Downtown streets to remain car-free

Page 5

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University, Cal Ave will stay car-free through September

City Council to consider design changes for commercial strips to support dining scene

By Gennady Sheyner

Palo Alto’s popular experiment with car-free downtown streets will stretch at least until the end of September after the City Council rejected Wednesday a proposal to reopen California and University avenues to cars sooner.

Bowing to overwhelming resident demand, the council turned down a proposal from City Manager Ed Shikada to reopen University and California avenues to cars on July 7 and Sept. 6, respectively. In voting 6-0, with Mayor Tom DuBois absent, the council members also signaled their desire to take a broader look at redesigning the popular commercial strips in the coming months and consider the optimal alignments for both streets, as well as for a half-block segment of Ramona Street between Hamilton and University avenues that also has been closed to traffic.

For many, the closure of University and California avenues, which the council approved a year ago to facilitate outdoor dining, has been a rare success story during a bleak period. More than 400 residents have submitted letters to the city in recent weeks urging the city to keep the streets closed to cars, while just six urged the city to open them back up. And more than 95% of responders to city surveys indicated in April that they would like to extend the closures.

“There isn’t a single resident in Palo Alto that I have spoken with that wants to see these streets reopened,” Irene Au, a resident of Evergreen Park, wrote to the council before the Tuesday meeting. “People celebrate the vibrancy of the streets and the beautiful spaces many restaurants have invested in to increase

Salad days

Bill Stewart harvests arugula at the Rinconada Community Garden in Palo Alto on June 23.

(continued on page 10)

ENVIRONMENT

As drought persists, redwoods face a precarious future

This summer could start years of decline for redwoods in the Bay Area

By Sue Dremann

Looking more like candidates for tinder than the stately evergreens emblematic of California, the line of coast redwoods along Alma Street near the Palo Alto Caltrain station appear to be dying. Their branches are bare and dessicated, with broken limbs and sparse, drying leaves.

They aren’t the only dying redwoods in town. A scrappy skyline of flagging and dead redwoods stand in stark contrast to the verdant canopy at the Palo Alto Square center on El Camino Real and Page Mill Road.

This year is the second in what fire officials and climatologists have said is a severe drought. Historically, this May was Santa Clara County’s ninth driest in 127 years, according to National Integrated Drought System data.

“As summer progresses, we’ll start to see more (redwoods dying) as it gets hotter and drier,” new city Urban Forester Peter Gollinger said during a joint interview with outgoing forester Walter Passmore earlier this month.

The decline of the redwoods is not a huge story — yet. Passmore said. But if drought persists, it could be. It generally takes three to five years or more before drought affects healthy redwoods. Weakened trees and those without irrigation would be the first to go.

Gollinger said redwoods make a rare success story during a bleak period. More than 400 residents have submitted letters to the city in recent weeks urging the city to keep the streets closed to cars, while just six urged the city to open them back up. And more than 95% of responders to city surveys indicated in April that they would like to extend the closures.

(continued on page 13)
I think we should use this crisis as an opportunity to make change.

— Alison Cormack, Palo Alto council member, on keeping downtown streets car-free. See story on page 5.

Around Town

Council meetings, departings City Clerk Beth Minor this week found herself in the spotlight for a change. Minor, who has spent the past five years as city clerk and who is concluding her term at the end of July, received a round of virtual applause from the council and a special resolution of appreciation from the city. Several City Council alumni, including state Assembly member Marc Berman and Karen Holman, a member of the Midpeninsula Regional Open Space District board of directors, lauded Minor for her positive attitude, patience and ability to stay neutral. Council member Alison Cormack called her “gracious and unfurled.”

“Even COVID-19 didn’t ruffle you and — POOF! — here we were on Zoom ahead of everybody else.” Minor thanked council members with whom she interacted over the years and said she has enjoyed working with the public and the city. “I was able to play Switzerland and be neutral throughout, and that passed on to my employees also.” Minor said. Shortly after passing the resolution, the council approved a contract with Lesley Milton, who will take over for Minor as city clerk in late July.

BEST OF THE BEST ... Five teams of local real estate agents and 13 individual local salespeople were among the top-selling 250 teams and 250 agents nationwide that made The Thousand Best of the Best list for their 2021, sales of $344,950,813. At No. 30, the Troyer Group of Intero in Palo Alto was ranked No. 30 in Palo Alto sales of $380,136,000. The Thousand Best list for their 2021, sales of $344,950,813. At No. 30, the Troyer Group of Intero in Palo Alto was ranked No. 30 in Palo Alto sales of $380,136,000.
Enjoying Foothills Park after dark

By Kate Bradshaw

I went out to explore the trails, from the park. Offering emergency exit access through the rules of the campground by a park ranger who walked way.

Unsure of just where the campsites were, I parked at the bottom of the hill at the Orchard Glen parking area and started hiking f the hill at the Orchard Glen sites were, I parked at the bottom way.

After getting set up, Willa and went out to explore the trails, enjoying the gorgeous dusk, where we saw deer, turkeys and other human park visitors.

By Kate Bradshaw

EDUCATION

To promote equity, district restructures department

New structure focuses on mental health, attendance and ‘service to others’

By Lloyd Lee

When Palo Alto Unified Superintendent Don Austin established the Office of Equity and Student Affairs in 2019, the district was grappling with a persistent issue: Minority and low-income students as a whole continued to lag behind in achievement. Shortly after the formation of the department, the district found Latino and low-income students were testing below standard by eighth grade in the state’s Smarter Balanced exam results, prompting Austin to order an evaluation of the district’s middle schools.

“Our gap between advantaged and disadvantaged (students) is the largest and most pronounced I’ve seen anywhere,” Austin said at the time. “Whether we’re talking test scores or any other measure, I’ve seen nothing like this anywhere.”

Now, more than a year of distance learning due to a pandemic has further exposed and exacerbated learning gaps, digital divides and declining student mental health in school districts across the nation, especially amongst minority and low-income students.

To overcome those losses, Palo Alto Unified is restructuring its equity and student affairs department to prepare for the 2021-22 school year to target what the district deemed five “key focus areas”: mental health, attendance, equity, early literacy and, as the district agenda states, “service to others.”

“We are looking forward to really putting some targeted focus on each of those key areas and bringing forward some initiatives, both through our (Expanded Learning Opportunities) planner, LCAP plan (Local Control and Accountability Plan) and our new Equity plan, that we think will really move the needle,” said Lam Conaway, the assistant superintendent of equity and student affairs, who will lead the restructured department. “So I think this is a plan for our district.”

During a brief discussion of the reorganization at the Board of Education meeting on May 9, Conaway said the new structure helps focus and streamline academic and student support services by putting them within a single department and assigning roles that entail overseeing mental health services, language services and programs to improve attendance in part by working with the district to look at student services “through the lens of equity.”

According to the organizational chart provided in the board meeting agenda, six district staff members, both new and existing, will help shape the department.

Guillermo Lopez, who was recently hired by the district initially to oversee the office of academic supports, will work under Conaway as director of student services and be responsible for overseeing the English Language Learner program, counseling and expulsions and be the decision maker on Truancy IX cases, among other roles.

Four other staff members who already have some experience in their new assignments through previous roles within the district were named: Ana Reyes, Genavae Dixon, Miguel Fittoria and Rosemarie Dowell.

Each person will lead a set of student services and programs aimed to address the five areas of concerns in the equity and student affairs department.

Reyes, for example, will act as coordinator of school climate, attendance and discipline. “School climate” includes improving attendance in part by working with homeless and foster youth who typically have attendance issues.

Fittoria will continue his role as coordinator of student and family engagement, managing the Student and Family Engagement Team, which directs families and students, particularly those who are low-income or underrepresented in the district, to proper community resources. He will also start overseeing the district’s Advancement Via Individual Determination program, language services, Voluntary Transfer Program and community partnerships.

No action was required on Tuesday regarding the restructuring, but board members were in clear support of the new plan for the department. Board members Jesse Ladomirak and Jennifer Di-Brenia agreed that it made “intuitive sense” to give the equity and student affairs department oversight of a broad range of student support services.

“If you think about it, health, wellness, school climate, attendance, discipline, family engagement — all of these contribute or detract from a student’s ability to access their education,” Ladomirak said at the meeting. “And we also know that they’re often profoundly interrelated in kids’ lives, which can make addressing them in isolation really difficult and too often ineffective.”

With the new restructuring, Conaway will also be reporting directly to the superintendent. At the meeting, Austin said that the areas of concern that the department will address are not ranked by priority, but, if he were forced to rank them, mental health is “number one.”

“In the future, you will be hearing lots about mental health, a lot about attendance,” Conaway said. “And we’ve developed some staff responsibilities solely around some of those key areas.”

In other business Tuesday, the board unanimously approved a settlement agreement of $172,250, (continued on page 11)
Palo Alto has plenty of opinions when it comes to state legislation and a stack of letters to prove it. Since March, the city has taken formal positions against Senate Bill 9 and Senate Bill 10, housing bills that would, respectively, allow duplexes in single-family zones and permit cities to add building density in areas close to transit. It has also supported a bill to allow teleconferencing for council meetings and opposed another bill that would limit a city’s rights to deny permission to telecommunication companies to install small wireless facilities on street poles.

On Tuesday night, the City Council added to the tally when it voted to support four bills pertaining to police accountability: AB 26, which requires departments to release the findings of investigations into officer misconduct even if the officer leaves the department.

The city’s propensity for taking public positions, particularly when it comes to opposing housing mandates, has won it plenty of friends and foes throughout the state. Council member Lydia Kou, who chairs the council’s Police and Services Committee, has been the city’s most fervent opponent of SB 9 and SB 10. In recent months, she has participated in community meetings and distributed newsletters where these bills are characterized as an attack on local government control. Her recent petition in opposition to SB 9 bears the title, “Goodbye, single-family neighborhoods.”

Kou suggested Tuesday that the city should do more to influence Sacramento lawmakers.

“My main concern is that the state Legislature has been inundating cities with so many bills, which impact the cities on many levels,” Kou said during the council’s discussion of the city’s lobbying efforts. “And so, I kind of felt like we needed more exposure to some of these bills so that we can learn more about their impacts.”

It’s not clear, however, how effective the city’s lobbying efforts have been. Palo Alto was one of many cities and organizations that opposed SB 50, a bill from Sen. Scott Wiener that would have increased housing density near transit corridors and in jobs-rich areas and that fizzled in 2020. Yet SB 9 and SB 10 face better odds. Both have already sailed through the state Senate and both cleared the Democratic-controlled Assembly’s Housing and Community Development Committee.

To determine which bills to weigh in on, the city generally relies on its legislative guidelines, which prioritize issues such as public transportation, improvements to the rail corridor and environmental sustainability. On housing, the guidelines call for supporting reasonable housing and land use policies that recognize local autonomy and create reasonable ratios between jobs and housing and “opposing attempts to remove from localities the ability to determine their own land use policies or stymie the local political process.”

Deputy City Manager Chantal Gaines said city staff had identified 179 state bills in the current legislative session that are related to issues in the city’s guidelines. Of those, 159 have cleared the Senate Appropriations Committee and are in various stages of the legislative process. Staff and the city’s lobbyist, Townsend Public Affairs, has also narrowed the pile of bills down to about 25 that warrant special attention. On those, Gaines said, staff is preparing to work with bill sponsors and others involved in the legislative process to make sure Palo Alto’s position is heard.

While Kou and some of her colleagues supported increasing the city’s advocacy efforts in Sacramento, most council members agreed that when it comes to lobbying, less may achieve more. Niccolo De Luca, senior director at Townsend Public Affairs, referred to the practice of some cities and interest groups to engage in widespread commenting as “papering the capital” and suggested that it may not be the best way to achieve legislative goals.

“When you paper up the capital, it’s good to get your thoughts out there. But what I’ve seen more effective for cities is to weigh in thoughtfully and thoroughly,” De Luca said Tuesday. “If there is a piece of legislation we don’t like, we express that we have opposition, but we also like to propose amendments or propose suggestions or highlight what has been done successfully in Palo Alto.

“If we’re going after so many bills, it would spread everyone so thin that it would be a challenge to weigh in with some of those thoughtful comments.”

De Luca also emphasized the importance of face-to-face meetings with key lawmakers in Sacramento and encouraged council members to partake in an “advocacy day” in the Capitol, where they can meet lawmakers and discuss issues of local importance.

Council member Alison Cormack, who had participated in an advocacy day before the pandemic, concurred and suggested that if the city wants to have an impact on Sacramento, “active advocacy” would be required.

“I’d like to see us collectively spend more time advocating for what we want, as opposed to opposing things that we’re concerned about,” Cormack said.

Others felt more comfortable in the role of the opposition. Vice Mayor Pat Burt said he believes it is “entirely appropriate” for the city to advocate both for and against bills. Opposing a bill, he said, “answers the questions of friends and foes throughout the state Legislature has been inundating cities with so many bills, which impact the cities on many levels,” Kou said during the council’s discussion of the city’s lobbying efforts. “And so, I kind of felt like we needed more exposure to some of these bills so that we can learn more about their impacts.”

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News Digest

$50K in handbags taken during heist

The RealReal became the latest store targeted in a string of expatriate raids, this time in downtown Palo Alto on Monday after a co-ordinated group of seven men raided the retailer’s downtown store, police said Tuesday.

A security guard at the 379 University Ave. store called police on June 21 shortly before 6 p.m. to report the theft, which took place while the luxury consignment store near Waverley Street was open. Officers responded immediately but the men had already fled, Palo Alto police said in a press release.

Five men entered the store and began ripping handbags from security cables, according to police. The store’s on-duty security officer, who is in his 30s, attempted to block their exit, but the group pushed him out of the way.

The security officer followed them out of the store, where he was confronted by two other men who had stayed outside during the theft. One man demanded the other to “pull the gun” and the second man allegedly told the security officer, “Don’t make me pull the gun.” The security officer didn’t see a weapon, police said.

The seven men ran east on University Avenue. The security officer reported hearing tires screeching from vehicles on Waverley Street but didn’t see them.

Employees estimated the group stole about 20 handbags with a total value of more than $50,000, police said. Palo Alto officers are working with regional law enforcement agencies to find out if the same group of individuals might be connected to thefts in other cities, police said.

Anyone with information about Monday’s theft is asked to call the department’s 24-hour dispatch center at 650-329-2413.

— Sue Dremann

County rescinds May 18 workplace order

Santa Clara County leaders announced on Monday that they are rescinding a May 18 order that regulated COVID-19 vaccination data and other requirements for businesses and offices.

Because new rules from the California Division of Occupational Safety and Health (Cal/OSHA) are in place, which governs businesses, the county’s order is no longer necessary, county Counsel James Williams said.

The county’s May 18 health order required all businesses and government entities to determine the vaccination status of their personnel, either through simple self-reporting or proof of a COVID-19 vaccination card from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

Now, the county will follow Cal/OSHA regulations, which likewise require businesses to document their employees’ vaccination status but do not specify a particular method. The employer must also keep a confidential record of the vaccination status for any employee not wearing a face covering indoors.

Face coverings are still required under California Department of Public Health guidelines, Williams said.

The closure of vaccination status, in health care settings, at schools, child care and youth settings, on public transit, in jails and correctional facilities and at homeless and emergency shelters.

Williams said the county’s May 18 order currently remains in place only for businesses or government entities that have not yet completed two rounds of “ascertainment of vaccination status” of their personnel. If those businesses and agencies complete the second round, the May 18 order no longer applies to them.

— Sue Dremann

State launched digital vaccination records

Vaccinated state residents can now access their vaccine record digitally through a tool introduced on June 18 by California’s Department of Public Health and Department of Technology.

The digital record can be accessed at myvaccinerecord.cdph.ca.gov and requires residents to input their name, date of birth, phone number or email address and a four-digit PIN.

Users will then receive a link to their digital record, which has the same information as the physical Centers for Disease Control and Prevention vaccination record card given out when people receive their shots, as well as a QR code that can be scanned to show the same information.

Officials with the two departments stressed that the digital record would not be used as a so-called vaccination passport and is an alternative way for vaccinated residents to confirm their status when entering a business or event.

Vaccinated people who need to correct or update their vaccination record can do so at cdph.ca.gov/covidvaccinerecord or contact the state’s COVID-19 hotline at 833-422-4255.

— Eli Walsh, Bay City News Foundation

(continued from page 5)

their capacity for more people to enjoy. Suddenly these streets have become cool destinations within Palo Alto that bring people out.”

But while most residents see the closure as a positive development, business owners along University have been quick to point out that the benefits of the closure are very uneven. Downtown retailers, including lululemon Athletica, Footwear etc., and 888, have reported that their Palo Alto locations have seen sluggish sales when compared to their stores in other cities. Meanwhile, restaurants outside University have argued that the street’s closure gives their counterparts on the main thoroughfare an unfair advantage.

Megan Kawkb, owner of The patio, an Emerson Street bar and restaurant, was among the first to speak out against the ongoing closure of University, which she argued helps out certain businesses at the expense of others. Kawkb has invested more than $60,000 in its on-street parklet, she said. But the constant flow of car traffic past her restaurant makes dining outside both unpleasant and dangerous, she said.

“While the idea was noble, helping a few only to starve the others is a very dangerous position,” Kawkb said.

Guillaume Bienaime, owner of Zola, a restaurant on the corner of Bryant Street and Hamilton Avenue, concurred.

“Specifically, when we say we’re all in this together, I think the people on University and California are in it together and the rest of us are left behind,” Bienaime said.

Major downtown developers also have requested that the closed thoroughfares be reopened. Roxy Rapp, speaking on behalf of a group of developers that includes John McNellis, Charles “Chop” Keenan and John Shenk, called the closure of University to cars “di-sastrous” and urged the council to consider other options such as parklets to facilitate outdoor dining.

“We’ve got to give back the roads to the cars in Palo Alto,” Rapp said.

Other business owners see things starkly differently. Nancy Coupal owns two Coupa Café shops, one on the closed stretch of Ramona Street and another on Lytton Avenue, which is open to cars. Her Lytton location has fared far worse than her Ramona one. Forcing restaurants back off of the streets, she argued, would simply bring fewer people downtown.

“The people need a safe place to go to hang out, to bring their families, to be able to work safely, to not have cars zooming by as they dine, because nobody likes that,” Coupal said.

The majority of the council shared that concern. Council members Alison Cormack and Greer Stone both cited the positive response they’ve been getting from businesses in both residents and out-of-towners.

“I think we should use this crisis as an opportunity to make change,” Cormack said.

While approving the short-term extension of the street closures, the city will work with the local chapter of American Institute of Architects and the city’s Architectural Review Board to consider improvements to California Avenue, including establishment of performance spaces.

That proposal moved ahead by a 4-2 vote, with council members Eric Filseth and Kou dissenting.

“I think it’s premature getting architectural designers until we’ve given direction and agreed as a council on what direction we want that to go,” Filseth said.

Like others, however, Filseth acknowledged the popularity of the city’s nascent outdoor-dining program and suggested that he would like to see it remain in some form.

“I think there is enough demand and enough interest in the community for outdoor dining in the two downtown areas that I think we need a strategy for it,” Filseth said.

Email Staff Writer Gennifer Sheyner at gsheyner@paweekly.com.
Camping (continued from page 7)

Sites are $40 per night.

In keeping with Foothills Park’s dog policy, dogs are only permitted in the park on weekdays, so dogs are not permitted camping on Friday, Saturday or Sunday nights.

Each tent-only campsite has a picnic table, water, fire bucket, charcoal barbecue, food storage locker and pad for tents. Each tent pad holds two four-person tents.

The group sites have two pads for up to four four-person tents. There are two campfire circles with benches for use by all campers, but people must bring their own firewood. Fires may also not be permitted depending on fire weather and/or drought conditions.

Campers have to be parked a half-hour before closing time, and anyone not spending the night is expected to exit the park before closing time.

Portable toilets and zero-waste dumpsters (for recycling, compost and landfill) are in the parking lot.

For more information, visit cityofpaloalto.org.

Email Staff Writer Kate Bradshaw can be emailed at kbradshaw@almanacnews.com.

The shared fire pits at the Towle Campground at Foothills Park offer a space to visit with other campers.

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said, can be very important to Palo Alto’s interests. "It’s not a one track of only saying what we’re for," Burt said. “Otherwise, we and other cities end up with things we oppose.”

All seven council members agreed, however, that the city should gradually move from the model of weighing in on a wide range of bills to a model of deeper engagement with fewer bills. "We don’t want to drop the ball and miss important bills," council member Greer Stone said. "But I also think it’s important for us to be nimble and react in a timely fashion and be able to address bills that are concerning the city and individual council members."

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

Budget (continued from page 5)

elimination of 87 full-time positions and 102 part-time positions, nearly all of those were positions in the council’s four main departments. When the city’s revenues began to plummet and the council approved nearly $40 million in budget cuts.

But unlike last year, when the council was united in the face of the pandemic, members on Monday split into two camps. Four council members, Mayor Tom DuBois, Vice Mayor Pat Burt and the only major minority, Greer Stone, pointed to positive economic signs — including recent projections about rising sales- and document-tax revenues — and advocated for restoring services and advancing a long-awaited and repeatedly delayed investment in a new site of the rehabilitation of the Roth Building in downtown Palo Alto.

Three of their colleagues — council members Alison Cormack, Eric Fleishet and Greg Tanaka — favored a more fiscally conservative approach, including delaying work on the long-eyed site of a new city history museum.

The approved budget rejects some of the most contentious proposals in Shikada’s budget, including a full “brownout” of fire stations and the closure of the Downtown, College Terrace and Children’s libraries. The city is no longer looking to cut five police officer positions that were eliminated popular Palo Alto Art Center programs such as Project Look and Cultural Kaleidoscope.

Some of these actions, however, may take some time to come about. Even though the council voted to reopen the three libraries that were slated for closure, staff warned that the Library Department doesn’t have the personnel to operate those branches.

Library Director Gayathri Kanth said Monday that the department has seven vacant positions.

"Those positions need to be filled before we would be able to open all the libraries," Kanth said. "Once the city recruits the needed staff — a process expected to take between three and six months — the libraries would be open three days per week.

Burt, who serves on the council’s Finance Committee, had advocated during the committee’s budget review for using 60% of the city’s $137 million allocation from the federal government (which was recommended 50%) and using the city’s Budget Stabilization Reserve to close the gap. In making the motion to approve the budget, he acknowledged that there are many fiscal challenges ahead in the ensuing years.

"We are not projecting to restore the cuts fully that were made last year, even in the coming few years, without a stronger recovery than we’re projecting and or help that a business tax or another source," Burt said.

Some of his colleagues agreed that the brightening financial outlook warrants a reconsideration of the proposed cuts. In explaining their support for the budget, DuBois pointed to the “rapidly changing economic environment” since late April, while Stone observed that where the city is “ending up is far better than where we began.”

“It looked really bleak in the beginning and I think we made a lot of good, smart decisions,” Stone said. Others, however, cautioned that the budget is too optimistic. Both of Burt’s colleagues on the Finance Committee — Cormack and Filseth — have argued over the course of the review that the city is merely deferring difficult decisions by using one-time funding sources to close the gap.

Cormack suggested that the city’s revenues may not return to their pre-pandemic levels any time soon.

“While what the majority is going to do today is based on hope, and it doesn’t match my value of fiscal sustainability,” Cormack said.

Tanaka agreed. By avoiding cuts, Burt, he said, is “stealing from the future to make it look better for today.”

Tanaka also criticized the city’s shift to a lobbying model in which the city focuses on fewer bills and takes a more active approach to influence legislation on issues of interest. He also voted to support four bills relating to police accountability, SB 2, SB 16, AB 26 and AB 718. Yes: Unanimous

Wireless: The council upheld the decision of the planning commission to grant an appeal of the city’s approval of Verizon’s three wireless facilities near 853 California avenues to traffic until Sept. 30 and to end the city’s "state of emergency" on July 1.

Yes: Burt, Cormack, DuBois, Fleishet, Kou, Stone No: Tanaka

Burt, Cormack, DuBois, Fleishet, Kou, Stone Absent: Tanaka

City Council (June 22)

Street closures: The council voted to extend the closures of University and California avenues to traffic until Sept. 30 and to end the city’s “state of emergency” on July 1.

Yes: Burt, Cormack, Fleishet, Kou, Stone

A/V: Burt

The council directed the planning director to approve a feasibility study for a new site of a new city history museum. The council also directed staff to negotiate with the museum for “mutual long-term success of the project.”

Yes: Burt, Cormack, DuBois, Fleishet, Kou, Stone

City Council (June 26)

Budget: The council voted to approve the city budget and utility rates for fiscal year 2022/23. Yes: Burt, DuBois, Kou, Stone No: Cormack, Fleishet, Tanaka

Tesa: The council approved a deal with Tesa for installation of 19 superchargers in the city’s garage at Bryant Street and Lytton Avenue.

Yes: Unanimous

Impact fees: The council directed the planning director to approve a feasibility study of theerekordable housing impact fees for commercial developments.

Yes: Burt, Cormack, DuBois, Fleishet, Kou, Stone No: Tanaka

Roth Building: The council discussed a request from council members Burt, Kou and Stone about the rehabilitation of the Roth Building at 300 Homer Ave. to establish the Palo Alto Museum. The council directed staff to negotiate a lease with the Palo Alto Museum for the building.

The council voted 6-1 to move ahead with the lease but split 4-3, with Cormack, Fleishet and Tanaka dissenting, on a portion of the motion directing staff to continue to negotiate with the museum for “mutual long-term success of the project.”

Yes: Burt, Cormack, DuBois, Fleishet, Kou, Stone

No: Tanaka

Board of Education (June 22)

Settlements: The board voted to approve two settlement agreements regarding a special education student and employee.

Yes: Unanimous

New hires: The board voted to approve an addendum to LPA Architects for schematic design services for Hoover Elementary School in the amount of $224,342. Yes: Collins, Dauber, O’Donnell, No: Dauber, Collins

Budget: The board voted to adopt the 2021-22 budget proposal.

Yes: Unanimous

Bond: The board voted to authorize staff to enter into a contract with nsHodges to continue bond program management services for 2021-22.

Yes: Unanimous

A/V: The board voted to approve issuing an addendum to LPA Architects for design services to add air conditioning to several buildings at Greene Middle School in the amount of $339,950. Yes: Unanimous

Email Staff Writer Gennady Sheyner at gsheyner@paweekly.com.
Residents have been concerned about a rare Dawn redwood that is on USPS property and is imperiled due to lack of care.

Redwoods

(continued from page 5)

up 1% of Palo Alto's street tree population. There are 925 redwoods under the city's direct care, and about 1,500 private trees that the city prunes to keep utility lines clear. Many more redwoods are located on private property, and he said the city doesn't know about their health.

Looking toward a drier and hotter future, over time, the city's treescapes is likely to change inalterably. The drought and climate change likely “won’t wipe out but will diminish the population of redwoods to pre-development Palo Alto. There were very few (naturally occurring) redwoods; El Palo Alto is a notable exception,” Passmore said.

Palo Alto and the Bay Area have always been marginal places for redwoods to survive in, given that they didn’t occur naturally here. Seeds from the city’s namesake tree, El Palo Alto, likely floated from the Santa Cruz Mountains down San Francisquito Creek and deposited in the fertile soil bank. Fed and watered by nutrients and creek flow, the young tree was able to flourish and put down roots that took advantage of the moisture.

Today, a less robust El Palo Alto is still holding its own, Passmore said. But it now sports a mister at the top to help spray its leaves with water, a necessary man-made dew fall.

Adapted to coastal environments, the trees rely heavily on fog and dew fall for their water source, making them less resilient to climate change, Passmore said.

In a three-year study of redwood forests in coastal California, UC Berkeley biologist Todd Dawson found that redwoods capture tremendous quantities of moisture from fog.

For their own hydration, the redwoods used about 13% to 45% of the fog water for their annual transpiration, according to Dawson’s 1998 paper in the journal Oecologia.

With climate change and hotter and drier winds and less rainfall, the redwoods, particularly those living under stress conditions, will continue to fare more poorly, collectively solve.” However, he and Chow later agreed they were “optimistic.”

Chow said she and Austin had a meeting on Monday that included district leaders of San Mateo County, including Nancy McGee, county superintendent of schools, that led them to believe that the district will come to a resolution that will “alleviate some of the budget concerns for all of the districts involved.” Further details on that Monday meeting were not disclosed during Tuesday’s board meeting.

Drought conditions are putting stress on the more than 900 redwoods on Palo Alto streets, including these near the Caltrain tracks.

Schools

(continued from page 7)

regarding a claim on behalf of a special education student, whose name is being withheld due to standard confidentiality practices, as well as another settlement agreement of an undisclosed amount regarding an employee “discipline/dismissal/release” matter.

Both items were approved during a closed session.

The board also adopted the district’s 2021-22 budget, which was first discussed in a meeting on June 8.

In it, the district projects a $277.6 million in revenues. Though local property taxes are robust, with a $4.6 million increase over the previous fiscal year, the new budget represents a decrease of $17 million due to many one-time payments that were made to the district during the pandemic.

When looking purely at the recurring revenue coming into Palo Alto Unified, board member Todd Collins said previously in an interview that the district remains in “very solid financial conditions.”

Some board members on Tuesday, however, brought up concerns about what the financial implications might be if the neighboring Ravenswood City School District is designated as a basic aid school district, which means the district would be funded through local property taxes and receive only limited funding from the state. According to Chief Business Officer Carolyn Chow, “supplemental property taxes” is largely pushing the district into that category.

“There are some nuances to that,” Chow said, explaining that Ravenswood might be a case where the district “flips in” and out of the basic aid category.

Austin said he was surprised by the new designation and that it creates a “serious issue to
Expert craftsmanship and luxurious interiors brimming with high-end appointments highlight this spacious and inviting 3-bedroom, 2.5-bathroom townhome located in The Willows neighborhood of Menlo Park. A beautiful staircase and deck made of clear heart redwood welcomes you, while oak floors, fine millwork, and finishes of walnut, porcelain, and marble create a stylish feel from the moment you step inside. Over 1,400 square feet of interior space includes the living room with a 2000w color-changing LED fireplace, the granite kitchen with cherry cabinetry and stainless-steel appliances, and the dining room with backyard access. Comfortable accommodations include the master suite with a stunning en suite bathroom, and a bedroom that easily converts to an office and features its own fireplace. Plus, this home is an entertainer’s dream, with an attached garage that can double as an entertainment room, a private backyard with a lush lawn and large clear heart redwood deck, and incredible, color-changing LED lighting features throughout the home that add to the ambiance. Topping it all off is a location that puts you just moments to both downtown Menlo Park and Palo Alto, Stanford University, and US 101, with access to top-ranked Menlo Park schools (according to My School Locator Menlo Park, buyer to verify eligibility).

OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY & SUNDAY 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM
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Listed by Audrey Sun of the DeLeon Team, the #1 Team in Menlo Park
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2.5% Commission Paid to Buyer’s Agent • Waived if DeLeon Buyer’s Agent
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3719 HERON WAY
PALO ALTO

ECO-FRIENDLY URBAN TOWNHOME-STYLE LIVING

Stylish, sustainable living awaits in this contemporary, eco-friendly townhome that puts you close to everything Silicon Valley has to offer. High ceilings give the home a sense of openness, and tremendous natural light highlights beautifully refinished maple floors that extend throughout the gathering areas as well as the guest bedroom. Over 1,200 square feet of modern living space includes the sizable living room and dining room, plus a granite-appointed kitchen with stainless-steel appliances from Bosch and LG. The master suite with a private balcony highlights the home’s 3 bedrooms and 3 bathrooms, while the 2nd bedroom features an en suite bathroom for added comfort and convenience for friends and family alike. Adding to the appeal, this home features a laundry closet, and a 2-car garage with ample built-in storage. This green-point rated, award-winning complex is sure to appeal to eco-friendly sensibilities with energy efficient features including rooftop-mounted solar panels and a top-of-the-line Rinnai tankless water heater. Plus, this incredible location puts you close to major tech firms including Facebook and Google, convenient to beautiful parks such as Ramos and Mitchell, and a short drive to major commute routes including US 101 and Highway 85, with access to top-ranked Palo Alto schools (buyer to verify eligibility).

OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY & SUNDAY 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM

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For more information contact: Alexandra Wilbur, DRE #01926475 | 650.459.3888 | alex@deleonrealty.com
Managing Broker: Michael Repka, DRE #01854880 | www.deleonrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
Crystal D. Gamage
July 12, 1919 – February 18, 2021

Long time Palo Alto resident, Crystal Diete Gamage, passed away at her home on February 18, 2021 with her daughters by her side. She was 101 years and 7 months old. Her family is grateful that she had a long full life filled with family, many accomplishments and good friends in a community she loved.

The Palo Alto Weekly interviewed Crystal in 1996 and said “It is hard to find anything in Palo Alto that has not benefited from the involvement of Crystal Gamage in some way.” She was involved in a wide variety of groups and said “The things I did I liked” and the Weekly said “She became president of nearly every group she joined”. She also felt it was important to make sure you encouraged and mentored people “you were bringing along, making them enthusiastic, because you don’t want to be president forever”.

Crystal was born in Chicago, Illinois to Edith Beyer Diete and Ernest A. Diete on July 12, 1919. Her bother, Richard, was born the following year and they joined a large and supportive extended family in activities, including summers at their cottage on the Fox River. Crystal was an active youth doing extremely well in academics and in sports - especially swimming. She said her “parents encouraged her to do her best but there was no pressure to come in first but just to do her best.”

Crystal swam breaststroke for the Lake Shore Athletic Club and won many Chicago and Illinois titles. At the age of 16 she was selected as an alternate to the 1936 US Olympic Swim team. A few weeks later she received a telegram saying a breast-stroker was sick and she should leave for Berlin (where the 1936 Olympics were held) but she could not get there in time to compete as transportation was only by water and train!

Later that year she won the Illinois State Women’s fencing title which she attributed not so much to her fencing technique but to her willingness to be in a situation she developed thru her swimming.

She graduated first in her class at Chicago’s Senn High and was awarded a scholarship to Northwestern University where she was a member of Phi Beta Kappa, Mortar Board and graduated Summa Cum Laude. She was on the Northwestern swim team as well as president of the campus YMCA and the German Literature Club. She also trained as a Red Cross nurse’s aid and volunteered in local hospitals during the war years. Her years at Northwestern demonstrated a pattern of excellence and community involvement that she would follow through her life.

Crystal married Walt Gamage in 1943. In 1944 they headed to Washington State when they stopped in Palo Alto to visit a friend who was graduating from Stanford. Walt went to Project COOP offices and was introduced to the editor, Eleanor Cogswell, who hired him on the spot to be the sports editor - and Palo Alto became home.

Crystal immediately got involved in the community by volunteering at the Palo Alto Hospital (Hoover Pavilion), and joining the American Association of University Women (AAUW) and League of Women Voters (LWV) - she served as the President of each of those local groups and went on to become the Vice President of the state LWV and head of their policy committee on California water. Later she served on the Santa Clara Water Board. She also worked at the Hoover Institute for the group that trained Navy officers to manage Japan after the surrender.

By 1950 Crystal and Walt had three young daughters. The family was active in the First Presbyterian Church - Crystal taught Sunday school and played the piano for the children. Walt was on the building committee for the new church building and Crystal raised pledges for the patio. The church had a wonderful 100th Birthday for Crystal in 1999.

Crystal was active in her daughter’s activities including PTA, Brownies, Girl Scouts, and being a welcoming mother to her daughter’s friends. Hearing of her passing several of her daughter’s friends said she was like a second mother to them which was the ultimate compliment!

In the summer the family spent time at Lake Tahoe and Fallen Leaf Lake - where Crystal would swim across the lake.

Over the years Crystal expanded her community involvement to include the Palo Alto Historical Foundation- she served as President, she was one of the founders of Friends of the Palo Alto Library, she was the Charter member in 1972 of La Comida, the senior nutrition program, she served on the Avenidas Board (Senior Center), she served on the board of the Channing House for 20 years, was a director of the Museum of American Heritage, she served on the Santa Clara Grand Jury (the only woman at the time) and was a member of the United Way Board for 10 years, coordinating the corporate giving program as a volunteer. She was a board member of Foothills-De Anza Community College Foundation, and a member of the Flood Control Advisory Board of the Santa Clara Valley District. She once said that she liked solving problems and that is why she would get involved with an organization. She would not stay on a Board if she did not think she could be helpful.

When her daughters were in high school, she had several high profile jobs. One of her favorites was director of Downtown Palo Alto from 1969-1976. She especially liked working with the merchants and on the urban design project that planted Sycamore trees on University Avenue. She said they brought a touch of the ‘Champs Elysees’ to University Avenue. The trees are still there!

She also held the United Way from 1976-1989 as director of allocations and special gifts for the United Way. When she retired the United Way director said they were replacing her with 3 people!

Crystal enjoyed supporting Stanford Athletics by awarding the Walter Gamage Scholarship each year. She appreciated the dedication of Stanford athletes to their sport as well as to their studies - as she did at Northwestern. She followed a variety of sports and could tell many back stories because of her husband’s long involvement with sports in California.

Her friends were far and wide…with so many in Palo Alto over the years. She enjoyed playing bridge for the ‘Life’ group, Gamble Gardens and the Palo Alto Garden Club. Zoom connected her to some groups but she missed the personal connections. She still followed the Palo Alto City Council!

She had friends of all ages as that is how she lived her life…engaging with people because of who they were, not about their age, race or religion. She loved her church and being involved in the community.

Her accomplishments were vast but her love of her family was always the most important to her. Her family will tell you how important her support and encouragement was to them. She is survived by her three daughters and their spouses, Crystal Gray, Carol and Phil Ferris and Cynthia Gamage. She was blessed with 4 grandchildren, Chris Gray (Susan Gray), Heath Ferris Basso (Greg Basso), Tracey Ferris Morgan (Kevin Morgan), and Brian Ferris (Audra Ferris). In addition, she is survived by 8 great grandchildren 14 years old and younger – Jack and Travis Gray, Abby and Emerson Morgan, Grace and Michael Basso and Walter and Duke Ferris.

When she reached 100 years she told one of her daughters “I do not feel young nor do I feel old. I feel like a human of indeterminate age and that feels freeing”.

She was loved by many and will be missed by all.

The family will hold a remembrance in the fall when all our great grandchildren have been vaccinated. Please email cynthia.gamage@gmail.com if you would like to be notified.

If you would like to remember Crystal consider supporting:
- La Comida www.lacomida.org
- Garden Club of Palo Alto www.gardenclubofpaloalto.org
- Gamble Garden www.gamblegarden.org
- Palo Alto Historical Association www.palhist.org
- Walter Gamage Scholarship Fund- Stanford University. (650) 725-4360

PAID OBITUARY
Peter Quarré
July 10, 1930 – June 9, 2021

Peter Quarré passed away on June 9th after a long battle with Parkinson’s disease. Our Dad was a friendly, happy, fun-loving guy. We miss him tremendously.

Peter was born in San Francisco, CA to Ox and Catherine Quarré and was the fourth of five children. He was reared in San Francisco and went to Catholic school until just before high school when his family moved to Paicines, CA. The Quarré ranch grew walnut trees and raised livestock.

Peter enlisted in the US Air Force in 1949. He was a staff sergeant and worked as an aircraft mechanic and flight mechanic on the C-54 aircraft.

Shortly after Pete completed his Air Force commitment, his cousin arranged a date for him with her beautiful fellow grade school teacher, Rita Bettini. The attraction was instant.

Pet and Rita were married in 1955 at the Church of the Nativity in Menlo Park, CA and soon had three sons, Richard, Bill, and Steve. They raised their children in Menlo Park with extended family nearby. The Quarré home was always celebrating something and filled with grandparents, aunts, uncles, cousins and neighbors. Pete was happily involved with the boys, helping coach Little League baseball, fishing and camping trips, and leading Cub Scout outings.

During his salad years, Pete worked at his brother-in-law’s gas station before beginning a 20-year career as an aircraft mechanic for United Airlines at their maintenance base in San Francisco. He developed an interest in all forms of transportation, including airplanes, trains, trucks, farm equipment, ships, motorcycles, and bicycles. Later, he would instill his interest in flying in his eldest son and grandson. This photo of Pete was taken on a flight he enjoyed with his grandson, Ross Quarré. Though Pete enjoyed all things mechanical, his true passion was sailing and boating.

While his boys were growing up, Pete acquired his Coast Guard captain’s license. He crewed numerous charters, including two lengthy trips. On one trip, he sailed a large sailboat from Hawaii to the West Coast, and on another outing, took a motor yacht through the Panama Canal.

In 1990, both Pete and Rita retired and moved to Washington State to be closer to their sons’ families. They settled in Kirkland where both made friends and found volunteer opportunities. Pete offered years of service to the Kirkland Police Department and Holy Family Parish. Pete and Rita traveled often and enjoyed trips to Alaska, Mexico, Europe, Australia, Central America, the East Coast, and many road trips across the United States. They especially loved the summer months spent boating and vacationing with the grandkids on beautiful Lake Chelan.

Pete’s greatest dedication in life was to his family: his beloved wife, Rita, and their two sons, Richard (Connie), Steve (Karen), Bill (Martin Yonke), grandchildren Jacqueline Quarré (Paul Thompson), Ross Quarré (Kristina), Annette Quarré, Matt Quarré, and great grandson Owen Quarré Thompson.

Dad, Grandpa, Great Grandpa will be remembered for the way he loved life and had fun...lessons we will cherish.

www.PaloAltoOnline.com • Palo Alto Weekly • June 25, 2021 • Page 17
In response to ‘Divided City Council approves budget, avoids service cuts’
Posted June 22 at 9:23 a.m. by Phil Carmody, a resident of Barron Park:
“The libraries at Rinconada and Mitchell Park should be back at 5 p.m. to play an hour of the drum band, giving an appropriate lunchtime music for the restaurant but that the drum band wasn’t hired to play. La Boheme was almost deserted and the manager, Marie, told us that the band had started up noon. She said it had come from the city of Palo Alto, although no one consulted her. She also said that she had already hired a French musician to play appropriate lunchtime music for the restaurant but that the drum band made it impossible, and the musicians had left after enduring an hour of the drum band, they stopped but announced they would be back at 5 p.m. to play for the dinner crowd.

Don’t you think that after the infamous tree affair, city hall would have learned that consultation with the local merchants on California Avenue is essential before making decisions about the street? We do not know who chose this band but wonder at the decision and politely request that it not happen again during lunch on a weekend.”

Brigid Barton and Rob Robinson
Webster Street, Palo Alto

In response to ‘Toll collection for U.S. Highway 101 express lanes in San Mateo County to start at year’s end’
Posted June 21 at 11:02 a.m. by Andrew Boone, a resident of our community:
“Widening Highway 101 from eight to 10 lanes in new toll lanes in San Mateo County will only make car traffic congestion worse, not better. Every single highway expansion that has ever been constructed in the Bay Area (and almost everywhere in the world except places with drastic population declines such as Detroit) has had the same result — more car traffic and more congestion. The reason is induced demand — if you build more highway lanes, more people will drive on the highway and more often — thus negating the small increase in traffic capacity the new lanes provide. This has been understood by transportation experts for nearly 100 years, ever since the first highways were constructed in New York by Robert Moses.

Watch and see how (Belmont Mayor) Charles Stone and (San Mateo County Supervisor) Dave Pine have wasted $600 million of our taxpayer dollars with these new ‘Lexus’ lanes. That’s a lot of public money that could have been invested in transit improvements and safety fixes to enable more people to walk and bike. For that much money, we could’ve built level boarding platforms at every Caltrain station, parks and recreation service and more. Instead it was wasted on generating more car traffic, more air pollution, more car crashes and more serious injuries and deaths. This was the most incompetent transportation decision made in San Mateo County in over a decade. Remember that when these career politicians run for higher office, they would do even more damage if elected.”

In response to ‘Opinion: Robust connectivity is critical to Palo Alto’s future’
Posted June 19 at 5:30 p.m. by Laurian Decker, a resident of Stanford:
“Though 5G coverage has yet to be fully expanded (with the possible exception of the T Mobile network), it is the wave of the future and Palo Alto should allow as many 5G cell towers as it can reasonably accommodate. The tin hat carcinogenic theorists and cell tower noise sensitive can either go back to using a landline or a payphone (if one is even accessible).

Just don’t hold up technological progress.”

In response to ‘Shifting politics boost Palo Alto’s quest for a history museum’
Posted June 19 at 9:54 a.m. by Ariel Fleming, a resident of Crescent Park:
“Palo Alto would not have become a noteworthy town had Leland Stanford built his university elsewhere. There would have been no Stanford University (Electrical Engineering) Department and thus no former graduates like Hewlett and Packard starting a company in a Palo Alto garage. And subsequently no future Silicon Valley as many other early electronics pioneers and entrepreneurs also graduated from the Stanford EE program.

And there would have been no Dr. Shumway performing revolutionary heart transplants because there probably wouldn’t have been a Stanford Hospital and various research facilities.

The full credit for Palo Alto’s emergence belongs to Stanford University.”

I’ve also noticed that the bicycle-pedestrian underpass is full of bikes and pedestrians at all times of the day and night. This is astounding. In my half century of residence, it’s never been like this. I think it’s because of California Avenue being closed to cars. All the bustling of people and activity and humanity out on the streets is, hands down, the best thing that has happened in Palo Alto in my long, long residence here.

With the new, hummingorous parking garage on Sherman Avenue, stopping and shopping, (even with a car) should be easy. Add some electric rental scooters and you will have, oh my God, dare I say it, a good quality of life.”

Deborah Golden Birch Street, Palo Alto

Letters

Merchants should weigh in on music
Editor,
My husband and I recently went to California Avenue to enjoy a meal at La Boheme as we do often. When we came out of the underpass to walk up to the restaurant, we were met with the sound of a drum band set up directly across from the restaurant in the middle of the day while people were eating lunch at both our restaurant and Joanie’s Cafe next door.

The noise was very loud, and talking through it was impossible. La Boheme was almost deserted and the manager, Marie, told us that the band had started up noon. She said it had come from the city of Palo Alto, although no one consulted her. She also said that she had already hired a French musician to play appropriate lunchtime music for the restaurant but that the drum band made it impossible, and the musicians had left after enduring an hour of the drum band, they stopped but announced they would be back at 5 p.m. to play for the dinner crowd.

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Deborah Golden Birch Street, Palo Alto
Showcasing the perfect blend of contemporary and traditional architectural elements, this stylishly remodeled three bedroom, one bathroom cottage also offers a fully equipped separate studio with a bathroom and kitchenette. Light and bright with a crisp white palette, open floor plan and designer finishes throughout, this home and studio have been completely transformed for the way we live, work and entertain today. The setting is divine with thoughtfully designed drought tolerant gardens that provide beauty and ease of maintenance, mature perimeter trees and modern fencing for privacy, artificial turf for fun-filled play, planted herbs and veggies for the casual chef and a terrace for outdoor entertaining. Located in the popular Willows neighborhood, this inviting retreat is in close proximity to excellent Menlo Park schools, convenient commute routes, the shops and restaurants of downtown Palo Alto, Stanford University, leading tech companies like Facebook, and Zoe’s Cafe, a neighborhood favorite, just down the street!

385 McKendry.com
A sense of belonging

Short Story Contest authors reflect on unconventional bonds forged in unexpected moments

Whether or not influenced by the abrupt and widespread isolation people around the globe experienced during the pandemic over the past year, the first-place winners of this year’s Palo Alto Weekly Short Story Contest all submitted pieces that examine the need for people to feel connected to the world around them.

Each of the writers draws upon their personal experiences and those of people around them to weave together stories that uncover the things around us — people, nature and objects — that provide comfort and meaning in our lives.

From the two siblings accustomed to bouncing from home to home who finally find a sense of belonging when a colony of bees nest outside their bedroom to the socially awkward high school loners who form unexpected friendships after an otherworldly conductor hijacks their train to the close-knit group of friends who must learn how to move forward following the untimely death of one of their own, each story sheds light on the unconventional bonds people can forge in unlikely places during unexpected moments.

The Palo Alto Weekly thanks all of the writers who submitted stories for this year’s contest; the judges for the Adult and Young Adult categories, Tom Parker, Meg Waite Clayton and Debbie Duncan; and the Teen category judges Caryn Huberman Yacowitz, Marjorie Sayer and Nancy Etchemendy.

Lastly, the Weekly extends its gratitude to the contest co-sponsors, Bell’s Books of Palo Alto, Kepler’s Books of Menlo Park and Linden Tree Children’s Books of Los Altos.

Winners

Young Adult: 15-17 years old
First place: “Not The Unusual,” by Claire Xu
Second place: “Sweaty Hands,” by Skyler Hedblom
Third place: “Memento,” by Jessica Wang

Teen: 12-14 years old
First place: “The train to Nowhere,” by Aaminah Memon
Second place: “Flying,” by Eime Youn
Third place: “Too Far,” by Elise Chang

Adult: 18 years and older
First place: “The First Time,” by Inna Tsrilin
Second place: “No Place Like Home,” by Sylvia E. Halloran
Third place: “Stones,” by Cary Kelly

The stories and biographies of all winners and honorable mentions can be found at PaloAltoOnline.com/short_story.

Judges for the Adult and Young Adult categories

Meg Waite Clayton

Meg Waite Clayton, a New York Times and USA Today bestseller and book club favorite, is the author of seven novels. Her most recent, the Jewish Book Award finalist “The Last Train to London,” is a national bestseller in the U.S., Canada and the Netherlands, and is published or forthcoming in 19 languages. Her screenplay for the novel was chosen for the prestigious Meryl Streep- and Nicole Kidman-sponsored The Writers Lab.

Debbie Duncan

Debbie Duncan has been reviewing children’s books for the Palo Alto Weekly since 1997. She is the author of the Benjamin Franklin Award-winning picture book “When Molly Was in the Hospital,” as well as a book for parents, “Joy of Reading.” She also contributes to the Perspectives series of commentaries on KQED radio. When she isn’t reading books to find the best share with Weekly readers, she’s writing her own middle-grade novel or hanging out on Twitter, @debbieduncan.

Nancy Etchemendy

Nancy Etchemendy’s novels, short fiction and poetry have appeared regularly for the past 40 years, both in the U.S. and abroad. Her work has earned a number of awards, including three Bram Stoker Awards and an International Horror Guild Award. “Cat in Glass and Other Tales of the Unnatural,” her collection of short dark fantasy, was named an ALA Best Book for Young Adults. Her most recent work is “Odd Company,” an online publication about compassion and conversations between people who disagree (free to the public at nancyetchemendy.substack.com). Etchemendy lives and works in Palo Alto.

Marjorie Sayer

Marjorie Sayer writes books with a multicultural and interdisciplinary perspective. Her middle-grade novel, “The Girl Mechanic of Wanzhou,” is a winner of the Scholastic Asia Book Award. Her nonfiction for adults has appeared in O’Reilly Media, and her recreational math books have been used in clubs throughout the country. She enjoys bicycle travel, her family and the friendship of her cats. She blogs about her interests at marjoriesayer.com.

Caryn Huberman Yacowitz

Caryn Huberman Yacowitz is the author of children’s books and plays. Her picture books are widely anthologized and included in the Junior Great Books and Junior Library Guild Selections. “Baby Moses in a Basket” (Candlewick Press) is her newest picture book. During the pandemic, she’s been recording her misadventures in Hebrew school and caring for a Norwegian Forest Cat. For more information, go to carynyacowitz.com.

Short Story Contest winners

Thank You

The following businesses co-sponsored the 35th Annual Short Story Contest, providing prizes for winners in all categories.

Cover Story
The black leather boot was poking Sasha's side painfully as the gray morning settled in, but Miron, pressing tightly to his body. Its sole was full of dry mud, and pieces of it chipped off and crumbled all over the bed sheets, speckling the whites with gray and brown. The police had brought back the boots and clothes yesterday afternoon. Pusheka T-shirt, old acid-wash jeans, mismatched socks, a gray one with navy stripes and a brown one with a hole on the big toe, and the boots. These boots were a cause for envy among all Sasha's classmates. Dr. Martens, a generous gift to Miron from his cousin who immigrated to the U.S. two years ago. Miron swore he will get Sasha a pair when he finally goes to visit his cousin in New York. Now, one of the boots lay on the floor by the wall, a useless piece of shaped leather, and the other was poking Sasha's ribs, as if trying to kick him in the heart.

Yesterday morning Sasha woke up at 5am. He stayed quietly in his bed, not to disturb Mom in the adjacent room, and thought about how the day was going to unfold. It was going to be a slow day at school, only math, Russian and gym, and a group of them had been planning to ditch after the first double period. Miron and the others were going to hang out by the Nameless Lake and watch the sun rise. Sasha brought his backpacks over and the old, rusty fence. He followed, Sasha, smiling and then threw her look. Lenka slowly walked toward her slim body and a knitted hat with uneven fringe and an edgy body, filling his body, almost painfully. Her lips, a little dry from the warmth of the sun generously laid its rays on their faces, escaping their wall-papered apartments for coveted gravel beach. The lake was calm like a dark mirror, and the sun generously laid its rays on their upturned faces and bare feet. The lake was calm like a dark mirror, and she cradled her small breasts against her lean, smooth body, covering her mouth with hers.

They had finally reached the lake and were now sitting on an old checked blanket by the water. In the summers, the narrow gravel beach was packed with gray-faced people, escaping their wall-papered apartments for coveted sunlight. That autumn morning, the lake was calm like a dark mirror, reflecting the sun. Miron remain obliviously waiting to be told. I finally me deeply when I heard it fascinating me ever since ... waiting to be told. I finally engaged with their friends. And the tragedy that results is convincingly, gorgeously and movingly delivered. No pair of Dr. Martens will ever look the same.

— Debbie Duncan, Meg Waite Clayton, Tom Parker

Why so dark?” Miron smiled, “Play ‘Aluminum Cucumbers’ in stead.” He was lying on his back, cigarette in his mouth, his hand holding Galina’s. She snorted and exclaimed “I have one!” then started on an old folk ballad about a girl falling in love but having no courage to tell her beloved. They all sang it a capella for a while, their voices rising to the tops of the tall pines and then broke down in manicual laughter, rolling on top of each other. Miron fished out (continued on page 29)

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Stylish living awaits in this bright, updated, 4-bedroom, 2-bathroom home that enjoys a convenient location close to top tech companies, great shopping and dining options, beautiful parks, and eco-friendly public transportation. The gated courtyard leads to the front door, and inside, hardwood floors extend throughout the traditional floorplan of over 1,200 square feet. A beamed, paneled ceiling crowns the living room with a centerpiece fireplace, the kitchen features new quartz countertops and a suite of new stainless-steel appliances, and the dining area includes outdoor access. Comfortable bedrooms are highlighted by the master suite with a private outdoor entrance and renovated bathroom, while the backyard offers great space for outdoor enjoyment with patio space and a newly planted lawn. Plus, this home features an attached 2-car garage. Just moments to Google, this home is also convenient to numerous parks including Monta Loma and Rengstorff, and The Village at San Antonio Center is approximately 1 mile away. And for Bay Area commuting, this location is just a short trip to Caltrain, and it provides easy access to Highway 85 and US 101.

OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY & SUNDAY 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM

www.2523Betlo.com
Offered at $1,888,000

Listed by Audrey Sun of the DeLeon Team, the #1 Team in Santa Clara County

Data from BrokerMetrics® based on MLS sales from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, in Santa Clara County, residential properties, with no off-MLS sales included in the rankings.

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

For more information contact: Audrey Sun, DRE #01933274 電話: 650.785.5822 我們精通國語和粵語
Managing Broker: Michael Repka, DRE #01854880 | www.deleonrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
EXPANSIVE AND STYLISH ON OVER AN ACRE

The peaceful, verdant backdrop of Los Altos Hills provides the perfect setting for this luxurious home set on a lot of over an acre. Introduced by a gated paver driveway, this home welcomes you with a striking brick portico, while luxurious appointments including marble finishes, inlaid hardwood floors, and fine millwork craft a stylish ambiance from the moment you step inside. Over 3,900 square feet of interior space includes highlights such as 5 total fireplaces, expansive formal rooms scaled for entertaining, the family room with a wet bar and backyard access, and the granite-appointed chef’s kitchen with appliances from Viking and Sub-Zero. The home’s 4 bedrooms and 5 total bathrooms feature a privately located guest suite, plus the incredible master suite with a spa-like bathroom. The entertainment options continue outdoors, where the backyard offers ample patio space, colorful plantings, and a sparkling pool and spa. And for added convenience, this home features a 3-car garage along with plenty of parking for guests. Moments to numerous nature preserves, this home is also a short trip from downtown Palo Alto, Stanford University, and downtown Los Altos, and provides convenient access to Interstate 280 for Bay Area commuting. Plus, this home is served by acclaimed Palo Alto schools (buyer to verify eligibility).

OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY & SUNDAY 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM

www.14100BerryHill.com

Offered at $4,788,000

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

Data from BrokerMetrics® based on MLS sales from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, in Los Altos Hills, residential properties, with no off-MLS sales included in the rankings.

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

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

中文諮詢請聯繫Audrey Sun, DRE #01933274 電話: 650.785.5822 | www.deleonrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
3732 LAGUNA AVENUE
PALO ALTO

BRIGHT AND SPACIOUS IN BARRON PARK

On an expansive corner cul-de-sac lot in the sought-after neighborhood of Barron Park rests this light-filled 4-bedroom, 3-bathroom home of almost 2,200 square feet. Gleaming hardwood floors extend throughout the traditional floorplan highlighted by the living room with a centerpiece brick fireplace, the formal dining room catered from the eat-in kitchen, and the inviting family room with a fireplace all its own. The master suite provides a private retreat, while the home’s additional bedrooms all offer comfort and convenience for friends and family alike. Outside, the sizable courtyard patio offers great space for entertaining, while colorful plantings and fruit trees populate the grounds. Plus, this home includes a large detached garage that can be used as a fitness center, music room, or office space to work from home in style. Just down the street from beautiful Bol Park, this home takes full advantage of Barron Park’s peaceful, private feel while still being a short drive away from downtown Palo Alto and Stanford University. And, acclaimed Palo Alto schools Barron Park Elementary, Fletcher Middle, and Gunn High are all just minutes away (buyer to verify eligibility).

OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY & SUNDAY 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM
www.3732Laguna.com
Offered at $3,188,000

Listed by Alexandra Wilbur of the DeLeon Team, the #1 Team in Palo Alto

Data from BrokerMatrix® based on MLS sales from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, in Palo Alto, residential properties, with no off-MLS sales included in the rankings.

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

For more information contact: Alexandra Wilbur, DRE #01926475 | 650.459.3888 | alex@deleorealty.com
Managing Broker: Michael Repka, DRE #01854880 | www.deleorealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
170 HAWTHORNE AVENUE
PALO ALTO

This beautifully renovated Craftsman home offers modern, stylish living space and an incredible location just blocks from the exciting amenities of University Avenue. Handsomely appointed with rich hardwood floors and impeccable millwork, the traditional floor plan offers plenty of space for entertaining and everyday living, beginning with the expansive living room centered by a fireplace, and continuing into the dining room that opens to the chef’s kitchen with stainless-steel appliances and a breakfast bar. The lower level offers office space allowing you to work from home in style, as well as a convenient kitchenette. Friends and family alike will find comfortable accommodations in the home’s 4 bedrooms, including the spacious master suite with a private entrance, while the detached studio includes a kitchen, bathroom, and laundry. Just moments to chic downtown eateries and boutiques, this home is also close to beautiful parks, as well as Stanford University, Stanford Shopping Center, Caltrain, and acclaimed schools Addison Elementary, Greene Middle, and Palo Alto High.

OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY & SUNDAY 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM
www.170HawthorneAve.com
Offered at $3,488,000

Listed by Michael Repka and Alex Wilbur of the DeLeon Team, the #1 Team in Palo Alto

Data from BrokerMatrix® based on MLS sales from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, in Palo Alto, residential properties, with no off-MLS sales included in the rankings.

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I started with bodies in the bathroom. Then, the humming began. Mags noticed it first, as she was the only one still fully awake. She sat at the desk with her chin propped up on her hand, reading the open pages of “What It?: Serious Scientific Answers to Absurd Hypothetical Questions” while Oleander lay on the bed with a borrowed coding textbook, about to nod off. The heaviness of summertime quarantining was upon them. It spilled in from the windowsill of their new apartment and pooled around their bodies, so thick and viscous that even lifting an arm became an arduous task. Oleander could feel the weight on his eyelids, and the book fell slack in his hands. He felt that he could finally rest without worrying, now that they had a place to stay.

“Ohlie!”

Mag’s tone was urgent. It was the same voice that his parents used when Oleander had gotten lost in the middle of night before the landlord came the next morning to demand the rent.

“Yeah? Did something happen?”

“Do you hear that?” asked Mags. The world swam in front of him as he sat up, blood suddenly rushing out of his head. He tried to listen for it.

“Hear what?”

“That noise,” she said. “Sounds like Dad’s old leaf blower.”

As he sat up Oleander discerned it: a low, buzzing noise that seemed to rise and fall as it circled through crescents and decrescendos. Its spontaneity indeed reminded him of the leaf blower his father had bought at a local flea market, back when they were in their rental home in Oakland. Although the machine was quite old and practi-cally falling apart, and it took several tugs on the cord just to get it to splutter to life, his father would still go out whenever he could to clean the leaves from the falling lawn in front of their house.

“You and Mags should have somewhere nice to play,” he’d said as he stood hunched over, prepar- ing to pull the cord again, “and it’s the least I can do to make our house look nice.” Afterward, he sat on the porch and watched as the bees,Magnus Household gathered onto Mag’s shirt and he only stood there silently as the bees were drawn to. Oleander had fallen tree branches in their hands, pretending the chain link fence that surrounded them was a castle wall, and knights ordered to protect it. “Be-gone!” they shouted, brandishing their makeshift swords. “This is our home!”

It almost seemed to Oleander later on that they weren’t just playing, but were also trying to fend off the invisible enemy — unemployment and economic downturns — that would drag them away each time they settled into a new place.

They were even more adamant in protecting that Oakland home, as it was the only house they’d ever lived in. In the past, they would just move from apartment to apartment, finding remnants of previous tenant’s lives stained into the carpet or etched on the wall, or left in forgotten tubes of toothpaste in the bath-room drawers. Nothing had ever felt like theirs until they rented that house, but even that was temporary.

“It’s definitely falling from out-side,” Oleander said, looking past his mother at the door of their second-story balcony. In the sunlight that spilled in from underneath the fake curtain, he could see specks of shadows flickering wildly on the floor. The humming was louder than ever.

Mags nodded as they crossed the room to open the balcony door curtain. She gripped the curtain and yanked it back.

With wide lips, they watched as black dots flitted dizzyingly across their faces.

“Oh, wow, look at that,” she said breathlessly. “I’ve never seen so many in the city. What are they do-ing here?”

Oleander sighed. “I don’t know. But we’re going to have to tell Mom and Dad about this."

“We do have to?"

Mag’s brows knitted together. “They’re not harming us,” she said. “Maybe they’re not right now.”

Oleander replied, closing the cur-tain, “but if we keep them here, they’ll make themselves at home inside some vent. Then our AC will be ruined. We actually have one for once so I don’t want to stop working!”

“I don’t either,” Mags replied, “but they just want a place to live. We’d understand that, right?”

“Yeah,” Oleander said quietly, “but they don’t belong in the city either.”

“They don’t have anything bet-ter,” Mags retorted. “Don’t you remember when we were living in Oakland? And the old little house that we loved, with the fence around it and the yard? Then the landlord hooted us out after eight months because we couldn’t pay. Do you really want to do that to them?”

She gestured toward the door. When Oleander didn’t respond, she turned and reached for the door handle of the balcony.

“What are you doing?”

“Going out,” she replied nonchalantly.

“With a million of those? Are you crazy?”

“There aren’t that many,” she said, “but if I get stung, I’ll come back in.”

He knew he couldn’t stop her. Mags was always the first to report the rodent infestation by holding a live mouse in her hand, or a cock-roach problem by coming into the living room covered in them and laughing. “They’re Madagascar hissing cockroaches,” she had giggled, almost proudly, as their mother frantically tugged her outside to smack off each bug one by one. There was simply no way to tell Mags what to do and what not to do. Once she was set on doing something, she did it, no matter how many times Oleander pleaded otherwise.

Now, he watched as Mags shut the door and gazed up at the wall of fuzzy bodies, gold and brown stripes shimmering under glassy wings as they slipped into the hole in the side of their apart- ment. A few flew around her, but she didn’t seem to mind it at all, not even when one settled onto her outstretched palms, or when more landed on her bright yellow shirt. It was as if her fingers were the curled petals of a flower, and Mags a strange-looking plant, that the bees were drawn to. Oleander wanted to call out “We don’t even know if you’re allergic yet!” But, he only stood there silently as the bees gathered onto Mags’ shirt and hung in clumps from her hair, and she smiled when they realized she in fact was not a flower and began to fly off.

After she’d gently nudged the remaining few from her hand, she came inside.

“Somewhere, you didn’t get stung,” Oleander said, shutting the door behind her. “I thought they’d be mad at us for the dead ones in the bathroom.”

“The bees that came in from the vent, got stuck, and then died because they couldn’t get out!”

“Yeah. He let out the breath he’d been holding. “Can bees be mad though? Do they have feelings?”

“Either way,” said Mags, “we can’t let Mom and Dad find out. They’re our secret.”

For the rest of the week, the bees were on their minds constantly. They kept the curtains open dur-ing the day but closed them im-mEDIATELY when their parents got home. But as long as the bees were there, and they could hear the faint buzzing in the background, they felt comforted.

The morning a week after their discovery, someone knocked at the door. Oleander awoke to the sound of voices down the hall. It wasn’t an unusual thing to wake up to. It was either his parents arguing over the bills they had to pay or a landlord giving them their last warning and rent. He got up quickly, trying not to wake Mags, and made his way to the living room, where his mother was standing in the doorway talk-ing to a man dressed in a white bee-keeper suit.

“What’s going on?”

His mother sighed. “We have a bee infestation.”

Oleander feigned a look of surprise.

“The landlord called people over to remove them,” she continued. “They’re here now to do that.”

Mags emerged from the bed-room. When she saw the beekeep-er, her face went white.

They watched as the beekeeper walked across their living room, his suit making a swishing sound and his equipment draging behind him. He went onto the balcony to set things up, and before long, they could see him using his equipment to suck the bees into a container.

“I feel sick,” Mags whispered.

“Why?”

“It feels like that time we went to Grandma’s place, and were waiting in the car while Dad talked to her. Do you remember the look on her face?”

(continued on page 29)
‘The Train to Nowhere’

By Aaminah Memon

M eg, Andrea, Riley and Zeke wake up in a train compartment — they were never sleeping, yet their eyes flicker open, and they all stumble groggily to their feet as if just woken from a deep slumber. They are on a train — but it isn’t the right train.

This train is wide and spacious, open and eerie. Silence creeps through the room and fills it like a living being. The stained-glass windows reveal a dark purple sky splattered with glowing white stars. Which doesn’t make any sense, Zeke notes, given just a second ago, it was very clearly day. But the sky above them is very obviously a night sky.

“Where are we?” Meg asks no one in particular.

And isn’t that the question? The question none of them know the answer to.

Before they had awoken, Meg was flipping through a book while seated on the train — the right train, not the wrong one she stands in now.

Zeke had been walking down the train’s crowded hallways. Andrea had just stepped onto the train.

Riley had been running toward the train, scrambling, having forgotten to set her alarm — again. Riley’s mother hadn’t understood how she could be so stupid — Riley didn’t understand, either.

No one answers Meg’s question. None of them can. Meg waits. She waits some more. She sighs.

“Who are you?”

“I’m Zeke.” Zeke says, giving her a small, shy wave. Zeke doesn’t talk to girls often. He doesn’t talk to anyone. No one ever wants to talk to him.

“I’m Andrea.” Andrea says, running a hand through dark black hair. Andrea doesn’t know who these people are, and already, she can feel their eyes on her, watching her, judging her. Andrea hates it. She wants to go to school and get the day over with so she can run back home and hide under the covers.

“I’m Meg.” Andrea asks.

“Just Meg?” Meg replies. Because that’s all she is. Just Meg. She’s nothing special. Neither is Riley.

Or Andrea. Or Zeke.

None of them are special. Meg looks toward Riley.

“Well?” She says. “What’s your name?” There’s a pause.

“Riley,” she says, snap-pish, thoroughly done with this conversation and this situation. Riley doesn’t like other people. Other people don’t like her. It’s a state of mutual dislike. Riley ignores everyone else, and everyone else ignores her.

She likes it that way. She doesn’t like Meg. Or Zeke. Or Andrea. She doesn’t know any of them. That doesn’t matter.

She dislikes them first — she hates them before they can hate her. Everyone hates her.

“I was just asking,” Meg says quietly. Now Riley feels bad. She ignores the feeling, like everything else.

Silence, once again, fills the compartment as if summoned. Riley stares at Meg’s confused face. Riley sighs.

She starts to apologize.

Distorted screeches alongside modified screams, sounds that are completely and utterly inhuman, echo through the train compartment, cutting Riley off.

Riley, Meg, Andrea, and Zeke all turn.

In the doorway stands a creature that isn’t an animal but isn’t entirely human either. Cat-like eyes with snakish pupils glow. The creature sucks in light like a syphon, leaving only darkness that hangs off its body like an ill-fitted coat. Occasionally, it flickers, merging with the air and disappearing in a split second, returning just as fast.

It resembles a human but doesn’t, simultaneously looking humanoid and as far from human as it could possibly be. Riley is the first to muster up enough courage to speak.

“What the hell are you?”

The thing stares, odd-shaped eyes glowing yellow. “You may call me the Conductor,” it says eventually.

“What are you?” It blinks.

“I am Eldritch,” it says simply. “Eldritch.”

The thing smiles, flashing sharp fangs and wicked canines — a smile so large it doesn’t quite fit on its face. “Eldritch.” It repeats. “Otherworldly.”

Zeke is the second to speak.

“Where are we?”

The Conductor tilts its head.

“You are on a train,” it says.

“The train to Nowhere.”

“Where are we?”

The Conductor responds. “There is always a destination at the end of the road.”

“If we’re going somewhere,” Meg says. “Why is the train called the train to Nowhere?”

“It is just a name,” the Conductor says. “A title. It holds no meaning.”

“So we’re going nowhere?” Meg scoffs. “That’s not possible.”

“You are never going nowhere,” the Conductor responds. “There is always a destination at the end of the road.”

“If we’re going somewhere,” Riley says. “Why is the train called the train to Nowhere?”

“It is just a name,” the Conductor repeats. “It holds no meaning.”

“Where are you taking us?” Andrea demands. “Where are we going?”

The Conductor hums an eerie, haunting melody that lasts a split second. “You are going to where you need to be.”

The Conductor flickered once, twice, and then it was gone. Silence.

“This... this might seem weird, but I don’t feel scared,” Zeke says after a while. An aura of quiet had been seeping through the windows and across the train compartment. As Zeke spoke, he cut through the silence with a sharp knife.

“No, you’re right,” Andrea replies. “I would normally be freaking out around now. But I just feel calm. Way too calm.”

“Calmmer than I’ve been in a while,” Meg agrees. “Despite whatever Eldritch abomination that thing was, everything about this situation feels oddly... peaceful.”

“Do you think it messed with our emotions?” Riley asks.

Zeke shrugs. “I’m not sure.”

And that’s true. All Zeke knows is that his emotions feel muted, a calm serenity draping itself over him. No matter how hard he tries, he can’t feel any anger, or sadness, or anything remotely negative. Even after summoning up his worst memories, he remains calm. Composed. Happy.

It’s odd.

Zeke isn’t sure if he loves it or hates it.

(continued on page 28)
Train to Nowhere (continued from page 27)

Meg speaks up. “Where do you think we’re going?”

“That — that thing said we were going where we needed to be,” Riley reminds her.

“And what’s that supposed to mean?” Andrea asks.

“I don’t know,” Riley admits. Meg doesn’t like not knowing. Meg knows things. She always knows, even if she’s not sure of every-thing. She knows how to solve the most challenging math problems. She knows how to take care of her dog and little sister. She knows how to make her classes and come out on top. She knows that fairytales aren’t real. She knows that things like the Conductor don’t exist — things like the En- dritch don’t exist. She knows that there is no such thing as trains go-ing nowhere.

And yet, such things do exist, which makes Meg wrong. Meg is never wrong.

Meg knows everything. Well. Mostly everything.

Meg doesn’t know why her older sister is always crying. Meg doesn’t know why her parents are always fighting. Meg doesn’t know why even though other people constant-ly surround her, she always feels alone. Meg doesn’t know why she constantly feels invisible, at school, at home, everywhere she goes.

Meg doesn’t like not knowing. No. Meg doesn’t like it at all.

“Hey,” Zeke says suddenly. “I think we all go to the same school.” Meg blinks.

“Huh?”

“Well,” he says, pointing toward Meg’s backpack, a dark green one I have. Andrea, he points to Andrea, “is wearing the Parks sports uniform under her sweater.” Andrea looks down. “And I feel like I might’ve seen Riley around before.”

“You all go to Parks?” Andrea exclaims. Everyone nods.

“We all take the same train.” Meg concludes. Riley’s eyes bulge.

“We’ve been in the same school for what, three years? And we’ve spent those three years riding on the same train every morn- ing? How did we not notice each other?”

“I’m not very noticeable,” Meg says quietly. “Although it is odd that we didn’t notice each other before.”

“Everyone’s just been caught up in their own worlds, I guess,” Andrea suggests.

Riley doesn’t know what to feel about that.

Riley would like to believe that she’d notice other people from her school, her grade, on the same train as her. But she is also painfully aware of how possible it was that she didn’t notice at all.

“That — really sad,” Zeke says, voicing Riley’s thoughts.

Zeke, gentle and kind, who cries over the slightest thing, feels like he’s going to cry right now. It’s such a small, mundane thing to cry about, but that doesn’t make Zeke want to cry any less.

“Let’s be friends,” Zeke says abruptly, hugging his tears.

“How?” Meg repeats.

“Well, we all go on the same train to the same school, and we see each other every day, so we should be friends.” Andrea, Meg, and Riley stare.

“If you guys want to, that is,” he adds as if afterthought. “I don’t have many friends.”

And that’s quite true. Zeke doesn’t have many friends. In fact, he doesn’t even have any friends. Zeke is kind and caring, but he doesn’t have the time to make friends — at school, he must focus on his studies. He never has time to hang out after school — he has to help his mom at the restaurant or take care of his little siblings. Zeke has three of them. On the weekends, Zeke is always working. Zeke doesn’t complain, though, because he knows his family is trying its best.

“We’re in a bad place right now,” his mom would say. “I’ll get better.”

It hasn’t gotten better yet. Zeke is always lonely. And so is Andrea, And Riley. And Meg. They’re all lonely. In Andrea’s opinion, it’s better to be lonely together than lonely alone.

“That’s a good idea,” Andrea says. “Let’s be friends.”

“You can just do that?” Riley asks. “Just declare that you’re friends with someone? Does it work that way?”

Riley wouldn’t know. She hasn’t had any friends either. Riley is blunt and abrasive, but struggles with her words, struggles to ex-plain how she feels. Riley doesn’t have the best control of her anger, can’t control the emotions that she’s always swamped with. She doesn’t have good grades — she can’t ever focus in class, always up and moving. Her parents are always disappointed in her, and so are her teachers. She spends all her time struggling with her homework — at home or in deten- tion. No one wants to be friends with the troubled child who can’t do math.

“We if we want to work that way, it can,” Andrea says. “Who can say otherwise?”

Andrea likes the thinking of making a choice for herself. Something in her life that she has control of. Andrea doesn’t have any control over her life. Every-thing in her life thus far has been somebody else’s decision. When she makes her choices, she bases them off of what other people would think of her.

Andrea likes the idea of making a friend just for the sake of it.

“What really is a friend?” Meg asks. That’s another thing she doesn’t know, another thing she doesn’t understand. Meg hates not understanding. Maybe these people will help her understand.

“A friend is — well, a friend,” Andrea reminds her.

“Really?” Riley mutters dryly. “I never would have guessed.”

“A friend is someone you hang out with,” Andrea says with a laugh.

“You are choosing the path for-ward,” the Conductor replies sim-ply. “It will take you on.”

Zeke smiles back at him. And Andrea smiles too. Riley doesn’t smile often. She smiles anyway.

There’s a chuckle from the doorway, and there the Conduc-tor stands, materializing from nowhere. “We are reaching the End,” it says.

“The End?” Andrea exclaims, pausing. “That doesn’t sound good.”

The Conductor stares at Andrea.

“All good things come to an End,” it says. “But worry not, for your end won’t be coming any-time soon. We are approaching our destination.”

“Our destination?” Zeke repeats. “Where is that?”

“The End.” Zeke stares. “We’ve arrived, it says. The train doesn’t feel like it’s stopped. To Meg, the train never felt like it was moving in the first place. Meg doesn’t question this. She accepts the fact that the train to Nowhere is filled with things she doesn’t understand and quite possibly never materializing with her.

The Conductor moves toward the train doors.

“Would you like to leave?” The Conductor asks, and Meg al-ways simply stay here. It is an op-tion. “Where do the doors lead?”

Zeke asks, gesturing to the door. “Forward or backward?”

“Where does the train go?” asks Andrea next.

“I’ve already told you,” the Conductor says with a toothy smirk. “Nowhere.”

“I want to move forward,” Meg says suddenly, standing up. She looks to Riley, to Zeke, to Andrea. Meg doesn’t want to stay on the train, alone. Meg wants to move forward with her — her friends. Because that’s what they are now — friends.

“I want to keep going.”


Riley is the slowest to respond. “I guess I’ll come, too.”

The four friends exchange glance- es. “Let’s go, then,” Riley says.

The Conductor offers a sharp-toothed grin as they approach the door. “And leaving here will take us forward.”

“Are you choosing the path for-ward,” the Conductor replies sim- ply. “It will take you on.”

Zeke smiles. “On we go.”

The train doors slide open.
At the lake and shouted “Help him, help him!”
Galina’s heart sank into her stomach as she turned and ran to-ward the lake, tearing her clothes off and fixing her eyes on Miron’s head. She silently popping in and out of the water like a wiggly peg. She dove in and the icy wa-ter took her breath away with one whiff. She was still numb cold and even the alcohol in her veins did not help. She tried to concen-trate, regain her breath and get into the rhythm. Stroke, stroke, breath, breath, stroke, breathe. Her muscles were spasmig, her chest burned, her lungs on fire. Stroke, stroke, breathe. She could see him. Still popping up above the water, but with larger intervals now. He opened and closed his mouth silently like a fish. Up and down. Close stroke, stroke, breathe. She reached him, grabbed his torso and tried to turn him onto his back. He hesitated a moment, twice her weight and too stiff.

His legs spasmng and were use-less, pulling them both down like anchors. He grabbed on to her desperately as she tried to swim. Too slow, too heavy. Her lungs were about to explode, her muscles giving up, the shore still too far. Breathing heavily, she felt Miron loosen his grip. Galina looked at him and met his eyes, giant and dark, completely present.

“Let go,” he mouthed. “Let go.”

Tears streamed down Galina’s face into the freezing water. On the shore, the other two were get-ting into the water and shouting, but they were too far away and too drunk and none of them were any good in the water. Galina felt Miron pushing her arms away. She loosened her hold and he started to sink. His cropped crown slowly disappeared into the water. Galina was paralyzed now, tears clouding her eyes, heartbeat slowing down, body slowly freezing. Galina, Galina, come back! Come back! I beg you!” Veronika bellowed, pushing fur-ther into the water, falling and getting up. Her shrill screams echoed over the lake and woke Galina up.

She turned around and swam. Her right leg was not working any-more, but her arms were strong enough to pull her toward the shore. The others were running to-ward her, their wet clothes spread around them like tentacles, their faces white with cold, their teeth chattering. She collapsed at the water’s edge and they pulled her out onto the gravel and covered her with jackets.

Back in the dusty old apart-ment Sasha did not want to go. His arms were wrapped around Lenka’s nake torso, her head on his chest, their legs intertwined like twin trees. They were lying there, two halves of a whole, for like twin trees. They were lying there, two halves of a whole, for-ward the lake, tearing her clothes off and fixating her eyes on Miron’s head. She silently popping in and out of the water like a wiggly peg. She dove in and the icy wa-ter took her breath away with one whiff. She was still numb cold and even the alcohol in her veins did not help. She tried to concen-
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No, Mama! Mama, there is no meaning in any of this! F--- God! Galina shouted and threw one of the boots across the room, where it met the wall and fell down with a loud thump. This seemed to take away the last of his strength as he collapsed onto the bed, curling around the other boot, pressing it into his body. His mom continued to sit on the bed, her arm around her son, listening to Sasha whisper “Forgive me, forgive me, forgive me...”
Modern, luxurious living awaits in this newly completed West Menlo jewel, which offers an enticing blend of stylish finishes and modern amenities. Beautiful European oak floors extend throughout nearly 2,800 square feet of open living space, with high ceilings and excellent use of glass crafting a bright, airy ambiance. At the heart of the home lies the spectacular great room that begins with the expansive family room featuring a linear fireplace and built-in Bose surround system. From there, the dining room with wet bar opens to the gourmet kitchen with quartz countertops, custom cabinets, and a suite of Thermador appliances. Plus, folding La Cantine doors open completely to the backyard ipe wood deck for true indoor/outdoor living and entertaining. The home’s 5 bedrooms and 4.5 bathrooms include the palatial master suite with a private balcony and spa-like bathroom, as well as 2 bedroom suites ideal for guest accommodations or work-from-home space. And the gorgeously landscaped backyard provides a peaceful retreat with tall trees, lawn, and planter boxes. This convenient location is just moments to downtown Menlo Park, downtown Palo Alto, and Stanford University, with easy access to Interstate 280 for Bay Area commuting, and provides access to the top-ranked Las Lomitas school district (buyer to verify eligibility).

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The Pear returns to live theater with an intellectual, romantic puzzle

Christopher Chen’s ‘The Late Wedding’ is playing indoors, outdoors and via livestream

By John Orr

I t can be tough to be married. It can be tough to be a playwright. And, it can be tough to figure out just what the heck is going on in “The Late Wedding” by Christopher Chen, as staged by The Pear Theatre.

Here’s a tip to make it — maybe a little easier to understand: The seven-person cast of multiple characters and its various interconnected vignettes are all tied to the same painful breakup, creating what Chen calls “a fractured portrait of a fractured marriage,” according to the show’s program notes.

Chen, inspired by the work of writer Inale Calvino, is both the playwright and the director of the play. The Pear’s director is the playwright, this is not uncommon, but it can be tough to figure out just what the heck is going on in “The Late Wedding” by Christopher Chen, as staged by The Pear Theatre.

The Pear is delivering “The Late Wedding” in three ways, in order to accommodate patrons’ various comfort and access levels. On Friday evenings and Saturday mornings, it is performed inside the theater. A livestream of the Friday night show is available to people who want to watch from home (not available on demand). For Saturday and Sunday matinees, it is performed outdoors on a stage tucked away in the side parking lot of the Mountain View theater space.

I saw the opening-night livestream, which offered some cleverness — no doubt thanks to Director Sakehillariou — and some technical sloppiness.

The sound mix was tragically bad, ranging from deafening loudness to weak levels that made dialogue very difficult to hear. The camera framing was mostly good, helped by effective lighting, but often the top of the frame stopped just under actors’ noses. Those weaknesses may be cleaned up by the next shows.

The good cast does well in delivering the cerebral maze of the script. Tyler Jefferies, Carissa Ratapanhayarat and John S. Boles were the most solid in their various roles.

Annamarie MacLeod, as narrator, gets a few good jokes, and comes out early to become the audience by thanking everybody for getting vaccinated and wearing their masks, saying she is “proud to be part of the first live, in-person play at The Pear after the pandemic. The Pear has shut down.”

Well, welcome back. “The Late Wedding” runs Fridays at 8 p.m., Saturdays at 11 a.m. and 2 p.m., and Sundays at 2 p.m. through July 18 at 1110 La Avenida St., Mountain View, and streams online Friday evenings.

Tickets are $30-$40. More information is available at thepear.org.

Email Contributing Writer John Orr at johnorr@regardingarts.com.

Everyday life becomes history in new mural celebrating Los Altos

‘200 Main Street [fan inventory of time and place]’ explores the personal side of the historical

By Heather Zimmerman

A portal to many different parts of Los Altos — one that looks almost as if anyone can step right through its door and begin exploring. And in a way you can: The longer you look, the more glimpses you’ll get of various residents’ lives in Los Altos over roughly the past century and a half.

Last month, Arts Los Altos unveiled “200 Main Street [an inventory of time and place],” a mural by Palo Alto-based author Martha Sakellariou, which explores many decades of Los Altos history and features photos and images of objects contributed by local residents. The piece is the third commission by new local arts nonprofit Arts Los Altos and was funded by a grant from the Los Altos Rotary Club.

The mural brings together historic photographs with images of memorabilia and other objects in a 30-foot-long, black-and-white composite image. The new art is installed on an exterior side wall of Satura Cakes, near the corner of Third and Main streets in downtown Los Altos. (200 Main St. is the bakery’s street address).

In both subject matter and composition, the mural echoes the idea of a family photo wall — but in this case, for an entire town and spanning a timeline of more than 150 years.

The homey feel of the mural is by design. Sakellariou frequently explores the theme of home in her works.

“I approach collective, historical, or personal stories from that sort of perspective: how you create a home around you, how you build a sense of belonging,” Sakellariou said.

The artist, who was born in Greece and later lived in London, moved to the Bay Area in 2013. Life in this more spread out, suburban region proved a big adjustment, but one of the ways Sakellariou has been becoming more at home here has been making connections and getting to know the community through projects that involve community members — and are sometimes even shown on or in their homes.

Los Altos is the bakery’s street address). In fact, community outreach is often a key component of Sakellariou’s works.

“I’m very curious about what’s happening around me, about people’s stories, how they end up in one place or another. Exploring, exchanging ideas, connecting. It’s about that chemistry of getting closer to people. And I seek that engagement and collaboration with people in most of my projects,” she said.

For the “200 Main Street” mural, Sakellariou spent several months extensively researching Los Altos history, an undertaking which included poring over archives at the Los Altos History Museum and consulting with museum staff, and seeking contributions of personal stories, photos and objects from Los Altos residents.

The artist’s emphasis on working with the community captured the attention of the Arts Los Altos board, which chose Sakellariou’s proposal from among eight different artists’ pitches.

“Martha was selected because of her presentation, and her concept to do outreach so that the community gets involved with creating the mural itself,” said Arts Los Altos Director of Development & Outreach Maddy McBurney.

The mural looks at local history, but not in the expected linear way, instead offering a personal take, exploring how different people over time have experienced living in Los Altos.

“I wanted this composition to be both symbolic and informative, so the symbolism is about how living in a city, living in a house, living on this planet is about sharing space and coexisting, cohabiting spaces — living through various layers of history, and becoming part of that history as it happens,” Sakellariou said.

Though she sought out some more “traditional” historic images, such as a photo of Los Altos’ first mayor, the mural emphasizes a variety of items that relate to the idea of domestic life and home — everything from books to sporting equipment and a variety of family photos. Many items might still be found in homes today, but also take on the added context of being part of the community’s story. Visitors can learn more about what’s pictured by scanning a QR code that accompanies the mural.

When approaching the Los Altos History Museum’s resources, Sakellariou was drawn to the more personal elements, such as the furnishings and fixtures in the museum’s Gilbert Smith House.

“The photographs and most items are contributed by Los Altos residents or found in the museum archives. The door and window were photographed at the Gilbert Smith House; the outdoor image of the Juana Briones house is a historical 1903 picture from the Palo Alto Historical Association archives. I didn’t make up anything, I only created a space for all of these things to coexist. And it was really important for me to compose this space with original items from the community and the local museum,” she said.

Longtime Los Altos resident Claudia Meyer contributed a handful of items that appear in “200 Main Street,” among them a photo of children standing in front of a house after a rare snowfall and a pair of riding boots and helmet.

“In 1962, it snowed in Los Altos and I’m in that picture with my little sister and a neighbor boy. We had just built a snowman,” she said of the photo’s snowy scene. Meyer’s family came to the area in 1953 and the following year moved into a newly constructed

(continued on page 36)
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NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE

DANIEL MARK COHEN

CASE NO. 21PR1901918

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the estate of, or debt, of, or by, DAMEIKO MARUZEN

A Petition for Probate has been filed by SARALEE COHEN in the Probate Court of California, County of Santa CLARA.

The Petition requests that SARALEE COHEN be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent.

The Petition requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take any actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking any important action, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection. The personal representative will show good cause why the court should not grant the petition.

A hearing on the petition will be held in this court on 08/02/2021 at 9:01 AM in Dept. 2 located at 191 NORTH FIRST STREET, SAN JOSE, CA 95113, PROBATE DIVISION.

If you object to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

If you are a creditor or a contingent creditor, you may file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within three years before the date such claim was incurred. (See section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.)

The Petition to Determine Claim to Property has been filed by BONDINE BURDETT & JOYCE ANTHONY, as Principals of Prime Fiduciary Services, as Executors of the ESTATE OF AUDREY GAMBLER.

The Petition to Determine Claim to Property is filed to protect the estate of AUDREY GAMBLER.

A HEARING on the PETITION TO DETERMINE CLAIM TO PROPERTY will be held on July 19, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. in PROBATE #5 located at 191 N. First St., San Jose, CA 95111. If you fail to appear at the hearing, it may affect your legal rights.

If you are a creditor or a contingent creditor of the estate, you may file a claim. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory of the estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for Petitioner: MATTHEW TRIET

ATTORNEY FOR PETITIONER: MATTHEW TRIET

Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

California statutes and legal form is available from the court clerk.

petition authority to work

leads out of the decedent.

The last day for filing claims shall be July

The Petition requests that the court direct REBECCA ORIOPO to pay the following:

1. the sum of $1,240,388.30 to the ESTATE OF AUDREY GAMBLER, as determined at a later date;

2. prejudgment interest to the ESTATE OF AUDREY GAMBLER, as determined at a later date; and

3. reasonable attorney’s fees and costs, as determined at a later date.

A HEARING on the PETITION TO DETERMINE CLAIM TO PROPERTY will be held on July 19, 2021, at 9:00 a.m. in PROBATE #5 located at 191 N. First St., San Jose, CA 95111. If you fail to appear at the hearing, it may affect your legal rights.

If you are a creditor or a contingent creditor of the estate, you may file a claim. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory of the estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk.

Attorney for Petitioner: MATTHEW TRIET

NOTICE TO CREDITORS OF BULK SALE 9/12/2021 10:30 AM

ESCROW # 0126015876

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN to creditors of the Deceased Estate of

DETERMINATION OF CLAIM TO PROPERTY IN THE

Estate of: DANIEL MARK COHEN

To REBECCA SORIANO, and all persons who may otherwise be interested in the ESTATE of DANIEL MARK COHEN,

Mural (continued from page 33)

that one of the photos featured in the mural was that of one of the artist’s daughter’s, she also contributed a photo of the place where she used to keep her pony. And (Sakellariou) really enjoyed this picture of me with my pony. “I just was fascinated by the process, and how she combined the old with the new. There’s many of us that grew up here and just to watch the progress of what evolved was really special. Getting to know her made the mural even more meaningful to me,” Meyer said.

The mural itself is an amalgam of old and new. While many of the objects pictured are historical, the photographs were assembled digitally and the mural, rather than being painted onto the wall, was printed on vinyl wrap, which was then affixed to the wall with a heat gun. The material is durable, offering permanence, but can also easily be removed, Mc Birney said — perhaps fitting for a piece that explores the passage of time. Meyer said she’s been encouraging friends and family to go visit the mural. She pointed out that one of the photos featured in the mural, seen through a window, is of an apricot orchard. Given the significant role of agriculture in the town’s development — even today Los Altos City Hall is located in an apricot orchard — Meyer said it meant a lot to her to see such images included.

Though she joked that the mural makes her “feel old,” she said “it also makes me so thankful that I grew up here.”

“200 Main Street [an inven- tory of time and place]” can be seen at the corner of Third and Main streets in downtown Los Altos. For more information, visit artlosaltos.org.

Email Assistant Editor Heather Zimmerman at hzimmerman@paweekly.com.

Mural in front of her mural “200 Main Street [an inventory of time and place]” in downtown Los Altos, May 11, 2021. (PAW June 11, 18, 25; July 2, 2021)

Arts & Entertainment

Martha Sakellariou in front of her mural “200 Main Street [an inventory of time and place]” in downtown Los Altos, May 11, 2021. (PAW June 11, 18, 25; July 2, 2021)

To place an ad or get a quote, contact Kevin Legarda at 650.223.6597 or email digitalsales@paweekly.com.

Employment

IT Systems Analyst, Clinical Applications

IT Systems Analyst, Clinical Applications,

Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital at Stanford (Menti Park, CA; Rep: 1000 Science (any) deg (3 or 4 yr deg) + 7yr exp OR Master’s + 5 yrs exp. May telecommute up to 2 days/wk. Apply: http://careers.stanfordchildrens.org/131789. Principals only. No calls. Must have unrestricted auth to work in US. Drug/bkground screening req’d. EOE.

Lead AI Scientist

Target Enterprise, Inc. is seeking a full-time Lead AI Scientist at our offices in Sunnyvale, CA. The Lead AI Scientist will be responsible for developing artificial intelligence models and algorithms for Target’s retail business. This position requires a Master’s degree or equivalent in Engineering, Computer Engineering, or a related engineering field and 2 years related machine learning experience. Must also have 24 months of experience which may have been gained concurrently with each of the following: (1) building statistical models, machine learning models, AI models, and optimization algorithms, (2) code with Python, (3) deploying large-scale models with big data frameworks, (4) working with demand forecasting and pricing models, and (5) utilizing knowledge of econometrics, optimization, and revenue management. In addition, must have completed coursework in Convex Optimization. Will accept experience gained before, during or after Master’s program. Position includes a telecommute benefit within commuting distance to Sunnyvale area Target office, as directed. Please apply online at https://corporate.target.com/careers/.
SOUTH BAY DELIVERY SERVICE LOCALE OFFERS THE CHANCE TO DO BOTH

By Heather Zimmerman

South bay-based Locale offers weekly deliveries of fresh produce and groceries as well as meal kits and prepared items from Bay Area restaurants, merchants and farms. The delivery service was founded early in the pandemic, as stay-at-home orders ushered in a new era of eating at home.

When Locale launched in May 2020, the delivery service initially focused on businesses in Los Gatos, where co-founders Jonathan Friedland and Chris Clark live. Relying on word of mouth, the service grew quickly and now boasts nearly 50 partnerships with eateries and businesses from around the Bay Area, including in San Francisco and Santa Cruz — with the one stipulation that businesses should be locally based, at least within the greater Bay Area. Its customer delivery area covers the Peninsula as far north as San Bruno, along with the South Bay and Santa Cruz, and charges a flat $5 delivery fee.

According to Friedland, Locale got started with the aim of giving customers the chance to order from multiple businesses while allowing restaurants the flexibility to sell small-ticket items, such as individual pastries, that wouldn’t necessarily be as easy to offer through large delivery companies like DoorDash or UberEats, due to the extra cost to the customer of delivery fees and tip.

“We wanted to create a way that customers could order from more than one business at a time and still keep that delivery fee really low,” Friedland said in an interview.

Rather than charge its partner businesses a delivery fee, Locale buys items from its vendors at wholesale (negotiating the wholesale price with the vendor depending on their margins), and charges a markup to customers, according to Friedland. For instance, the retail price for a carrot cake muffin from Manresa Bread is $5 purchased directly from the bakery and $6 purchased from Locale.

In giving customers the ability to purchase items from multiple businesses in one order, Locale looks to fill a different niche from the big players in food delivery, as its offerings and delivery schedule demonstrate. With its selection of ingredients and meal kits sourced from local businesses, Locale is more akin to an upscale online grocery store or farmers market. Shoppers can place orders throughout the week, but all deliveries are made on Saturdays.

Friedland also noted that curation is key to Locale’s offerings. “What we’re trying to do is create a sense of trust with our customers so that if we list a sourdough bread or pasta sauce, our customers can trust that we’ve vetted this product and it’s the best and most high quality for a reasonable price in the area,” he said.

The fact that Locale’s offerings are curated also seems likely to help ensure the service’s staying power as more restaurants reopen and customers are less restricted to their homes.

Locale aims to continue expanding in the Bay Area with new partners. The service also refreshes its current offerings periodically. “Our service is more about trying new things, so we always try to switch things up at least once every two months or so just to keep things new,” Friedland said.

For more information on Locale and how to order, visit shoplocale.us.

Top, Locale offers a variety of local produce and grocery items, as well as prepared meals from Bay Area businesses. Above, shoppers can place orders throughout the week on the Locale website, and all deliveries are made on Saturdays.

Locale co-founders Jonathan Friedland (left) and Chris Clark started the delivery service as a way to allow customers to get food — including groceries and prepared meals — from multiple local businesses in one order. Photos courtesy Locale.

www.PaloAltoOnline.com • Palo Alto Weekly • June 25, 2021 • Page 37
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Welcome to this bright, airy, mid-century modern home, fully updated in 2011 with tasteful elegance. Located in the desirable Leland Manor neighborhood of North Palo Alto, the home brings quintessential California inside-outside living to the fore. Opulent showcase garden with a water fountain, cozy gas fire pit, built-in barbecue grill, outdoor dining area make the backyard a perfect place for hosting large gatherings—An entertainer’s delight!

All this with Stellar schools—Walter Hays Elementary, Greene Middle, Palo Alto High attendance area (buyer to verify availability). Close to Library, Palo Alto Art Center, Lucie Stern Community Center, Rinconada Park, as well as the Market at Edgewood and downtown restaurants. LOCATION! LOCATION! AND LOCATION!

Offered at $4,100,000

Open House
Sunday, June 27
1:30pm - 4:30pm

Arti Miglani
DRE #01150085
650.804.6942
www.ArtiMiglani.com
Arti@ArtiMiglani.com
303 ATHERTON AVENUE
ATHERTON

RENOVATED COLONIAL MASTERPIECE IN SOUGHT-AFTER ATHERTON

From the moment you step into the foyer of this American Colonial masterpiece, you will get a sense of the grandeur that is yet to come. Flawless interiors brimming with high-end appointments have been expertly renovated to provide for a modern Silicon Valley lifestyle, with 7 bedrooms, 8.5 bathrooms, and over 11,650 square feet of living space offering perfect venues for both entertaining and everyday living. Rich hardwood floors, impeccable marble finishes, detailed millwork, and soaring ceilings craft a luxurious ambiance throughout all 4 levels of the estate, with multiple rooms opening to the 1.14-acre grounds for true indoor/outdoor living. Highlights include 4 fireplaces, expansive and light-filled formal rooms, the gourmet kitchen with new top-end appliances, and the handsome office that can also double as a guest suite. Enjoy movie nights in the incredible theater with its own projection room, unwind in the fitness center with a relaxing sauna, and enjoy your favorite vintage from the wine cellar with space for over 1,300 bottles. Retire at the end of the day to the magnificent master suite with 2 spacious bathrooms, while multiple additional bedroom suites provide comfortable accommodations for friends and family. The newly landscaped grounds include a new pool, outdoor kitchen, and inviting fire pit, and for added convenience this estate offers a 5-car garage, plus a gated motor court with ample parking. Find yourself just moments to both downtown Menlo Park and Palo Alto, as well as Stanford University, the Menlo Circus Club, and Venture Capital centers along Sand Hill Road. Plus, acclaimed public and private schools are minutes away.

For virtual open houses & more photos, please visit:
www.303AthertonAve.com
Offered at $19,988,000

Listed by Michael Repka of the DeLeon Team, the #1 Team in Atherton

Data from BrokerMetrics® based on MLS sales from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, in Atherton, residential properties, with no off-MLS sales included in the rankings.

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

Audrey Sun, DRE #01933274 | 650.785.5822 | www.deleongroup.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
165 PATRICIA DRIVE
ATHERTON

SPECTACULAR GARDEN ESTATE ON OVER 1 ACRE

Serene, gated grounds of over an acre brimming with beautiful trees and colorful plantings set the stage for this magnificent West Atherton estate. Over 6,400 square feet of total interior space wraps you in elegance and luxury from the moment you step inside, with high-end appointments including rich inlaid hardwood floors, marble finishes, detailed millwork, and arched casement windows creating a stylish ambiance. Expansive formal rooms scaled for entertaining include the living room and dining room, both of which are centered by a stately fireplace, while the incredible gourmet kitchen features high-end appliances plus a secondary prep kitchen for hosting fantastic dinner parties with ease. The inviting family room features great space for a relaxing evening at home, and the nearby sitting room offers tremendous possibilities as a media center or office. With 5 bedrooms and 7.5 bathrooms, including the pool house, friends and family alike are sure to find inviting accommodations highlighted by two lavish master suites that each evoke the feel of a fashionable retreat. Experience true indoor/outdoor living as numerous points throughout the estate open to the lush grounds with peaceful gardens, an elevated terrace, outdoor kitchen, and a sparkling pool with a Herringbone paver patio. Just moments to downtown Menlo Park, downtown Palo Alto, and the Menlo Circus Club, this estate is also close to top private institutions including Sacred Heart and Menlo School (buyer to verify eligibility).

For virtual open houses & more photos, please visit:

www.165Patricia.com
Offered at $10,500,000

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Michael Repka, DRE #01854880 | 650.900.7000 | michael@deleonrealty.com
中文諮詢請聯繫Audrey Sun, DRE #01933274 | 電話: 650.785.5822 | www.deleonrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224

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Social Media’s Ugly Truth

Investigative journalists Sheera Frenkel and Cecilia Kang will talk about “An Ugly Truth,” their new book that offers a behind-the-scenes look at Facebook and the many controversies surrounding the platform during an online presentation hosted by Kepler’s Literary Foundation at 6 p.m., Thursday, July 15. In their book, Frenkel and Kang probe the many controversies surrounding Facebook’s data mining, internal politics, security breaches, lobbying, international content manipulation, and relentless drive for profits. Their explosive, exclusive reporting yields a shocking conclusion — that the company’s missteps have not been an anomaly, but an inevitability. The platform’s civic failures were baked into how Facebook was built to perform. Webinar space is limited. To purchase tickets, go to keplers.org.

A Chef’s Zero-Waste Tips

Chef and author Anne-Marie Bonneau will introduce her cookbook, “The Zero-Waste Chef: Plant-Forward Recipes and Tips for a Sustainable Kitchen and Planet,” during an online presentation hosted by the Palo Alto Library at 7 p.m., Thursday, July 15. In her book, Bonneau shares 75 recipes for cooking with scraps, creating fermented staples and using up groceries before they become waste. To register, go to fopal.org.

Book Drop-Off Reopens

Friends of Palo Alto Library reopened its drop-off donations program on June 14. A volunteer will greet donors outside the group’s main room at 4000 Middlefield Road Monday-Saturday from 3 to 5 p.m. to guide donors through the donation process. No appointments are needed. Donations are limited to six bags/boxes per drop off. No ephemera, electronics, art, records, music CDs or plushies/stuffed animals will be accepted. For more information, email melody.tehrani@cityofpaloalto.org.

Books by Appointment ...

Friends of the Palo Alto Library launched a Friends and Family program to enable patrons to shop the group’s shelves for books in the Main, Children’s and Bargain rooms by appointment until it resumes its monthly book sales, which have been on hold due to the pandemic. To schedule a shopping appointment in the Bargain Room, email appointments@fopal.org. To shop in the Main Room, go to signup.com/go/2d4Ahk. To shop in the Children’s Room, go to signup.com/go/ehabC. There is a $30 minimum purchase requirement and shoppers must have exact change or a check for purchases.

Local Author Simone de Muñoz Was Writing a Novel About a Hypothetical Virus When Covid Hit

In the summer of 2019, Mountain View author Simone de Muñoz began writing a science fiction thriller that became unexpectedly relevant by the time it hit bookstores on March 6. “Manflu,” de Muñoz’s debut novel, is about a virus that is deadly to the male population. The book focuses on vaccine researcher Morgan Digby as she struggles to defeat the virus amid interoffice meddling, corporate conspiracy and forbidden romance. The book explores how society might change if women held the reins of political power and cultural change.

De Muñoz pointed to Margaret Atwood’s “The Handmaid’s Tale” as a source of inspiration. She said she did a fair amount of research about viruses and pandemics to make the premise of “Manflu” as plausible as possible — not knowing at the time that she would be living through a global pandemic firsthand just months later.

De Muñoz said she watched the six-part Netflix docuseries “Pandemic,” which premiered in January 2020, before COVID-19 was widespread in the U.S. She also consulted at length with one of her closest friends, pediatrician Dr. Veronica Lois, a Stanford Medical School graduate. They discussed how a virus that primarily affected men might work. As she was working on her fictional book, COVID-19 hit.

“Spring of 2020 was an intense time for me,” said de Muñoz, who is a wife, a mother of two young children and chief analyst for the nonprofit Community Services Agency of Mountain View, which provides food and shelter to those in need. “I was researching pandemics and writing about a pandemic while trying to keep my family safe and serving massive numbers of people newly in need.”

Coming home from helping in the food pantry, de Muñoz would “sanitize absolutely everything.”

“Like many people, my anxiety was through the roof,” she said. “Even though the book related to a pandemic, writing it was therapeutic because writing is stress relief for me.”

– Simone de Muñoz, author

By Michael Berry

‘Even though the book related to a pandemic, writing it was therapeutic because writing is stress relief for me.’

Above: Mountain View author Simone de Muñoz. Recently released a fictional story about a virus that only affects men. She began researching pandemics as background for the story prior to the COVID-19 outbreak. Top: Image courtesy of Simone de Muñoz. Illustration by Douglas Young.

(continued on page 46)
Welcome to this gorgeous home in the heart of downtown San Jose. This three bedroom, three bath home has recently been renovated with new floors and appointed with modern finishes and fixtures for contemporary living. This two level condo has a separate entrance for the Master Bedroom suite on the top floor and is exceptionally large. The downstairs bedroom looks out over a gorgeous balcony which is perfect for relaxing and enjoying the peaceful location of this perfectly situated unit far from the hustle and bustle of street noise because of its location within the building. Near San Pedro square, SAP center and Japan Town. This home is refreshingly bright and beautiful. Be close to everything and still nestled on a quiet and peaceful tree lined corner of this ideal location

Offered at $988,000

Keyko Pintz
Realtor
650.224.9815
kpintz@intero.com
DRE #02011298

Olivia Pintz
Realtor
650.888.6878
opintz@intero.com
DRE #02051033
This enchanting, light-filled bungalow emanates timeless Palo Alto charm and enjoys a location just blocks to the excitement of University Avenue. Beautiful hardwood floors highlight the home’s comfortable living space, while divided light windows add a stylish touch. Craft delicious meals in the kitchen that features Shaker-style cabinets, a built-in ebony dining table, and stainless-steel appliances including a Bosch dishwasher. Two bedrooms provide inviting accommodations, served by a renovated bathroom with Grohe fixtures. And for peaceful outdoor enjoyment, the backyard offers ample heated patio space. Find yourself mere moments to both Johnson Park and El Camino Park, a short trip to Stanford University, and convenient to the shops and eateries of downtown Palo Alto and the Stanford Shopping Center. Plus, both Caltrain and US 101 are within easy reach, and children may attend acclaimed schools Addison Elementary, Greene Middle, and Palo Alto High (buyer to verify eligibility).

**OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY & SUNDAY 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM**

[www.166Cowper.com](http://www.166Cowper.com)

**Offered at $1,488,000**

Listed by Alexandra Wilbur of the DeLeon Team, the #1 Team in Palo Alto

Data from BrokerMetrics® based on MLS sales from January 1, 2020, to December 31, 2020, in Palo Alto, residential properties, with no off-MLS sales included in the rankings.

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For more information contact: Alexandra Wilbur, DRE #01926475 | 650.459.3888 | alex@deleonrealty.com

Managing Broker: Michael Repka, DRE #01854880 | www.deleonrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
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PALO ALTO

STYLISH DOWNTOWN PALO ALTO LIVING

A modern downtown lifestyle awaits in this remarkably stylish 2-bedroom, 2.5-bathroom condo located just a block away from University Avenue. Gorgeous hardwood floors extend through almost 1,100 square feet of dynamic, open living space beginning in the light-filled living room with a fireplace in floor-to-ceiling stacked stone. From there, the dining area flows into the remodeled kitchen with top-of-the-line appliances from Wolf, Bosch, Fisher-Paykel, and Liebherr. Two spacious bedroom suites include one with a private entrance from inside the complex, and the master suite with a spectacular spa-like bathroom. For indoor/outdoor living and entertaining, this home offers a sun-soaked front balcony and private backyard patio, while an in-unit laundry closet, attic storage, and carport parking provide added convenience. Just moments to the incredible boutiques and eateries of downtown Palo Alto, this home is also just around the corner from beautiful Heritage Park, and it is convenient to Stanford University, the Stanford Shopping Center, and Caltrain.

OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY & SUNDAY 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM
www.714Ramona.com
Offered at $1,488,000

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Managing Broker: Michael Repka, DRE #01854880 | www.deleonrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
Manflu

(continued from page 42)

out the character of Morgan Digby, her scientist protagonist, who doesn’t always take the safest path through life. When Morgan has an affair with a younger man never exposed to the virus, she isn’t prepared for the repercussions.

“She had to have flaws,” de Muñoz said. “Some of the readers are outraged by her irrepressible behavior, but if you have a character who’s doing everything perfectly, that’s a pretty boring story. So I had to show that she was a bit of a dreamer and a bit distracted and flawed.”

Set in the near future, “Manflu” depicts the possible consequences of the losing most of the planet’s male population. The novel posits that climate change isn’t as significant an issue after such an abrupt decline in population and associated greenhouse gases.

Also, wealth is distributed more fairly in de Muñoz’s near-future.

“One of the things that comes up in the book is if there’s less military spending, then we can repurpose that money for other policy priorities, like infrastructure or care-giving support,” de Muñoz explained.

According to de Muñoz, who graduated from MIT in 2002 with a bachelor’s degree in Economics and later worked at the Brookings Institution in Washington, D.C., for two years conducting policy research before earning a master’s in Public Policy, military spending in the U.S. is a huge amount of the budget.

“It’s over 50% of discretionary spending. The interest on the national debt is a huge amount of the budget. So I think people may not realize that if those numbers are reduced, there’s just a world of possibility in running the country in a different way.”

Even though her book is about a pandemic, de Muñoz said “it’s actually escapist. It’s about imagining a different world. I think it’s timely, while also having that quality of something a little bit fun. I’m hoping people will see it that way.”

Email Contributing Writer Michael Berry at mikeberry@mindspring.com.
MENLO PARK | $2,395,000
This totally remodeled 3br/2ba contemporary-style home features a great room with spacious kitchen, stainless steel appliances; separate sitting areas for entertaining and television viewing and a large dining area. French doors open to a redwood deck and a lush backyard with gas fire pit and pergola covered patio. The large master suite includes a walk-in closet with organizers and a luxurious bath.

Elaine White
650.465.4663
ewhite@cbnorcal.com
CalRE #0182467

SAN JOSE | $1,049,000
Beautiful 3br/3ba townhome in the Copperwood Community. This home features tons of natural light & vaulted ceiling in the living room & master bedroom. Enjoy cooking in the clean kitchen complete with ample cabinets & granite tile countertops. You will love the master suite that displays views of surrounding mountains. The good size, private backyard is great for entertaining & has mature orange & lemon trees.

Saruul Barrios
415.828.8304
saruul.barrios@cbnorcal.com
CalRE #01925631

REDWOOD CITY | $2,195,000
2 Homes: Main Home 3br/2ba and Charming Cottage 1br/1ba.

Helen Aragoni
650.270.1600
helena.aragoni@cbnorcal.com
CalRE #01306091

MENLO PARK | $2,098,000
Creek setting, charming 3br/1ba corner lot rancher on a cul-de-sac. Great Menlo Park schools.

Liliana Perazich
415.297.0125
liliana.perazich@cbnorcal.com
CalRE #02015538
REDWOOD SHORES | $1,995,000
Beautiful light-filled 3br/2.5ba home in the “Sunrise” community of Redwood Shores. Conveniently located to nearby walking & bike trails, restaurants, and public transportation.
Sandy Rostad
650.888.1078
srostad@cbnorcal.com
CalRE #01272002

PENNGROVE | $1,325,000
Beautiful oak-studded ranch home offers a formal dining room, living room, 3br/2.5ba, potential 2nd master, deck, patio & 3 car garage, 1.5 acres.
Michael Williams 650.867.3876
CalRE #01962382
Julian Bolano 707.799.4533
CalRE #01993349

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