programs to address homelessness. Action: N/A.

Housing Element: The council approved appointments to the Housing Element Working Group, which includes 15 members and two alternates. Yes: Dubois, Filseth, Kou, Storey No: Burt, Cormack, Tanaka.

LET’S DISCUSS: Read the latest local news headlines and talk about the issues at Town Square at PaloAltoOnline.com/square.

City View

A round-up of Palo Alto government action this week

Max A. Capestan

July 12, 1933 – December 17, 2020

Max Capestan, age 87, passed away on December 17, 2020 after a stroke. Born on July 12th, 1933, he was a long-time resident of Menlo Park. Born in Indiana, to Max and Virginia, he graduated as Salutatorian from Foothill High School in Gary, and attended Indiana University for undergraduate and medical school, where he joined Phi Kappa Fraternity. In 1955, he married MaryAnn Sulich who was his wife for 45 years. They had four children, Mark, Doreen, Janet, and Greg. After medical school, he joined the Army Reserve, and in 1961 he and his family moved to Atherton to work at Stanford Hospital OB/GYN practice with Kaiser Permanente, Redwood City.

After a varied medical career, he spent his retirement years volunteering at Stanford University, singing in two local cho- 

re groups, Masterworks and Peninsula Cantare, bowling at the Palo Alto Lawn Bowling Club, traveling extensively with his wife, Grace, and doting on their little dog, Tina.

Max was well liked for his calm, friendly presence, wry sense of humor, and lovely tenor voice. He was a kind, genial competitor, and always had words of encouragement for his teammates.

Max is survived by his wife of 16 years, Grace, brothers Bill and Bob, his children: Mark, Doreen (Joe), Janet (Peter), Greg (Robynn), Step-Daughter Linda (Pete), nine grandchildren, and two great-granddaughters.

A memorial reception will be held under Covid restrictions allow for public gatherings.

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Police

Who is in charge of Palo Alto?”

Aram James, a frequent critic of the Police Department, sug- gested that the way in which the department adopted the encryption policy undermines its stated commit- ment to transparency.

“What transparency looks like is not encrypting first and then we have to discover it later to have the hearing,” James said. “It’s the reverse — you bring to the attention of the citizens and the press, ‘Hey, we’re thinking about encrypting. Let’s have a hearing.’”

The council, which had never discussed the policy prior to the Monday meeting, agreed that it should get more involved. Coun- cil member Greer Stone proposed scheduling a formal meeting on the encryption policy, which would allow members to reconsider it. Mayor Tom DuBois agreed.

“I think we should reverse the decision immediately and wait until the year ends and hopefully come up with an alternative before them,” Mayor Tom DuBois said.

Stone argued that the encryption policy impedes the First Amend- ment right of the press to perform its job and serve as a check on the government.

“I understand it’s difficult to develop and implement a new pol- icy but the First Amendment states the floor that we can’t constitution- ally fall below,” Stone said. “And we’re not meeting that standard there.

“It doesn’t matter that it’s hard. Most things worth doing are. But we really need to identify alterna- 
tives to this blanket encryption and at a minimum allow for the press to monitor police radio.”

Jonsen said the city has been ex- ploring additional options, includ- ing the use of the app PulsePoint to keep an online log of police incidents. Currently, however, the app is generally used by fire de- partments and paramedics — not police agencies. Jonsen said the department has had discussions with PulsePoint about integrating law enforcement. That conversa- tion, Jonsen said, will continue.

“I really just hopeful that we’ll be able to find the technology that will allow us to meet the needs of both the community and the DOJ mandate,” Jonsen said.

DuBois, however, suggested that PulsePoint would be insufficient for monitoring the department.

Just having a flood of generic text messages might not be useful,” he said.

Council members also agreed that they should reach out to other cities — and to its lobbyists in Sac- ramento — to discuss a legislative fix. One alternative that former As- sembly member Todd Gloria pro- posed in 2019 would have required police agencies to provide licenses to news organizations to listen to encrypted broadcasts. That legisla- tion, known as AB 1555, failed to advance in Sacramento.

Vice Mayor Pat Burt and coun- cil member Lydia Kou both sup- ported forming an alliance with other cities to explore other alter- natives to encryption. Kou serves as an alternate on the board of directors of the Silicon Valley Regional Interoperability Au- thority, which coordinates emer- gency communications between the various agencies across Santa Clara County. She recommended an email letter to other directors. Council member Eric Filseth sup- ported the idea.

“We seem to be in the era of state mandates. This is one that doesn’t seem to solve any par- ticular problem we have in our community,” Filseth said of the encryption mandate. “I encour- aged that we’re collaborating with other cities to see if we can find a way around this because this isn’t something we want.”

For more on this subject, read Diana Diamond’s opinion column on page 15.

Email Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner at gsheyner@paweeekly.com.
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中文諮詢請聯繫Audrey Sun, DRE #01933274 | 電話: 650.785.5822 | www.deleonrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
Cathy Frances Latterell June 30, 1926 – March 28, 2021

Cathy Frances Latterell, a Palo Alto, CA resident of 51 years, passed away at the age of 94 at her home from a lengthy illness on March 28, 2021. Cathy was born on June 30, 1926 at Mary’s Help Hospital in San Francisco to Clark Matthew and Frances Ann Franklin. Cathy and her older brother, Dave, were raised in The City, Marin County and the San Joaquin Valley. Upon graduation from Madera High School, Cathy returned to San Francisco. She then attended Muson University School and began work at American President Lines and Weyerhauser Steamship Line. At that time, her father had a portrait studio on Clement St. in San Francisco. She and her parents were parishioners of Star of the Sea Catholic Church.

On January 1, 1951, Cathy had her first date with her future husband. On August 18, 1951 they were married at Star of the Sea Church. That year, Phil began his 30 year career with Shell Oil in Marketing, which led for them to live in various locations in California. They bought their first home in Orinda, CA where Cathy was President of the Orinda Democratic Club. Despite the fact that Phil was a Republican, she reluctantly escorted Cathy ringing doorbells for Adlai Stevenson in the Presidential Election of 1956.

In 1959, their son, Clark, was born followed in 1963 by the birth of their daughter, Gail. In 1965, Phil was transferred to Sacramento and they made their home in Carmichael, CA for the next five years. In 1970, another transfer came along and their residence on Dana Avenue has been home ever since. Cathy resumed her career. She worked for Saga Corporation at Channing House before transferring to their Executive Offices in Menlo Park as an Executive Assistant. After Saga was purchased by Marriott, she retired from the Marriott Corporation in 1991.

Having a son and daughter active in the Palo Alto Children’s Theatre, Cathy was President of Friends of the Palo Alto Children’s Theatre for two years as well as a member of the early Standing Arts Committee of Palo Alto. In addition, she also sang for many years in the choir at St. Albert the Great Catholic Church, Much to Phil’s delight, Cathy became a registered Republican and political arguments ceased.

In November 1991, Cathy and Phil’s oldest granddaughter, Dana Alexis Latterell, was born. Cathy commenced day care for her and her sister, Lauren Shelly Latterell, who was born in April 1993. In June 2003, their first grandson, Jesse Ross Latterell, was born followed in December 2004 by their second grandson, John Paul Latterell. Throughout the years, Dana and Lauren attended Duveneck, Jordan, Palo Alto and Poly, and to where there to provide great company and happiness to their “Nana” when Cathy lost her beloved husband, Phil, to cancer in February 2006. Cathy always enjoyed the car pools to and from school, working at “Young Fives,” driving to and from and dances and entertaining their friends.

Cathy always loved having the friends of her children and grandchildren at her home. Her love of playing piano, wonderful soprano voice and great sense of humor were some of the qualities that she was known for. She said that she was blessed by wonderful friends and neighbors whom she knew where always there for her. As a friend of Bill W, she was a role model and inspiration to others who were looking for a different way of life.

Cathy is survived by her daughter, Clark Latterell, her daughter, Gail Pruitt, granddaughters Dana and Lauren Latterell and their mother, Toni Schultz of El Dorado Hills, CA, grandparents Jesse and John Latterell and their mother, Jana Yohanan of Woodside, CA and their grandson, Jacob Anthony Armstrong and daughter-in-law, Katherine Dawitt Latterell.

Due to COVID, a Celebration of Life for Cathy will be held at a later date. Those interested in details can contact the family.

Being that Cathy was a breast cancer survivor, in lieu of flowers, the family would prefer for donations to be made to the Susan B Komen Breast Cancer Foundation.

Janet McClure Lyman

October 9, 1925 – March 18, 2021

Janet McClure Lyman, a resident of Palo Alto for more than sixty years, passed away peacefully of natural causes at age 95 on March 18, 2021, in Petaluma, California, where she had lived since 1981. Janet was born on October 9, 1925, to Thomas Harvey McClure and Ada Gibson McClure (née Titus) and grew up in Pelham, New York, with her older sister Barbara. She attended Wheaton College in Illinois, graduating with a bachelor’s degree in economics and a minor in English and German. Afterwards, she went on to earn a certificate from the management training program at Radcliffe College (a graduate program for women which was shortly thereafter absorbed into Harvard Business School).

Janet married John Hilton Lyman (who passed away in 1998) in 1949 and moved to Palo Alto with him shortly afterward. Over the course of their 25-year marriage, they had three children, Kate, Amy and John. Janet spent most of her career in the accounting department of Lockheed Martin, where her duties included financial analysis and data maintenance of contracts and classified materials. In retirement, she traveled extensively through Europe, enjoyed visits to her family and friends near and far, gardening at home, hiking across the Bay Area and being an active member of her local community.

Janet supported her faith in democracy, literature and her church in many ways. She was a committed monthly blood donor, served as a President for both the League of Women Voters and the American Association of University Women of Los Altos, and was a longtime vestry member at Christ Episcopal Church of Los Altos. She used her natural gifts as a vocalist to contribute dozens upon dozens of audio books for Recording for the Blind and Dyslexic in Palo Alto. She also helped found and supported the MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour, coffee ice cream and hummingbirds.

Janet is survived by her daughter, Amy Ramage Lyman and three grandchildren, Maggie McClureaverman, Simeon Lyman Levering, and Sarah McClure Haufrecht.
An Alternative View

Palo Alto police have shut their doors

By Diana Diamond

At the Monday, April 5, council meeting, there was no sign that any change from the current status was “complicated,” would take a long time, would be very hard to do, would endanger our relationships with other cities, etc. In other words, he didn’t want to do it. Even toggling (jumping for one communication channel to another) was “a very complicated approach.” Yes, he wanted to keep his new self-imposed encryption policy intact. The City Council is the policy maker in most instances, but it has let the police department do its own thing. Despite a declaration of a transparent department, it is getting more opaque.

There are several incidents within the last couple of years (Jonsen took over as chief in 2018) that show the police department closing its doors to the public and press — all very upsetting and inappropriate for this community:

• Encrypting all police radio transmissions to the press and public. Such police exchanges have been available for years.

• “Police dog bites man.” Mountain View police were looking for a suspect and called in the Palo Alto police dog and handler, Officer Nick Enberg. The dog sniffed something in the backyard. Enberg saw a sleeping person in a shed and told the dog to attack. The sleeper — Joel Alejo — woke up with a snarling dog in his face. He stood up and then Enberg told the dog to attack again, never saying a word yet to Alejo, whose leg by now was bitten.

Mountain View police arrived and told Enberg that Alejo was not the person they were looking for. Alejo sued. The incident was never made public, but the suit was, and the public blamed it about it in the Palo Alto Daily Post about four months later. Why not a police report? Palo Alto police said the man was not injured enough to report it. But if you read the police blog, all sorts of incidents are reported — stolen bikes, fender benders, etc. Why in the world keep something like a police dog bite closeted? Because, I suspect, it’s embarrassing for the police department, and Jonsen doesn’t want that. Nothing happened to Enberg, who is still on staff working as a dog handler.

• To find out about a crime or an incident, a reporter typically talks to a lieutenant or the press officer on duty. Well, Jonsen has declared that the press can no longer talk to any police officer — they must submit their question online to the department, and “someone will get back that day or the next.” Do you know what that means if you are reporting a story? Was anyone killed in a big accident on Middletown?’ I might ask. Or, “Why are the burglary rates increasing so much?” If a reporter gets an answer that needs more clarification, he or she cannot call the police but must submit a new question to the department and wait for another reply in 24 hours. So, the public might not find out about the big accident until four or five days later.

• The police had to cut its budget, and one of the jobs Jonsen eliminated was the public communications slot. Public communications? Sure sounds like another way to eliminate press access to the department.

There’s much more. A 2019 report from the outside police auditor was not made public until earlier this year. A council member asked why. No response yet that I know about.

Bravo to the questions and suggestions from Mayor Tom DuBois and Vice Mayor Pat Burt on Monday. They seemed truly concerned with what was happening, as did Council member Greer Stone, and their suggestions for what to do next were good ones.

City Manager Ed Shikada was at the meeting. I may be reading him wrong, but it seems that he agreed with Jonsen that it would be difficult and complicated to change things. But Shikada hasn’t done an outstanding job in having the Utilities Department provide any detailed information about all the recent power outages.

So, what happens next? DuBois indicates there will be a council meeting covering this topic, which is good. But we need more than that because the opaque cover of city business is getting darker and darker. I don’t think the council can do the investigation by itself. Maybe a panel of community experts can contribute.

People, we have a problem in this city. We need to recognize that and work hard to solve it.

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 Diana.Diamond@gmail.com.
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Healthy Hearing, Healthy Brain

Michelle Inserra, MD is an otologist with the Earlens Hearing Center. She holds a medical degree from Stanford University and completed a fellowship in Neurotology at the California Ear Institute.

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Earlens® was recently named a top 100 Invention for 2020 by TIME Magazine and is a 2021 Best of Menlo Park Award Winner.
I've been a difficult year for artists, but for a pair of Los Altos songwriters, singers and multi-instrumentalists, it's also been a fruitful time to watch their music blossom. The Song Gardeners (Mary Gospe and Corrie Dunn) have been hard at work writing, recording and releasing original songs with empowering messages, in a genre they call New Age pop.

“It is our intent to bring peace, beauty and harmony into the world through our music,” Dunn said. “Songwriting is our therapeutic creative outlet.”

The band (which also previously included Mountain View musician Chris Day) has released a number of well-received singles and plans to release an album in the coming months, with producer and fellow Los Altan David Scheiber as the helm. With titles including “Love Flows,” “Warrior of Light” and “Love is the Magic of Change,” written by Dunn, the band’s music “is an invitation for women across the globe to break free of outdated patriarchal, religious and cultural norms that keep them silenced and hinder their choices and freedom of expression,” according to a press release by the band.

Gospe and Dunn both grew up in musical families. They met 20 years ago, when their sons were in kindergarten and have been friends ever since, with a mutual love of organic gardening (hence the band name). They played together in the Los Altos cover band Cool Fire, then formed The Song Gardeners to nurture their original material.

Dunn has long been involved with music professionally; she holds a degree in bluegrass fiddle lessons with local legend Jack Tuttle. While she’s composed songs since her youth, sharing them with the public is a fairly new endeavor.

Gospe earned an MBA and worked in high-tech marketing and consulting for years, with music on the back burner, although she, too, dabbled in songwriting, taking a class at Foothill College multiple times, “until I maxed out,” she said with a laugh. In 2018 she decided to take a short sabbatical to follow her heart’s true delight. A fortuitous introduction to producer David Vito Gregoli led to the recording and release of an album of original music, “Time to Soar,” in 2019 and before she knew it, “My six-month sabbatical turned into a forever sabbatical,” she said, transitioning to an “encore career” as an independent musician.

I always dreamed of being in a band or doing something with music but I don’t know if I ever thought it would take off,” she said. “I’m kind of living my dream right now.”

Obviously, the year of pandemic restrictions have put a damper on Gospe and Dunn getting together to play, record and perform, but they’ve kept up with their collaborations from a (short) distance.

“We all are really close together physically but we each record our own parts to e-mail back and forth,” Dunn said. “I’m kind of living my dream right now.”

When writing, Gospe said she often starts with the lyrics. “I’ve had a few songs drop in while I was meditating,” she said. For the song “I Choose Love,” the words struck suddenly mid-meditation as a sort of divine download: “In this moment I get to choose. No one else is standing in my shoes. It’s up to me how I want to be,” she recalled. “That was really cool. Those are like gifts, when that happens.”

The band marked its return to live, in-person performance with a gig as part of downtown Los Altos’ First Fridays event on April 2.

“With technology, we can still create and share our music; we’ve even had some online performances. But nothing beats live music, both for the performers and the audience,” Dunn noted.

Ultimately, Gospe said she’d love to tour both locally and internationally, especially to Europe, where the band has received some nice airplay and attention. But in the meantime, it’s all about continuing to develop their songs and keep the positive vibrations humming.

“We feel really good about the messages we’re putting out,” Gospe said. “The songs are healing. I think we’ve found a niche for ourselves.”

More information is available at thesonggardeners.com. Email Arts & Entertainment Editor Karla Kane at kkane@paweekly.com.
Congratulations on managing what is a permanent crisis and know that there are more of us than you think who support independent journalism and local journalism.

- Jill M.

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Eating Out

with me and illustrate the stories below that have stuck Maum co-chefs).

in that series with the former is from the first conversation to lunch at a restaurant of their characters. It gave me an excuse to into local kitchens and bakeries they're all my favorite in different possible to do that since, at the stories from over the years for put together a list of my favorite people who are as obsessed with ter and thousands of passionate there's the column, a newslet-
ter in and of itself, which isn't the case for a long time (maybe ever) at our newspa-
ners. In that vein, the Peninsula Foodist will continue on with a new writer.

Thank you so, so much, for all of your support over the years — every email, tip and interview. I still have lots of connections on the Peninsula and plan to be around (read: eating) often, so please don’t be a stranger. You can always reach me on social media at @ekadvany on Twitter and lenak21 on Instagram.

Here are seven of my most memorable stories.

How San Jose became America’s Vietnamese food mecca

For Vietnamese refugees, restaurants provided economic opportunity and community. Today, they offer a delicious case study in regional flavors. At San Jose’s venerable Vung Tau, soup is history.

The restaurant serves eight noodle soups, each of which starts with the same broth but tells its own story about Vietnam.

A line of cars stretched through the parking lot of the Mountain View Senior Center on Tuesday morning, drivers waiting patiently for boxes of fresh produce, milk, eggs, canned goods and chicken to be placed in their trunks by masked volunteers. One young mother left quickly to prepare food for her baby, while two older women filled shopping carts with free food so they wouldn’t have to spend money at the grocery store this month.

Peninsula Foodist Elena Kadvang speaks with Meichih and Michael Kim, former co-owners of Maum restaurant in Palo Alto, which received a Michelin star, over lunch at Orchard City Kitchen in Campbell on Aug. 5, 2019.

Silicon Valley’s underground food movement is driven by Instagram and COVID economics

There’s an underground food movement booming on the San Francisco Peninsula.

It’s not happening at restaurants, but in the homes and backyards of out-of-work cooks, high school cooks, mothers and fathers — people who have turned to selling food to make ends meet during the coronavirus shutdown. On any given day, if you’re clued into the right Instagram and Facebook pages, you can find homemade quesadillas, fresh tacos, lumpia, pupusas, smoked brisket, smoothies, boba tea and otai (a Polynesian drink made from fresh fruit).

Read more at tinyurl.com/penUnderground.

How 12 million pounds of food gets distributed during a pandemic

At first, I thought the waivers were funny, almost a gimmick. I mostly skimmed them, signifying my bodily rights away without much thought at two restaurants that required them before serving me the hottest dishes their kitchens can muster. I just wanted to get to the spicy part.

Then I found myself at the bar of The Swingin’ Door in San Mateo ordering the “Habanero Burger XXX,” which the British pub claims is “the hottest burger in the nation.”

Read more at tinyurl.com/spicywaiver.

Desperately seeking soft serve: Chasing down Mister Softee on the Peninsula

It wasn’t easy finding Mister Softee.

For someone used to food trucks with fixed locations, chasing one down was new to me. Sure, you can use the iconic East Coast soft serve company’s smartphone app to track the trucks in real time, but they’re constantly in motion. Every time I put in a location on Waze, by the time I arrived, the truck I was following had moved somewhere else, just out of reach.

Read more at tinyurl.com/searchforsoftee.

Food trucks hate: Inside the Peninsula supper club celebrating immigrant cuisine

Lalita Kaewsawang was 10 years old, and obsessed with chicken fat rice. Growing up in Nonthaburi, Thailand, she’d return to the same street vendor over and over to watch him make the khao mun gai, a deceivingly simple yet technically challenging dish. She offered to wash dishes for an hour just to be able to watch him pour chicken stock into a vat of rice at the exact right moment.

Read more at tinyurl.com/TapestrySupper.

Behind the scenes at Manresa’s staff meal

Just after 4 p.m. at Manresa Restaurant in Los Gatos, you’ll find some of the kitchen staff in an unlikely setting: sitting in a nondescript parking lot behind the three-Michelin-star restaurant, eating out of ceramic dishes filled with chicken Parmesan, pasta, Caesar salad and garlic bread. Welcome to family meal.

Read more at tinyurl.com/ManresaStaffMeal.

Editor’s note: Stay tuned for continued food coverage with the Weekly’s new Peninsula Foodist.

www.PaloAltoOnline.com • Palo Alto Weekly • April 9, 2021 • Page 23

I have some bittersweet news: This marks my farewell as the Peninsula Foodist.

After putting out 47 Peninsula Foodist newsletters and eight years covering restaurants and education for the Palo Alto Weekly and our sister publications The Almanac and the Mountain View Voice, I’m taking a job as a food reporter at the San Francisco Chronicle. I’ve felt the full emotional guts that comes with starting a new life chapter after a very formative one, and it feels particularly difficult to leave behind this column and the community behind it. When I first started the Peninsula Foodist column many years ago, I had no idea what it would turn into. I just wanted to write about restaurant news and do justice to the food reporters who came before this column and the community and, most critically, to tell the stories behind the food on our plates.

It’s hard to express how rewarding it is to build something from the ground up, especially in the media world. I’m so grateful to parent company Embarcadero Media for supporting this passion project and investing in restaurants as a serious beat in and of itself, which wasn’t the case for a long time (maybe ever) at our newspapers.

Food news: This marks my farewell as the Peninsula Foodist.

Thank you all for your support over the years — every email, tip and interview. I have felt the full emotional guts that comes with starting a new life chapter after a very formative one, and it feels particularly difficult to leave behind this column and the community behind it. When I first started the Peninsula Foodist column many years ago, I had no idea what it would turn into. I just wanted to write about restaurant news and do justice to the food reporters who came before this column and the community.

One of my editors suggested I put together a list of my favorite stories from over the years for this last article. It’s almost impossible to do that since, at the risk of sounding really sappy, they’re all my favorite in different ways. My reporting took me into local kitchens and bakeries and gave me access to some of the Bay Area’s most interesting and important culinary characters. It gave me an excuse to start basically my dream series — asking local chefs out to lunch at a restaurant of their choice for an interview (the photo above, taken pre-pandemic, is from the first conversation in that series with the former Maum co-chefs).

But I’m going to list a few stories below that have stuck with me and illustrate the driving force behind the Peninsula Foodist: to be the most comprehensive, compelling source for food news in this region, and, most critically, to tell the stories behind the food on our plates.

Thanks for the memories

A fond farewell from the Peninsula Foodist

By Elena Kadvang

How San Jose became America’s Vietnamese food mecca

For Vietnamese refugees, restaurants provided economic opportunity and community. Today, they offer a delicious case study in regional flavors. At San Jose’s venerable Vung Tau, soup is history.

The restaurant serves eight noodle soups, each of which starts with the same broth but tells its own story about Vietnamese history through toppings, condiments and serving style.

Read more at tinyurl.com/sjviet.
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Welcome to Parc Regent, Los Altos’ most desirable community of luxury condominiums for residents aged 55 years or better. Boasting an enviable corner unit located on the ground floor, this bright, inviting home offers 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, and over 1,600 square feet of living space. A gas fireplace centers the living room, which features glass doors opening to an outdoor patio with views of the newly refinished pool at the center of the complex. Inspire your inner chef in the granite kitchen with appliances from Bosch and Kenmore Elite. This peaceful, secure complex also features a fitness center, a deeded parking space in the underground garage, and a storage room. Plus, this great North Los Altos location puts you mere moments to everything downtown has to offer including shops, restaurants, banks, and the post office. Supreme comfort, ultimate convenience, and an unbeatable location – this home checks all the boxes for outstanding Silicon Valley living.

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Incredible landscaping and a Zen-like garden courtyard calm the senses and welcome you to this spacious, stylish home in Central Menlo, set on a corner lot of almost 1/3 acre. Once inside, elegant appointments are everywhere you turn, including beautiful hardwood floors, spectacular beamed ceilings made from old growth redwood, and a custom copper fireplace surround. Light-filled gathering areas are perfect for entertaining, the chic kitchen boasts an Italian-made Verona range, and multiple rooms open to either the front courtyard or the peaceful backyard for true indoor/outdoor living. The home’s 3 bedrooms and 2.5 bathrooms include the master suite with a walk-in closet, as well as an attached in-law unit with a kitchen and private outdoor entrance. Find yourself just minutes to downtown Menlo Park, and a short trip to downtown Palo Alto, Stanford University, and Facebook. Plus, top-ranked schools are close at hand, including Hillview Middle, which is just down the street.

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

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Across
1 Dental degree
4 “Pygmalion” author’s initials
7 Big name in keyboards and motorcycles
13 Green Day, for one
14 Key on either side of the space bar
15 Lack of interest
16 Song activity #1
18 Senator Kyrsten
19 Linguistic suffix with “morph” or “phon”
20 Admit, as a guest
22 Director Grosbard with a palindromic name
23 Song activity #2
28 Filipino dish
29 Dock workers, at times
30 Actress Daly of “Judging Amy”
31 Capital in the Andes
34 Harry Potter sidekick
35 Song activity #3
38 ___ de los Muertos
41 Gently prods
42 Rough file
46 Integrated set that allows you to browse the Internet, e.g.
48 Seasonal gift giver
49 Song activity #4
53 Play a part
54 Knock it off
55 Aussie hopper
56 Difference in a close ballgame
59 Song-based trick wherein the things the singer’s “never gonna” do to you describe the theme answers, in order
61 Extremely ___ (addicted to Twitter, say)

Down
1 Serious-and-funny show
2 Had for supper
3 Landscaping purchase
4 ___ damn (cared)
5 “Expletive deleted” sound
6 Runway
7 “___ queen!”
8 Bee-fix?
9 The Red Devils of the Premier League, when abbreviated (the team uses this as their website)
10 Artist’s workshop
11 Author better known as Saki
12 “You’re the Worst” star Cash
13 Casey’s place, in a poem
14 ___ buco (veal dish)
15 “Arrested Development” surname
16 Venerable London theater
17 ___ buco (veal dish)
18 Senator Kyrsten
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“Never Say Never” — just click the link, I promise, By Matt Jones

This week’s SUDOKU

Answers on page 20.

Answers on page 20.

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