Excitement, anxiety mix as students start new year on campus
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Dear Reader,

In the 1990s, when Alan Wachtel's bike network was filled with “unofficial underpasses and unmarked paths,” said Wachtel, a longtime member of the Palo Alto Bicycle and Pedestrian Advisory Committee. A Brooklyn native who moved to Palo Alto in 1958, Lefkowitz introduced Wachtel and hundreds of others to many of the trails in and around the Baylands, though his trips stretched well beyond Palo Alto’s city line. Wachtel recalled rides that Lefkowitz led to Water Dog Lake in Belmont and along Alpine Road or Skyline Boulevard. He recalled the tour of murals in downtown Palo Alto and the Fourth of July trips stretching between Byron and Middlefield, with office space on the ground floor, housing on every floor and two levels of underground parking, according to the application filed by Lund Smith of Smith Development.

To move the project ahead, Smith Development is requesting “planned home” zoning, a version of “planned community” zoning that allows developers to exceed development standards and zoning regulations in exchange for public benefits. In the case of “planned home” zoning, a designation that the city introduced in February 2020, the benefit is housing.

(continued on page 10)

Transportation

Family hopes to preserve Lefkowitz legacy at new bike bridge

By Gennady Sheyner

Benjamin Lefkowitz never got to ride through the seasonal undercrosings that has borne his name for more than three decades. ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig’s disease, robbed him of his ability to cycle in the late 1980s, and he was in a wheelchair by the January 1990 ceremony inaugurating the project, which connects the east and west sides of U.S. Highway 101. A friend of Ellen Fletcher, the city’s undisputed bicycling champion, Lefkowitz was an avid cyclist, regularly commuting by bike from his home on Greer Road to his jobs at IBM, SRI and Allstate Insurance, said his son, Matthew Lefkowitz. He also loved the Baylands, leading bike rides along the marshy network of trails and levees as a longtime member and former president of Western Wheelers, a bicycling group.

In the 1980s, when Alan Wachtel joined the group, the Lefkowitz underpass didn’t exist. Benjamin Lefkowitz and other riders had to get creative, whether it meant walking over sandbags with bikes balanced on their shoulders or using a culvert in Alviso on the way to Mountain View, Wachtel recalled.

(continued on page 29)

Housing

Smith Development pitches 73 housing units near Middlefield Road

By Gennady Sheyner

After dropping its plans to build apartments near the California Avenue Caltrain station, Smith Development is now proposing another residential development, one that would bring 73 housing units to a block of University Avenue near Middlefield Road.

The proposal calls for combining three parcels along the south side of University Avenue, between Byron Street and Middlefield, which currently include two two-story office buildings separated by a parking lot. The two office buildings at 511 Byron Ave. and 680 University Ave. would be demolished and give way to a four-story, mixed-use building stretching between Byron and Middlefield, with office space on the ground floor, housing on every floor and two levels of underground parking, according to the application filed by Lund Smith of Smith Development.

To move the project ahead, Smith Development is requesting “planned home” zoning, a version of “planned community” zoning that allows developers to exceed development standards and zoning regulations in exchange for public benefits. In the case of “planned home” zoning, a designation that the city introduced in February 2020, the benefit is housing.

(continued on page 29)

(continued on page 10)

ADA lawsuits hit hundreds of businesses

Restaurants decry ‘shakedown’ over widespread litigation

By Kevin Forestieri

Things were looking pretty good last month for Tai Pan, a downtown Palo Alto restaurant known for its Cantonese dim sum. State officials lifted COVID-19 restrictions at the start of summer, and business was finally picking up again as friends — long parted — were reuniting over good food.

The positive outlook was shattered on July 21, however, when Tai Pan received a lawsuit stating that the restaurant was discriminatory. Its outdoor dining tables, set up for pandemic safety and the preferred option of customers, allegedly lacked enough space for wheelchair access under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA).

Tony Han, who runs Tai Pan with his family, said he was shocked to learn that these ADA lawsuits are not only common but that an extraordinary number of businesses have been hit with similar allegations in just the last two months. The Chinese restaurant Taste, just down the street, was sued the next week, followed by Singaporean eatery Killiney Kopitiam just days later.

To Han, the stream of lawsuits has soured the positive feeling of recovering from the pandemic. “The last year was so difficult and probably the hardest year that everyone has ever worked in this industry,” Han said. “So everyone was on this high, and all of the sudden this thing happened.”

So far this year, more than 1,400 ADA lawsuits have been filed in northern California’s district court, primarily targeting businesses located in the Bay Area. Of those lawsuits, 686 have

(continued on page 29)

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LEADING THE WAY ... Citing their leadership during the pandemic, Palo Altostriped the "interim" tag from Gayathri Kanth and Darren Numoto and appointed them directors of the city’s Library and Information Technology departments, respectively. The City Council unanimously affirmed the appointments of Kanth and Numoto on Monday night. The decision by City Manager Ed Shikada to appoint two current leaders to the top positions in their departments followed a recruitment period that occurred before the health crisis. The city held off on making the appointments because of a hiring freeze related to the city’s budget challenges. Both Kanth and Numoto have been serving as department heads on an interim basis for well over a year, with Kanth taking on the role in October 2019 and Numoto filling his in December 2018. In announcing the appointments, Shikada cited their “outstanding leadership throughout the pandemic” and noted that they had shown “great ability to adapt to ever-changing circumstances while supporting the workforce and community.” Kanth and Numoto will have salaries of $220,000 and $210,000, respectively. My short-term goal as Director is to continue the phased reopening of all the city’s facilities,” Kanth said. “My long-term goal is to work with the leadership team to continue providing seamless services while navigating the pandemic.” Numoto said in a statement that he is “excited to partner with departments to solve problems and provide innovative services to our community and businesses.”

BACK TO WORK ... After closing its doors for 16 months, HanaHaus reopened its coworking space in downtown Palo Alto on July 30. The long-awaited return was marked in celebratory fashion with the Palo Alto Chamber of Commerce, which presented a plaque to HanaHaus. Staff proudly watched as a green ribbon was cut at the entrance to the University Avenue location, where people can pay for a workspace. Blue Bottle Coffee, which operates a cafe in the space across from the historic Varsity Theatre, gave away “Buy One, Get One Free” cards to the first 50 customers.

In the Limelight ... Six Midpeninsula entertainment venues and arts groups are among the local organizations that will receive federal relief funds designated to help small music and entertainment businesses affected by the pandemic. Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, announced July 30. The half-dozen arts companies are among 16 such organizations in the 18th Congressional District that will receive a total of $13.8 million through the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant program run by the Small Business Administration to provide financial support to small arts and entertainment businesses that had to temporarily close due to the pandemic. The program’s aim is to keep the businesses going and help keep workers on the payroll, according to a press release from Eshoo’s office. “These local venues drive the Bay Area’s unique culture and economy, and it’s wonderful to see them opening back up with the help of these federal funds,” Eshoo said in the press release. The companies picked for grants include local institutions such as the Palo Alto Players, which will receive $128,167. Another local recipient is Quarter Note, which has been granted $111,778. The program was established as part of a COVID-19 relief package that passed in December 2020. Eshoo helped secure additional funding for the grant program through the American Rescue Plan, which passed in March. For a complete list of recipients in the 18th Congressional District, visit eshoo.house.gov.
Students return to campus for new school year

By Alicia Mies

Despite ‘elephant in the room,’ school leaders strike hopeful note as in-person education resumes

Amid a national surge of the Delta variant of the coronavirus, Grierson labeled the possibility that the variant will affect the school year as the “elephant in the room.” However, he was relieved to hear of schools shutting down again to contain the virus, he said, but contingency plans have been made in preparation for the future.

“Of course, the health and safety of our students and families and staff members is our primary concern, and if we do need to reverse our direction and go into a shelter in place type of learning format, then we will do so,” Grierson said.

“The nice thing is that most, if not all of our teachers have experience with that.”

Dharap echoed this importance of prioritizing public health and said he also believes that the district is now better prepared in case the delta variant does spike.

“Having gone through this for a year and a half, the plans in place have been tested, so I think it will be a lot easier to figure out where the gaps are and where the issues are and continue serving our students. But of course, we’re hoping that doesn’t happen,” Dharap said.

In front of the entrance to JLS, parent Matt McCulloch proudly snapped a candid picture of his son mounted on his bike, helmet strapped on tight. It was his son’s first day of middle school as a sixth grader and while McCulloch was excited, he also expressed that the increased class sizes, the need to navigate COVID-19 guidelines and the return to seven hours at school.

“Think the masks are going to help as much since we did distance learning,” said Jane Lathrop Stanford Middle School. “But of course, we’re hoping that doesn’t happen,” Dharap said.

For many students, the origin of the pandemic is one of the most stringent in the state.

“I’m a little nervous because I’m not really used to being at school as much since we did distance learning and then hybrid,” said Ragaeta, a student at Palo Alto’s Jane Lathrop Stanford Middle School. “I’m also worried about wearing masks on hot days, but I think the masks are going to help us stay safe, so I’m just glad everyone’s wearing them.”

Nearby, crossing guards expertly coordinated the traffic of middle schoolers on bikes and cars in a queue of backed up cars. Within the organized chaos of the JLS drop off zone, some students chatted with district volunteers who looked hyper-focused on crossing the street, hands clutching backpacks and lips pursed.

For many parents, the orchestrated routine of getting to school is a familiar return to pandemic life. For others, particularly sixth graders and this year’s seventh graders—who began middle school last fall after COVID-19 broke out— the experience is completely new and nerve-wracking.

JLS students, along with all other students at Palo Alto Unified School District middle and high schools, started a new year on Wednesday— the first relatively normal back-to-school day since 2019. Kindergarten and elementary school students begin their year on Thursday.

While around 60% of the JLS student body attended school in person at the end of last semester, the campus population has increased to 97% this year, according to Principal Chris Grierson.

The remaining 3%, or approximately 25 students, will participate in a virtual independent study program run by Stride Learning Solutions, a private vendor of distance learning curriculum.

On campus, students and adults are required to mask indoors in accordance with federal, state and district rules, although masks are optional outdoors. Physical distancing will not be required and COVID-19 tests will be available on campus.

Additionally, the district requires that all staff show proof of vaccination and that those without proof of vaccination be tested daily for COVID-19, according to Board of Education President Shounak Dharap. Unvaccinated volunteers are not allowed on campus. Dharap said that the policy is out of the most stringent in the state.

Even with the excitement about being back on campus, the delta variant has people aware of how socially and mentally overstressing the reentry to school may be for students, given the increased class sizes, the need to navigate COVID-19 guidelines and the return to seven hours at school.

“This is by far the hardest thing coming out of the pandemic is that people are leery of what in-person learning looks and feels like,” he said. “Many people are kind of nervous about the length of a real in-person school day and the stamina it takes being out in public and around other people.

To ease students’ transition back to normal schooling, JLS has adopted a modified block bell schedule with a later start time of 8:30 a.m., a seven period day on Monday and only three to four classes Tuesday through Friday.

Grierson hopes that the new schedule will help students “redevelop social muscles and accelerate gradually to the regular cadence of school before the pandemic.”

Additionally, Panther Camp, an orientation for incoming sixth graders, has been expanded to all JLS students. The week-long itinerary includes mini scavenger hunts so students can find the library, gym and classroom rooms and reminders on how to use Schoology and other school resources.

“Because it isn’t just the sixth graders this year and it’s all grades, it’s this kind of wonderful experience of all of us learning together this whole week,” Assistant Principal Hanisi Accetta told the Weekly.

With new incoming families and students from the lottery-based Connections Program, Grierson and Accetta also hope that Panther Camp will help students get to know unfamiliar faces in their classroom as well.

“Our goal is to make sure that people feel comfortable making new friends and getting to know others, especially when they might not have had that level of practice or exposure in the last 18 months,” Grierson said.

Like other students, eighth grader Harrison Lan felt slightly nervous to start the school year, especially because he hasn’t been back on campus for a year and a half. But despite that minor anxiety, he said he’s looking forward to getting back to normal, trying different classes and reconnecting with friends.

For everyone’s safety, social distancing and masks are required (masks will be available).

Email Contributing Writer Alicia Mies at aliciamies@gmail.com.

About the cover: A school administrator speaks with parents and students before school begins at J.S. Stanford Middle School. Photo by Adam Pardee. Cover design by Douglas Young.
**Fuki Sushi owner, a Palo Alto native, subjected to racial-hate tirade**

Despite a harrowing encounter, Lumi Gardner hopes people will ‘treat others with kindness’

By Sue Dremann

For three generations, Lumi Gardner’s family has operated their popular Fuki Sushi restaurant on El Camino Real in Palo Alto. On Aug. 1, the native Palo Altan experienced a tirade of racial hatred she never imagined would happen in her community, she said.

A customer became enraged when a server said the restaurant wasn’t accepting cash due to the pandemic. He began shrieking at the server, a petite woman, just 5 feet, 2 inches tall, who has worked there for more than 30 years. Gardner told the Palo Alto Weekly, Gardner told her employee that she would step in.

“This is un-American! It’s illegal for you to not accept cash,” he shouted repeatedly, Gardner wrote in a Facebook post, describing the incident.

“I said I would happily accept cash, simply because I wanted to avoid a possibly dangerous situation. He proceeded to scream back at me ‘I don’t understand you (through your mask). You are back at me. ‘I don’t understand you is one thing; body say that to me’. He took out his phone and recorded me while he continued to yell and scream at me about how he was going to sue me, wisely choosing to not express his racist beliefs while on camera,” she wrote in her post.

“It was an experience to say the least,” Gardner told Palo Alto Online on Aug. 6. “It’s still going on. I got a threatening call last night,” she said.

Gardner’s story came to light after Menlo Park City Council member Ray Mueller posted her comments about the incident on his Facebook page. After hearing about the situation from a constituent who was eating at Fuki Sushi and witnessed the abusive tirade, he contacted Palo Alto Vice Mayor Pat Burt. Mueller and Burt went to the restaurant to express support for Gardner, Burt said by phone on Friday. He and Mueller worked to make Gardner, who was still in shock over the incident, feel supported and validated, he said.

“Fuki Sushi is a third-genera-
tion restaurant. It’s a treasured institution,” he said.

Burt said he contacted Palo Alto Mayor Tom DuBois and City Manager Ed Shikada, and Shikada brought Burt Chief Bob Jon-

loop. Palo Alto Police spokesman Con Maloney said on Friday that the department is investigating the incident, but he could not comment further.

Burt said he wants to do something about addressing this incident and others like it through an event that would potentially involve East Palo Alto, Menlo Park and Palo Alto. He would like the event to support the three communities in an affirming way rather than being reactive.

“Here’s what we are as a community, and if there are outliers, we’re going to stand up to them,” he said.

“We need to keep standing up. This is our community we know. It’s not a reflection of our community, but sadly, it’s a reflection of our time,” he said.

For Gardner, the experience was angering as opposed to humiliating. She attended Fairmeadow Elementary School, which she said was “pretty diverse.” The family moved to Los Altos and she went to Los Altos High School. She’s been working at her parents’ restaurant since she was 13 years old.

This area and Fuki Sushi are what she has always known and loved.

“I feel I chose to raise my family here and my children here. Where we live, it’s unique and it’s special. I wouldn’t want to live anywhere else. Every day I come in here and I do my best to take care of people and I do it from my heart. I train our people the same — that’s how you can feel joy every day,” she said.

But the pandemic and recent volatile political rhetoric have been stressful and upsetting for many people, she said.

“I just hope people can treat people with kindness. I think it’s the only way. I really mean that. I don’t want this poison to infect or spread in our community,” she said.

Gardner said the man didn’t make her feel like an outsider. It makes her mad that anyone would feel entitled to think of treating anyone in that manner.

While the man was berating her in front of her staff and in the parking lot, her busboy was watching. She felt concerned for him and her other staff members — people she said are gentle and kind.

“It breaks my heart that the customer would do that to someone else and they would not have the confidence to call that out. Most of my team is Asian and I saw that it really struck them hard. They are raising their children here. I could see they felt the same kind of anger that I felt. Their children are American-born,” she said. 

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**Public Agenda**

A preview of Palo Alto government meetings next week

**CITY COUNCIL...** The council plans to receive a presentation from Valley Water about the drought and hold a pre-screening session for a proposed development with 49 town houses at 280 and 300 Lambert Ave. The council will then consider a recommendation to decline adopting energy storage system targets and discuss a workplan for developing a tax measure for the 2022 ballot. The virtual meeting will begin at 5 p.m. on Aug. 16. Those wishing to participate by Zoom can do so by dialing 669-900-6833 and using Meeting ID: 938 281 037. The meeting will begin at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 19. The agenda was not available by press time. Those wishing to participate by Zoom can do so by dialing 669-900-6833 and using Meeting ID: 992 2730 7235.

**COUNCIL FINANCE COMMITTEE...** The committee plans to consider a recommendation to approve a verified emission reduction agreement with Integrative Organization Oaxaca. Indigenous and Agricultural Communities to purchase 24,000 tons of carbon dioxide equivalent for $228,000. The virtual meeting will begin at 6 p.m. on Tuesday, Aug. 17. Those wishing to participate by Zoom can do so by dialing 669-900-6833 and using Meeting ID: 992 2730 7235.

**CITY/SCHOOL LIAISON COMMITTEE...** The committee plans to meet at 8:30 a.m. on Thursday, Aug. 19. The agenda was not available by press time.

**PUBLIC ART COMMISSION...** The commission plans to adopt its two-year work plan, discuss the Midtown poetry murals and get an update on temporary art in the new public safety building. The virtual meeting will begin at 7 p.m. on Thursday, Aug. 19. The agenda was not available by press time. Those wishing to participate by Zoom can do so by dialing 669-900-6833 and using Meeting ID: 938 281 037.

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Bridge (continued from page 5)

Rosie Lefkowitz looks over a collection of photos in her home in Palo Alto from the pedestrian and bicycle underpass dedicated to her late husband, Benjamin Lefkowitz.

Benjamin’s wife, Rosalie Lefkowitz, recalled in an interview her husband’s passion for bicycling. After lobbying the city to build a bike overpass at Oregon Expressway, Lefkowitz led the charge to convince the City Council to build another access point to the Baylands farther south. But by the time the underpass was completed in 1989, his riding days were behind him. He was diagnosed with ALS in 1987. Photos of the inauguration ceremony show him smiling in his Western Wheelers hat as he is being recognized by former council members Larry Klein and Leland Levy near the undercrossing.

“‘He got to see it and roll across it,’” his son said.

Benjamin died in April 1990, according to a Western Wheelers newsletter from that year. The bicycling club, where he served as president from 1976 to 1977, described him as a “pioneer in bicycle commuting.” Ellen Fletcher, a former council member whose name graces the city’s first bike boulevard and a middle school, called him an “accomplished rider” in the newsletter, though noted that he was “always patient with even the slowest riders.”

His passion for bicycling continued well beyond his pedaling days. One year before his death, he established a trust fund in which the annual interest went to a person who makes significant contributions to bicycling in Palo Alto. Fletcher was the first recipient of the award.

Now, the undercrossing is in its final days. Palo Alto is nearing completion of its new bike bridge at Adobe Creek, a $24-million span that is tentatively set to open to the public in October. Unlike the undercrossing, which is only open between April and October, the bridge would provide riders with year-round access to the Baylands. But while the bike bridge is an immensely popular project with local bikers — and one that Benjamin Lefkowitz would have surely applauded — those who knew him hope that the improvement will not inadvertently obscure his place in Palo Alto’s history.

Western Wheelers, which Lefkowitz joined in 1972, submitted a letter in July asking the City Council to keep the Lefkowitz name on the new bridge. Benjamin Lefkowitz got around by bike at a time when “bicycling was an unusual form of transportation for adults,” the letter states.

“As Ben once said, ‘I bicycle because it’s a healthy, economical way to get around, and it’s ecologically sound. It gives me a sense of freedom and motion I have found in no other activity.’

This perspective has since found widespread acceptance in Palo Alto and forms an essential part of the City’s identity,” the Western Wheelers newsletter states.

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Albert Bandura, the David and Lucile Packard Professor of Social Science in Psychology, emeritus, in the School of Humanities and Sciences, whose theory of social learning revealed the importance of observing and modeling behaviors, died peacefully in his sleep in his Stanford home on July 26. He was 95.

Bandura is internationally recognized as one of the world’s most influential social psychologists for his groundbreaking research on the importance of learning by observing others. In a 2002 issue of the General Review of Psychology, Bandura was ranked the fourth “most eminent psychologist of the 20th century” behind B.F. Skinner, Jean Piaget, and Sigmund Freud.

He is best known for developing social cognitive theory (also known as social learning theory); the concept of self-efficacy — the idea that a person’s belief in their ability to succeed can shape how they think, act and feel; and his Bobo Doll experiments.

By Holly Alyssa MacCormick

**Ruth S. Satterthwaite**

March 11, 1943 – July 19, 2021

Ruth C. Satterthwaite, a resident of Palo Alto for 56 years, died peacefully at home on July 19 of pancreatic cancer. Ruth was 78 years old.

To her family, Ruth was a loving, loyal and dedicated wife and mother.

As a mother, Ruth not only unconditionally supported her own children in their academic pursuits and hobbies but immersed herself in, inspiring in her children a sense of confidence and community. Among her friends, she was known for her cheery disposition, lifting speech and pixie sense of humor.

Ruth was also a talented musician, writer, editor, and genealogist. She was born in Doylestown, PA, to Walter M. Carwithen Jr. and Ruth Leech Carwithen. Ruth attended Ripon College, graduating Phi Beta Kappa in 1965 with degrees in English and music. After college, she worked in Boston for the publisher Houghton Mifflin.

Ruth married Edwin H. Satterthwaite, Jr. in 1966. They moved to Palo Alto, where Ed was pursuing a PhD at Stanford. In 1971-72, they lived in Newcastle upon Tyne, UK, where Ed taught at the university. That experience cemented Ruth’s life-long interest in British history and in her own family roots in the Devon-Cornwall area.

Ruth and Ed subsequently returned to Palo Alto and have lived there essentially ever since. In addition to raising two sons, Rob and Will, Ruth became the consummate community volunteer. She was a frequent parent volunteer with her sons in their school and became active in the San Mateo County Genealogy Society as well as a writing group and several writing projects.

Ruth ardently pursued her passions for music and genealogy. In addition to joining several musical groups and choirs, she sang for fifty years with a group of friends who gathered weekly to read and enjoy early music. She also gained a reputation as an expert amateur genealogist and became active in the San Mateo County Genealogy Society as well as a writing group and several writing collaborations.

Ruth is survived by her husband, Ed, her brother Thomas, her two sons, Robert (Elizabeth) and William, and two grandchildren, Ella and Conner. In lieu of flowers, the family suggests memorial donations to a favorite charity in honor of Ruth.
Timeless Beauty with a blend of Old Charm and a Modern Flare!

404 West Meadow Drive, Palo Alto
Listed at $2,699,000
3 BD | 2 BA | 1700± SF

This gorgeous home with 3 large bedrooms and 2 full baths, sits on a corner lot with abundant natural light. Extensively remodeled kitchen with brand new flooring, custom cabinetry, steel appliances and breakfast area. Elegant living room with a brick fireplace and a formal dining room boasts of space for entertaining guests or just for a quiet cozy evening. Hardwood floors throughout make seamless transition between rooms. Detailed trim work and tall ceilings add to the character. Front bedroom has a nook perfect for study or work from home. Brand new instant hot water heater. Mature landscaping and a beautiful pergola for outdoor summer evenings!

Excellent Palo Alto schools including Barron Park Elementary, Fletcher Middle, and Gunn High are located close by. Convenient location with close proximity to Stanford University, Facebook, Google, LinkedIn, Apple, VMWare, Roche, SAP etc... Stroll to nearby Robles Park, and fine dining along El Camino Real. Easy access to 101 and 280 freeways.

For more pictures and details please visit www.404WestMeadowDr.com

Ashu Chadha, Realtor
DRE# 01068735
408-838-3892

www.PaloAltoOnline.com • Palo Alto Weekly • August 13, 2021 • Page 15
37th Annual Palo Alto Weekly Moonlight Run & Walk

Presented by City of Palo Alto

RACE NIGHT
SEPTEMBER 17, 2021
HALF MARATHON, 10K & 5K

Early Bird Registration

Sign up by August 25 and save $5

Use the promo code: "EARLY5"

Register at PaloAltowweeklyMoonlightRun.com
I’m so excited ... nope, not for a long-awaited vacation nor my grandson leaving for college or even a fancy restaurant meal indoors. Very soon, I’m due for one of Palo Alto’s twice yearly, free garbage cleanup days. For this homeowner, who once shamelessly begged, “I’ll pay double, just hurry!” for an instant pickup of an old critter-infested chair, free “anything goes” via GreenWaste beats winning the lottery.

Palo Alto has always been ahead of its time — open space, open classrooms, bike lanes. Though not everyone has agreed on the city’s priorities, you won’t find a sane citizen who doesn’t applaud a gratis garbage cleanup twice yearly, free one of Palo Alto’s long-awaited meal indoors. Very inexpensive and shady. Best of all, they precluded environmental overload — there were no garages.

Instead, a modest, shed-like structure hugged one side of these carports for minimal storage — room for a fold-up lawn chair and cooler, a few pots and garden spades and perhaps a small set of every-day tools. What else did a family of four or five really need back then? Costco had yet to con buyers into actually paying a fee for the privilege of a five-year inventory of napkins, pretzels and paprika. “Hoarders” hadn’t grown into the guilty little TV show secret for a generation of viewers.

Fast forward to the age of conspicuous consumerism when “We need a garage!” became the middle-class mantra of suburban homeowners. No matter that these protruding structures marred curb appeal, or were packed with worn, useless, ill-used, never-used, may-someday-be-used stuff. Inside, forgotten on shelves and in corners hid the broken, battered and bent, the unfashionable, unattractive and unneeded feathers from our nests. Garages “archived” term papers, yearbooks, photos, 45 rpm records and bills paid long ago. And while crammed garages were precluded environmental overload — there were no garages.

The next mantra, which started not very long after the garage addition, became a variation on the theme of “Who’s going to help clean the garage?” This ritual — the begging, not the work — continued until finally a definite date was inked on the “Must Do” calendar. “When this time we mean it, Mom” day arrived, lame excuses and sudden disappearances canceled my best-laid plans. Whether from family or the garbage company, there were no free cleanup days.

Renewed vows to declutter surfaced regularly as more stuff vied for additional space. “Maybe it’s in the garage” became a familiar refrain. No more! With the pandemic and progressive trends to save the planet, the attic atmosphere of garages has now morphed into a family room, a studio and maybe even a man cave. My own trash has been tamed, and my mismatched bins and banker boxes sit still and legibly labeled. My car fits with room to spare.

Usable stuff still remains in the garage — holiday decor, pool equipment, a barbecue grill and dishes saved for the college-bound grandkids. I admit to having a second fridge. Also in its special place, rolled up by the side door and easy to retrieve, stands my trusty American flag, ready to be unfurled to fly on national holidays.

On the next free pickup day, we’ll likely only save special memorabilia that reek of Americana: old baseball mitts, an out-of-print United States history book, a Rosie the Riveter poster.

Like other dated fashions of clothing and decor, vintage is “in” and retro often finds a way of roaring back, so I’ll hang on to the old emblems, wait for a probable comeback and continue to let Old Glory wave outside our newly decluttered garage.

Evelyn Preston is a former Palo Alto teacher and a 25-year investment adviser who now writes.
ELEGANCE, CHARM, AND A SOUGHT-AFTER LOCATION

A brilliant garden setting welcomes you to this beautiful 5-bedroom, 4-bathroom home in the sought-after neighborhood of Community Center. Nearly 3,600 square feet of elegant living space enjoys high-end appointments including hardwood floors and detailed moldings, with an open floorplan that exudes warmth, charm, and hospitality. Large-scale spaces invite both entertaining and quiet evenings at home, beginning in the living room anchored by a centerpiece fireplace. From there, the chef’s kitchen with top-end appliances flows into the nearby family room with a fireplace all its own, and downstairs, a large flexible-use room with a wet bar offers ideal space for a media center. Comfortable bedrooms include the primary suite with a spa-like bathroom, as well as a convenient guest suite. An entertainer’s dream awaits in the backyard, where a majestic redwood shades the expansive patio with an outdoor kitchen and inviting fireplace. Plus, an extended driveway and detached garage ensure ample parking is always available. Convenient to Stanford University, the shops and restaurants of University Avenue, and vibrant public spaces including Rinconada Park and Gamble Garden, this home is also served by top-ranked schools Walter Hays Elementary, Greene Middle, and Palo Alto High (buyer to verify eligibility).

OPEN HOUSE: SATURDAY & SUNDAY 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM
www.1018FultonSt.com
Offered at $5,288,000

Listed by the DeLeOn Team • 2.5% Commission Paid to Buyer’s Agent • Waived if DeLeOn Buyer’s Agent

Michael Repka, DRE #01854880 | 650.900.7000 | michael@deleonest.com
Alexandra Wilbur, DRE #01926475 | 650.459.3888 | alex@deleonest.com | DeLeOn Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
BRAND-NEW CONSTRUCTION WITH A CONVENIENT LOCATION

Clean, modern lines and a floorplan perfect for the Silicon Valley lifestyle of today highlight this newly constructed home created by Tektle Design. Soaring ceilings and tremendous natural light offer a breezy sense of openness from the moment you step inside, as beautiful wide-plank oak floors extend throughout nearly 3,700 square feet of living space filled with open gathering areas scaled for entertaining. A focal-point fireplace in floor-to-ceiling textured tile centers the living room, the chef’s kitchen enjoys top-of-the-line appliances from Wolf, Bosch, and Sub-Zero, and the downstairs level includes a wet bar and offers space for a game room, wine room, and a convenient Zoom office. Arranged over three levels, the home’s 5 bedrooms and 4.5 bathrooms offer comfortable accommodations for family and friends, highlighted by the expansive primary suite, and the convenient guest suite. And for indoor/outdoor living, the peaceful backyard provides a sizable patio, lush lawn, and trees lining the perimeter. Just moments to the great shops and restaurants along California Avenue, this home is also minutes away from Stanford University, a short drive to University Avenue, and blocks from top-ranked Escondido Elementary.

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

www.1251College.com
Offered at $5,498,000

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Michael Repka, DRE #01854880 | 650-900-7000 | michael@deleonrealty.com
Alexandra Wilbur, DRE #01926475 | 650-459-3888 | alex@deleonrealty.com | DeLeón Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
316-318 WAVERLEY STREET
PALO ALTO

STYLISH AND UPDATED IN THE HEART OF DOWNTOWN

An ultra-convenient downtown location just 1.5 blocks from University Avenue highlights these stylish, updated homes that offer a total of 4 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, and over 2,200 square feet of living space, both located on a lot of 5,250 square feet. Refinished oak floors extend throughout the light-filled home at 316 Waverley Street that boasts a large living room, dining room, and a remodeled kitchen with stainless-steel appliances, plus remodeled bathrooms and 3 comfortable bedrooms including the primary suite with a refinished, circa-1900 clawfoot tub. The home located at 318 Waverley Street also enjoys gorgeous oak floors, and comfortable living space that includes the granite-appointed kitchen, an office, and the living room that opens to a wonderful deck. Additionally, both homes are separately metered, both enjoy private outdoor patio space shaded by their own retractable awning and power provided by solar panels, and 316 provides a garden with a lawn and avocado tree. Just down the street from Johnson Park, these homes are also blocks to Caltrain, a short drive to Stanford University, and moments from some of Silicon Valley’s finest shops and restaurants. Plus, 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.316Waverley.com
Offered at $2,988,000

Listed by the DeLeon Team • 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@deleonrealty.com
Managing Broker: Michael Repka, DRE #01854880 | www.deleonrealty.com | DeLeon Realty, Inc. | DRE #01903224
Bright, spacious interiors and an open floorplan highlight this 4-bedroom, 3-bathroom home located in the heart of Silicon Valley. Beautiful engineered hardwood floors extend throughout nearly 1,900 square feet of interior space that offers an ideal setting for a modern lifestyle, as the spacious living room flows seamlessly into the dining room, which adjoins the kitchen for easy entertaining. The primary suite features a dual-sink vanity and step-in shower, and the home’s additional bedrooms include a convenient guest suite perfect for family and friends. In the backyard, a deck and lawn offer great space for outdoor enjoyment and entertaining, with fruit trees and rose bushes populating the peaceful, private setting. Just moments from both Mango Park and De Anza Park, this home is also convenient to top tech companies including Apple and LinkedIn, and is just a short drive from Highway 85. Plus, top-ranked schools Cumberland Elementary and Sunnyvale Middle are both within approximately 1 mile.

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

www.773WRemington.com
Offered at $1,988,000

Listed by the DeLeon Team • 2.5% Commission Paid to Buyer’s Agent • Waived if DeLeon Buyer’s Agent

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Woven in time

‘Interlaced’ exhibition at Qualia Contemporary Art showcases weaving techniques old and new

By Sheryl Nonnenberg

As a child growing up in an isolated, mountainous area of China, Dacia Xu would gather with friends to knit and crochet. “My earliest memory are the images of my mother weaving,” she said in an interview. “The sound of the loom in the house made me feel safe and warm.”

After opening Qualia Contemporary Art in Palo Alto in January of this year, she promised herself she would feature a textile exhibition as soon as possible. She has fulfilled that intention with “Interlaced,” a group exhibition of seven contemporary textile artists, on view through Oct. 1.

The show consists of seven artists (Terri Friedman, Kiki Smith, Hung Liu, Josh Faught, William Wiley, Robert Kushner and Xiaoze Xie), with work created in traditional and more contemporary processes. All of the artists adhere to one of the medium’s most basic objectives: to tell a story.

Tapestries can be traced as far back as the ancient Egyptians and Incas, who buried their dead in woven clothing. During the medieval period, tapestries were used by the church to impart stories from the Bible, and to insulate castles and provide privacy. A prized commodity, tapestry-making made a major advancement with the invention of the Jacquard mechanical loom in the early 1800s. This allowed them to move between painting and tapestry for many years. His Jacquard weavings in this show depict sacred books, covered in clothes and a stack of folded newspapers. The colors in these tapestries are intensely deep and beautiful and make the rather mundane subject matter glow with life. Xu explained that the artist likes to employ cultural objects like newspapers and books because they reflect “ephemeral notions of time and our collective memory about events.” She added that there is no overt political message intended in these works, but rather the goal is “gathering interest in these objects, because the viewer can’t actually read them.”

Liu, whose paintings are currently featured at the De Young Museum, was born in Changchun, China and was trained in the Chinese socialist realist style. That is evident in her vividly colored “Above the Clouds,” a portrait of a young child seated on cushions as white cranes (symbols of happiness) fly around him. There is a peaceful serenity to the tapestry, as there is in “Madame Shoemak-er,” where a kneeling figure works while encircled by spectacularly colored butterflies.

Liu died on Aug. 7 at the age of 73. Said Xu, “Hung was one of the first Chinese artists to establish a career in the West. Her works that focus on the life of women in Chinese history particularly resonate with me. She will be greatly missed.”

There are stark contrasts in the works of Kushner and Wiley. Using the Jacquard technique, both artists have designed wondrous landscapes. In the case of Wiley, known as a member of the California funk movement that was based at University of California at Davis in the 1960s and ’70s, there is a fantastical beast nipping at the sun, while planets, plants and nonsensical writings fill the background.

Kushner’s work is more lyrical and representational, with lush, floral elements that dance across the tapestry. It is easy to imagine his work adorning the walls of a well-appointed home, which is fitting since Kushner is involved in the pattern and decoration movement. These artists seek, according to the gallery press release, “to revere and produce forms of objects and materials,” she said.

Fought, a professor of textiles at California College of the Arts (CCA), definitely fits that description. Here he is represented with several pieces that incorporate aspects of handweaving (hemp is the material) with found objects and materials,” she said.

Painted Hung Liu drew on vivid colors and socialist realist influences in pieces such as “September,” on display through Oct. 1 at Qualia Contemporary Art.

Robert Kushner used the Jacquard technique to create “Change of Seasons.”

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about trying to explore painting with new methods and materials.”

“WHY” is a crazy-quilt of color and pattern, mainly in hues of pink and purple, with the word “why” prominently woven into the body of the piece. “Green Placebo,” a work of brightly contrasting hues of green and red, also has the title woven into the tapestry. “Green Placebo” is inspired by my interest in neuroscience and the whole notion of brain plasticity/neuroplasticity. My work is all about rewiring the brain and the loom as a metaphor for wiring (the warp/weft threads),” Friedman said.

Although there is a sharp contrast between the tightly woven, mechanically produced tapesries and the more free-form, handwork pieces in the show, Xu believes that the entire cycle of history surrounding this ancient medium has revolved back to where it started.

“The newer approaches of handweaving, knitting and crochet could be the more ancient approaches,” she said. “I hope the exhibition can provide a glimpse into the change and development of fiber art over time.” Qualia Contemporary Art is located at 328 University Ave., Palo Alto. More information is available at qualiacontemporaryart.com.

Correction
In the Aug. 6 Arts & Entertainment story on the Palo Alto School of Chamber Music, there was an error in the organization’s name in the subheadline that could have caused it to be confused with a different, unaffiliated group, the Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra. The Weekly regrets the error.

Palo Alto – Stevenson House
• Waiting list for Studio units for 62+: Open: 9 am, August 9 – 5 pm, August 20, 2021. HUD subsidized rent based on income. Apply online at stevenonhouse.org. Completed applications will be entered into a lottery to determine ranking and waiting list position. No visits to the property office please.

• Lista de espera para apartamentos tipo estudio para 62+: Abierta: 9 am, 9 de agosto - 5 pm, 20 de agosto de 2021. Alquiler subsidiado por HUD basado en ingresos. Solicite en línea en . Las solicitudes completadas se ingresarán en una lotería para determinar la clasificación y la posición en la lista de espera. No visitas a la oficina de la propiedad, por favor.

455 E. Charleston Road, Palo Alto
650-494-1944
Email: stevenonhouse@jsco.net
stevenonhouse.org

www.PaloAltoOnline.com • Palo Alto Weekly • August 13, 2021 • Page 23
OPEN HOUSE
SATURDAY 8/14 & SUNDAY 8/15 1:30 PM - 4:30 PM

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$12,988,000 | 7 Bd | 11 Bth
www.65Selby.com

651 LOWELL AVENUE
PALO ALTO
$9,988,000 | 6 Bd | 5.5 Bth
www.651Lowell.com

1018 FULTON STREET
PALO ALTO
$5,288,000 | 5 Bd | 4 Bth
www.1018FultonSt.com

1251 COLLEGE AVENUE
PALO ALTO
$5,498,000 | 5 Bd | 4.5 Bth
www.1251College.com

316-318 WAVELEY STREET
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$2,988,000 | 316: 3 Bd | 3 Bth
318: 1 Bd | 2 Bth
www.316Waverley.com

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Justin Rodriguez and Jarad Gallagher were on the hunt. They’d embarked on a road trip, driving hundreds of miles through Spain and Portugal tasting dishes throughout the region. When it came to finding the specific dish they were searching for, the two just weren’t having any luck.

“We were driving down this road, looking for this whole roasted suckling pig, but hadn’t found it in the way we’d hoped,” Rodriguez said.

Finally, there it was in Albufeira—“in a little restaurant with a sign of a sucking pig on it.”

“It was probably the best food we had,” Rodriguez said. That’s high praise, coming from Rodriguez and Gallagher, who both come from Michelin-starred restaurants, including Mountain View’s Chez TJ.

Now Rodriguez and Gallagher are bringing flavors from those experiences to the Peninsula at the Shashi Hotel in Mountain View. “That was something we really identified with as an outstanding cuisine where we thought we could add to the conversation,” said Rodriguez, the director of food and beverage operations. “We’re basically trying to be true to the intention of the dishes and the products we’re taking from those areas, but putting our own interpretation on them in the way we’d want to eat it.”

The Emerald Hour is open now, with three other food establishments to follow.

The Emerald Hour

The Emerald Hour is both a drinking and dining destination. There are tapas-style dishes like marcona almonds with Périgord truffles, sea salt, lemon zest, and gildas with manzanilla olives, boquerones and guindilla peppers. There are also charcuterie boards with cured meats and Spanish cheeses, as well as sandwiches featuring fresh and local ingredients like the Mt. Tam & Fig Melt, and A5 Miyazaki wagyu with lettuce cups and Vietnamese-inspired mèo chảm. Much of the menu is based on seafood.

“That’s what I like to eat, that’s what I like to cook,” Gallagher said. The Emerald Hour offers such dishes as black cod with truffle, grains and squash blossom and oysters with green apple mignonette.

Cocktails feature recipes developed by Rodriguez, with a focus on clear spirits like tequila and white rum. A base spirit lays the foundation for each cocktail. Then, for anything else that’s added, they use cooking and kitchen techniques for house-made syrups, tinctures and bitters.

“We make everything fresh,” Rodriguez said. Seasonal cocktails showcase this. For a seasonal take on a sidecar, the team previously used a base of Chateau Dudognon Grand Champagne Cognac. Then they took a pound of Rainier cherries and put them into a Cryovac vacuum chamber. They prepared them sous vide for two hours at 130 degrees before bringing it all together and finishing the cocktail with orange. Currently, for the Snap Pea on the Rocks cocktail, they’re extracting solids from sugar snap peas by running them through a centrifuge to create a pea gin that’s refreshing and light.

“We have centrifuges going all the time … and a lot of modern techniques,” Rodriguez said. “It is certainly equipment you’d see in a lab, but we’re just making drinks with it.”

Carte Blanche

Serving coffee from San Juan Bautista’s Vertigo Coffee Roasters, the cafe Carte Blanche will also have a technological twist. “(The cafe’s) got all the bells and whistles, and integrations of some technology, like a self-pour robot machine for pour-overs,” Gallagher said. “Starbucks has already filled the market with what they do. There’s no reason for us to duplicate that,” he explained.

“Broma has already filled the market with what they do. There’s no reason for us to duplicate that,” he explained. The white-and-gold cafe will have two signature desserts: One will be an affogato, and the other will be inspired by European baguettes and Nutella. “If you’re a traveling student, you buy a big batch and that’s what you live off,” Gallagher said.

Carte Blanche makes this dessert extra decadent with brioche. “Think of a lobster roll, filled with chocolate ganache,” he said.

Broma

As a casual spot for Spanish fare, Broma will complement Emerald Hour. “Broma” is an expression that means to “banter back and forth,” said Gallagher. “It’s kind of like giving each other a hard time.”

He wants a meal with more of that, and less screen time and Googling. “I like the idea of a group of people sitting around a table … bantering back and forth about sports or whatever it is,” Gallagher said. “Now, conversations are a little more pointed and direct, because everyone has the answer to everything.”

Gallagher isn’t afraid to shake up the dining room vibe as (continued on page 28)
Shashi Hotel
(continued from page 27)
needed. “One night, it was getting a little stuffy in that area. I went out there and rang a big gong to make everyone laugh. I need it to be fun,” Gallagher said. “It’s supposed to have a fun, positive energy.”

Belle Terre
Belle Terre will offer a different atmosphere — the fine-dining restaurant was “designed like a gold meteor slammed into the earth and petrified into it.” A dining room looks toward a doorless kitchen with a smoker and hearth. There’s a parlor with crystal details in the back for people seeking privacy, and a wall-to-ceiling wine cellar that runs the length of the restaurant.

The aim is to be exclusive, Gallagher said, and there’s a price tag to match: Items will start at $85 on a prix fixe, a la carte menu that features French, Italian and German cuisine with Californian influence. He emphasizes that it’s “all really exclusive food” — they’ll eventually grow some of their own produce, aiming for fruits and vegetables that can’t be found elsewhere.

Something else that can be hard to find? “We’re trying to give a three Michelin-starred dining experience in 1 1/2 to two hours,” Gallagher said.

Expediting the fine dining experience is a practical consideration for serving Silicon Valley.

“People are traveling, they’re tired, they’ve got long work meeting days. People aren’t that interested in having a meal that goes past three hours,” Gallagher said. “I like my 5 1/2 (hour) long meals, but in Silicon Valley with the traffic and the way schedules work, it’s not very realistic.”

But banter over good food and drink? That just might be more realistic.

The Emerald Hour is open now at the Shashi Hotel in Mountain View. The team hopes to open Carte Blanche and Broma before the end of the year, and Belle Terre in 2022.

The Emerald Hour, 1625 N Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View; 650-420-2600, theemeraldhour.com.

Email Associate Digital Editor Sara Hayden at peninsulafoodist@paweekly.com.

The Emerald Hour recently opened at the Shashi Hotel in Mountain View.

The “Everything’s Peachy” cocktail is made of white rum infused with Snowbrite peach, a brown butter-pecan orgeat, lemon juice, lime juice, Peychaud’s bitters and Amaro Nonino, as well as cardamom seed and grains of paradise.

Answers to this week’s puzzles, which can be found on page 35.

65 Bay Area locations.
66 if we count your couch.

In-person or virtual visits at Peninsula Pediatric Medical Group

Stanford Childrens Health

genpeds.stanfordchildrens.org
This project as proposed would violate numerous standard zoning rules, chief among them the city’s density limit on residential developments. The half-acre site in an R-20 zone would, by definition, normally allow 10 dwellings. In this case, Smith is proposing 73.

In addition, the 55,960-square-foot building (91,590-square-foot with the two garage levels) would exceed the height regulation by 45 feet and the setback regulation by 10 feet. Smith Development would be well shy of the city’s zoning height regulations.

The proposal for 660 University is similar in many ways to the one considered for the California Avenue site. The plan called for a mixed-use development with 75 housing units and offices on the ground floor. It also sought to combine three properties — at 123 Sherman Ave., 150 Grant Ave. and 2501 Park Blvd. — for a new mixed-use development and the University Avenue proposal. It rested on the flexible “planned-home” zoning process to exceed zoning regulations.

Ultimately, Smith opted to instead move ahead with a purely commercial project that is consistent with underlying zoning and that, as such, would not need to undergo the rigorous screening process that is reserved for planned-home projects. The process involves a “prescreening” session in front of the City Council, followed by formal hearings by the Planning and Transportation Commission and the council.

Another planned-home project, a proposal by Roger Fields to build a 49-condominium development at 280 and 300 Lambert Ave., is scheduled for a council prescreening next week. The project will call for 10 townhome-style condominiums in a 35-foot-tall building at the front of the property and a five-story, 55-foot building with 57 condominium units in the back. Email Staff Writer Gennady Sheyny at gsheyny@paweekly.com.

Online This Week
These and other news stories were posted on Palo Alto Online throughout the week. For longer versions, go to www.PaloAltoOnline.com/news.

California requires teacher vaccines or COVID tests
After months of reluctance, Gov. Gavin Newsom on Wednesday mandated that all California school employees be vaccinated for COVID-19 or be tested weekly. (Posted Aug. 11, 9:28 a.m.)

Council backs plan for transitional housing
Eager to strike a blow against homelessness, Palo Alto agreed late Monday night to pursue a transitional housing complex with more than 100 rooms on a San Antonio Road site near the Baylands. (Posted Aug. 10, 1:02 a.m.)

City changes direction on East Meadow bikeway
Seeking to thread the needle between residents’ wishes and grant requirements, Palo Alto advanced on Monday a plan to install bike improvements, including protected bikeways, along sections of East Meadow Drive, Fabian Way and Waverley Street. (Posted Aug. 10, 12:18 a.m.)

Police investigate second sexual battery
Palo Alto police are looking for a man who allegedly groped a woman on Monday near Stanford Shopping Center. The incident was the city’s second sexual battery case in two days, the department said Tuesday night. (Posted Aug. 10, 11:42 p.m.)

Council considers mandatory vaccines
As Palo Alto moves ahead with reopening in-person services at City Hall, the city is considering whether to institute a COVID-19 vaccine requirement for city employees, a move that has already been made by Santa Clara County, San Francisco and other jurisdictions around the state. (Posted Aug. 9, 2:59 p.m.)

Palo Alto man drowns in Lake Powell
A man who drowned in Lake Powell in Utah on Thursday while rescuing his children from the water has been identified by the National Park Service as 89-year-old Palo Alto resident Phil Chiang. (Posted Aug. 9, 8:50 a.m.)

Bike bridge opening delayed
Facing construction delays and supply shortages, Palo Alto is now plans to open its new bike bridge over U.S. Highway 101 in late October, according to a city announcement. (Posted Aug. 7, 9:15 a.m.)

(continued from page 5)

been filed by the same plaintiff, Scott Johnson, a quadriplegic man who has sued close to 100 businesses in Palo Alto and Mountain View alone. The list and range of businesses targeted is broad, including national chains like Subway and Chili’s, along with small locally owned restaurants like Don Giovanni and Doppio Zero in downtown Mountain View.

Along with restaurants, smaller cafes like Alexander’s Patisserie and Maison Alyzée have been hit with lawsuits, and grocery stores, including Nob Hill Foods on Grant Road, also have been served. Johnson has sued auto repair shops, hair salons, liquor stores and even a welding shop, Praxair Welding Gas and Supply on Old Middlefield Way.

In most cases, businesses facing ADA lawsuits are doomed to lose in court and instead seek to correct the violation and pay a settlement that can be as high as $26,000. Despite the cost, many see it as a small price to pay compared to fighting a long, losing battle.

Han said he hasn’t decided how to respond to the lawsuit, but he said there’s a sense of injustice to the serial litigation. Business owners are angry, he said, because they go out of their way to accommodate people with wheelchairs and other access-related disabilities. Many, including Tai Pan, don’t remember someone with a wheelchair and a service dog attempting to eat at their restaurant during the months Johnson allegedly ran into these ADA-related roadblocks.

What restaurant employees at Tai Pan do remember, Han said, is a man coming by the restaurant and casing the outdoor tables with measuring tape right around the time Johnson allegedly visited the restaurant. He believes the lawsuit is simply a way to extract
ADA
(continued from page 29)

settlement money from businesses that can scarcely afford it right now.

“It is absolutely a shakedown, it’s extortion by all means,” Han said.

Sandy Liu, owner of Taste, said her restaurant experienced something similar. Nobody recalls a man in a wheelchair trying to eat at the restaurant, but they do remember someone carefully observing the outdoor patio from the sidewalk — something that apparently amounts to a “visit” under the lawsuit. She worries that the alleged ADA violation may have had something to do with the outdoor seating arrangement permitted by the city under the COVID-19 pandemic and that the city may have some responsibility for the multiple lawsuits.

Liu, like Han, said she still doesn’t know exactly how to respond to the lawsuit, but she said businesses can’t afford to deal with legal fees and a high-cost settlement.

“We are facing so many challenges to survive since COVID,” she said. “Our restaurant business is dropping like crazy.”

Though Johnson is an attorney and listed as the plaintiff, the lawsuits are being spearheaded by a San Diego-based law firm called Potter Handy LLP, which specializes in ADA litigation through an arm of the company called the Center for Disability Access. Dennis Price, an attorney with the center, said in an interview last month that all of the lawsuits are well-founded and based on factual violations, and that Johnson did in fact try to patronize these businesses and found they were noncompliant with the ADA.

Price said defense attorneys will sometimes whip their clienteles into a frenzy about Johnson’s motives but that these cases are a clear-cut effort to improve disability access and implement the 30-year-old federal law as it was intended. Serial litigation from private citizens, despite its bad rap, is the only way to push compliance on a large scale.

“Part of Mr. Johnson’s purpose is to vindicate the ADA the way Congress created it,” he said. “It relies on private enforcement, and that is what Mr. Johnson has done.”

In the vast majority of cases, Price said there is an objectional violation that’s pretty hard to contest. Grocery store aisles need enough clearance to travel through in a wheelchair, restaurant tables need to meet certain measurement requirements, and parking spaces must meet rigid standards that go far beyond painting the pavement blue.

The pandemic has been particularly brutal for those with disabilities, Price said, and people with reduced lung capacity were essentially forced into house arrest. Johnson himself got COVID-19 and nearly died from it, he said, and adjustments made during the pandemic to accommodate outdoor activities and social distancing often created barriers for people with mobility-related issues.

“The world presumes an awful lot of things about people who are going to patronize businesses, and what’s important and what’s not,” Price said. “It’s easy to write these things off or call them a technical violation, but sometimes it’s the difference between going out and staying home.”

On a recent webinar hosted by the Mountain View Chamber of Commerce, real estate lawyer Ken Van Vleck said these lawsuits are not frivolous, and most of the infractions cited are in fact violations of the ADA that need to be addressed. Oftentimes the question is not whether a business is going to lose the case, but how badly and at what cost. Protracted litigation is something plaintiffs’ attorneys want, Vleck said, and that can run the cost up to $100,000.

“If your initial reaction is to kick and scream and fight and put a lot of trouble for them, it’s going to cost you more to settle the case,” he said. “It is invariable, in my opinion, to say ‘This case is a loser but we’re going to fight it anyway because we want to make a point’ and then settle it a year later — that just doesn’t make sense.”

It can differ from lease to lease, but it’s usually the business tenant that’s on the hook for maintaining ADA compliance, though landlords can be sued instead of or along with the tenant. And if the landlord has to make expensive fixes to satisfy the ADA, those costs can be passed down to the tenants.

Even businesses that have closed during the pandemic and have been served with a lawsuit can still be liable for damages, attorney Martin Orlick said.

Many businesses opt to quietly settle with Johnson and make the problem go away as quickly as possible, but Han said the recent avalanche of lawsuits has prompted him to publicly take action. Over the last few weeks he has been connecting with other affected business owners and consulting with five different law firms to find some way to prevent costly litigation on such a massive scale from happening again. He believes the city has a role to play and could offer to pay for inspections to ensure local businesses comply with the ADA before getting served with lawsuits.

Han said many of the law firms he’s talked to specialize in ADA lawsuits and know Potter Handy and Johnson well, but he and other business owners are wary of the advice they’re given. They promise a fast settlement in the cheapest way possible, but they also stand to benefit from these court cases.

“Obviously there’s a lot of distrust going around. These guys are just playing the same game; they’re on the other side of the same coin. But what else are you going to do?” Han said.

Since getting the word out about the lawsuit, Han said there’s been an outpouring of support from customers at Tai Pan. One of them, a lawyer from Minnesota, said he also faced an ADA lawsuit and recommended that Han fight back. Others talked about ADA lawsuits like they’re a necessary evil and something that’s been normalized over time, which he believes is a huge problem. It’s not normal to give businesses zero chances to fix these unapparent accessibility problems, he said, and it’s something that ought to change.

“The more you make this type of behavior seem normal, the more this is just going to get out of control,” Han said, pointing to the hundreds of newly filed cases.

“This is literally out of control right now.”

Tony Han, who operates Tai Pan in Palo Alto, was shocked when he learned that an ADA lawsuit had been filed against his restaurant...

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www.PaloAltoOnline.com • Palo Alto Weekly • August 13, 2021 • Page 31
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT

J MOLINA SET DESIGN

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. FBN72753

The following person (persons) (are) doing business as: J MOLINA Set Design, located at 214 Leomoyne Street, Los Angeles, CA 90065-1950

This business is owned by: An Individual. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) (are): JAVAN CARLOS MOLINA

214 Leomoyne Street
Los Angeles, CA 90065-1950

Registrator began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 07/01/2021

A MEADO MEADOW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. FBN72752

The following person (persons) (are) doing business as: A MEADO MEADOW Neighborhood Association, located at 3379 Nathan Way, Palo Alto, CA 94303

This business is owned by: An Unincorporated Association. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) (are): ROCKY BUCK, TREASURER

1379 Nathan Way
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Registrator began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 08/01/2005

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Santa Clara County on July 27, 2021.
(PW) June 10, 2021, 2021

EVE WANG & COMPANY

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. FBN77447

The following person (persons) (are) doing business as: Eve Wang & Company, located at 1135 Walsh Ave., Santa Clara, CA 95050, Santa Clara County. This business is owned by: An Individual. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) (are): XIN WANG, Treasurer

1135 Walsh Ave.
Santa Clara, CA 95050

Registrator began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 07/01/2021

A MEADO MEADOW NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. FBN77448

The following person (persons) (are) doing business as: A MEADO MEADOW Neighborhood Association, located at 3379 Nathan Way, Palo Alto, CA 94303

This business is owned by: An Unincorporated Association. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) (are): ROCKY BUCK, TREASURER

1379 Nathan Way
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Chp/Wittman.

AMNA Treasurer

749 Mayfair Avenue
Palo Alto, CA 94303

Registrator began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 08/01/2005

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Santa Clara County on July 27, 2021.
(PW) June 10, 2021, 2021

EVE WANG & COMPANY

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. FBN77449

The following person (persons) (are) doing business as: Eve Wang & Company, located at 1135 Walsh Ave., Santa Clara, CA 95050, Santa Clara County. This business is owned by: An Individual. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) (are): XIN WANG, Treasurer

1135 Walsh Ave.
Santa Clara, CA 95050

Registrator began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 07/01/2021

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Santa Clara County on July 27, 2021.
(PW) June 10, 2021, 2021

NextVerse AI

FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT File No. FBN77450

The following person (persons) are) doing business as: NextVerse AI, located at 51 E. Campbell Ave., Santa Clara, CA 95050, Santa Clara County.

This business is owned by: A Limited Liability Company. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) (are): NextVerse LLC

51 E. Campbell Ave.
Santa Clara, CA 95050

Registrator began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 07/01/2021

This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Santa Clara County on July 27, 2021.
(PW) June 10, 2021, 2021

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2072 Ashton Avenue $3,588,000
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DeLeon Realty 650-900-7000

PALO ALTO
1181 Lincoln Avenue $4,300,000
Sun 1:30-4:30 3BD/2BA
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2360 Middlefield Road $3,200,000
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:00 4BD/2BA
Pam Barrall 408-202-5143

774 Stone Lane $3,995,000
Sun 1:30-4:30 4BD/3BA
The Dreyfus Group, Golden Gate Sotheby’s International Realty 650-485-3476

1018 Fulton Street $4,988,000
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30 5BD/4.5BA
DeLeon Realty 650-459-3888

1251 College Avenue Call for price
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DeLeon Realty 650-459-3888

4121 Orchard Court $4,663,250
Sun 2:00-4:00 5BD/7BA
The Dreyfus Group, Golden Gate Sotheby’s International Realty 650-485-3476

551 Lowell Avenue $9,988,000
Sat/Sun 1:30-4:30 6BD/5.5BA
DeLeon Realty 650-900-7000

316 Waverley Street $3,988,000
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Across
1 Is perfectly snug
5 “___ and the Tramp”
9 Barroom battle
14 Home of the Jazz
15 Presque Isle’s lake
16 Lofty nest
17 A short and unsatisfying dating show (from an ITV/CBS reality dating show)?
20 Word after social or mixed
21 Luggage on a winter vacation, maybe
22 Urnus, for instance
24 “Aladdin” monkey
26 Cannes entertainment
27 “I think I know this one!”
28 English-speaking country of Central America
31 Jerk-faced jerk
32 Mixtures that create purple (from a 1999 high school football movie)?
36 Actress Shire of “Rocky”
37 Rogue computer in “2001”
38 ___ apso (small terrier)
42 Mount where transactions take place (from a 1999 horror video game-turned-movie)?
45 Revolutionary Guevara
48 Pick
49 Singer Corinne Bailey ___
50 Aloha garlands
52 “Life ___ Highway”
53 #1 Beatles tune of 1970
54 “Ni ___ Kai-Lan” (Nickelodeon cartoon)
55 “The ___ Sanction” (Clint Eastwood film)
56 Oscar-nominated composer Danny
64 Got down, perhaps
65 Remove from the schedule
66 Those things, to Tomas
67 Sets up a vendor booth
68 “I cannot tell ___”
69 “Sabrina, the Teenage Witch” actress Caroline

Down
1 It gets petted
2 Suburban suffix
3 Mausoleum built by Shah Jahan
4 Martin of “The West Wing”
5 #1 Beatles tune of 1970
6 Pavarotti specialty
7 God, in Italy
8 Tokyo currency
9 Enjoy the beach (if you don’t burn easily)
10 Archaeological find
11 “Lawrence of ___” (1962 epic)
12 Grammy-winning gospel singer CeCe
13 Cliff protrusions
18 AB followers
19 Trooper maker
22 Put on Snapchat, say
23 “Livin’ La Vida ___”
24 Country on the Adriatic
25 Listed on a program
29 Branch of philosophy
30 Long swimmers
33 Cage piece
34 Compliment
35 Quieter “Quiet”
39 Photo touch-up tool
40 Bacon hunk
41 “Match Game” host Baldwin
43 Le Havre’s river

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Answers on page 28.

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Answers on page 28.
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