Closed streets, open-air dining hit downtown

Businesses surveyed after pilot program; retailers cite struggles

By Melissa Hartman
Staff Writer/melissa@latc.com

Los Altos City Council discussions last week saw renewed – and unanswered – calls from current and former residents to reduce police department funding in the wake of the Black Lives Matter protests earlier this month.

Meanwhile, Mayor Jan Pepper questioned why funding for the evaluation of expanding the police staff was considered a higher priority than building a new Emergency Operations Center (EOC).

Public comment at the June 16 meeting was dominated by requests that the council review the city’s police budget and internal operating structure.

Los Altos High School graduate Maya Acharya expressed her disappointment in what she called a history of anti-Black racism at the school. She said money could be better spent on working to break down social biases on campus, close the achievement gap and encourage affordable housing to stimulate greater diversity.

"Adding another school resource officer to LAHS will not help. ... It doesn't support students," Acharya said.

See POLICE, Page 5

Businesses surveyed after pilot program; retailers cite struggles

By Eric He
Staff Writer/erich@latc.com

The streets of downtown Los Altos looked different last weekend, with a trial run of the city’s plan to ban vehicular traffic to help local businesses. The closure drew mixed reactions, with restaurant owners generally seeing an increase in business while retailers noted a decline in foot traffic and sales.

The Thursday through Sunday pilot program allowed restaurants to place more tables outside, creating additional space for patrons to honor Santa Clara County’s social-distancing protocols amid the shelter-in-place restrictions. Main and State streets were closed to vehicular traffic from First Street through Fourth Street. The Los Altos City Council, which approved the program at its last meeting, planned to assess its success at its Tuesday meeting, after the Town Crier’s print deadline, and determine whether to continue.

The city held two webinars with downtown business owners Monday to elicit feedback.

Councilwoman Jeannie Bruins acknowledged the retailers’ struggles, expressing hope that merchants were willing to help each other in the best interests of downtown Los Altos.

The city also sent surveys to all business owners, asking them to compare the foot traffic and sales receipts last weekend to those of the weekend before and the same weekend dates from last year. The survey asked whether businesses used the additional outdoor space. Restauranters were asked how many outdoor seats they added, while retailers responded to whether they had a line in front of their business and whether customers had enough space to queue.

Khatchig Jingirian, president of Smythe & Cross Fine Jewelry on Main Street, said Saturday afternoon that sales were down 75% since Thursday.

He added that he hadn’t seen some of his regular customers, and that he’d spoken with four other retailers who also experienced a dramatic drop in numbers. Jingirian said he saw people hanging out on the streets, but they weren’t necessarily shopping.

"It’s nice to see people walking outdoors," he said. "But we forget the downtown is a business district, and unfortunately it’s become more of a park kind of atmosphere.”

See STREETS, Page 6
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Local ideas to shape new public art in LAH

Los Altos Hills’ Public Art Committee is inviting residents to submit thematic ideas for a yet-to-be sculpted artwork meant to represent facets of life in town. Examples include images of an apricot orchard, deer grazing or Silicon Valley technology at work.

“We need your help to infuse this innovative sculpture with iconic images that tell our story and portray the values of our community,” the committee wrote last week.

Los Altos Hills City Council members last month approved the commission, called “Hills Helix,” for Los Altos Hills specialist in large works, above, is crafting a “Hills Helix” for Los Altos Hills.

San Jose artist Roger White Stoller, a San Jose artist, will be crafting the 10-foot-by-12-foot, stainless-steel conic shape that showcases local iconography. A $100,000 donation by Hills resident and artist Karen Druker facilitated the purchase.

Send up to three JPEG photos or sketches to the Public Art Committee at committee@publicartc@gmail.com by 5 p.m. July 26. Include your full name, a description of the image, the location of the scene depicted and an explanation of what the image says about Los Altos Hills.

– Megan V. Winslow

Welcome Eric to the newsroom

You will notice a new journalist covering city events this month. Eric He joins the Los Altos Town Crier as a news reporter.

A native of the Santa Clara Valley, He’s experience ranges from investigative to sports reporting, and you’ll have already spotted his byline in our print and online pages.

Please give him a welcome as you meet him – he looks forward to chatting in English or Cantonese and welcomes your story ideas and feedback at erich@latc.com.

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**MVLA activists hold Juneteenth event**

By Eric He
Staff Writer/erich@lats.com

A n activist group of current and former students from the Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District held a Juneteenth event at Pioneer Memorial Park in downtown Mountain View Friday.

Organizers welcome visitors at a Juneteenth event at Pioneer Memorial Park in Mountain View Friday.

**Purissima Hills Water District defends LAH county fire agency amid scathing audit**

By Megan V. Winslow
Staff Writer/meganw@latc.com

I n advance of a Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors review this week of allegations against the Los Altos Hills County Fire District, a partner agency has publicly defended support of the district.

An audit of the fire district misused $2.2 million in state funds to improve fire suppression efforts within its jurisdiction, argued Ernest Solomon, Purissima Hills Water District (PHWD) Board of Directors president, in a June 15 letter addressed to supervisors Cindy Chavez and Dave Cortese. Chavez and Cortese comprise the Board of Supervisors’ Finance and Government Operations Committee (FGOC), which is tasked with reviewing an audit completed by the board’s Management Audit Division and published May 26. They are expected to do so Thursday morning as part of a joint teleconference meeting between the FGOC and the Children, Seniors and Families Committee, another group Chavez and Cortese preside over. Afterward, the supervisors could make a recommendation to the entire board.

**Vital collaboration**

Within the audit, management audit manager Cheryl Solov questioned whether the fire district’s history of funding enhancements to PHWD infrastructure like fire hydrants and water tanks could constitute illegal “gifts” of public funds. She recommended the Board of Supervisors temporarily suspend fire district commissioners’ authority to prevent them from spending additional taxpayer money on such projects until further review.

California government code, however, allows See AUDIT, Page 7

**Planning commissioner officially announces bid for Los Altos council**

Town Crier Staff Report

L os Altos Planning Commissioner Sally Meadows last week declared plans to run for city council in the Nov. 3 election.

An active volunteer, Meadows has served on local governing boards and nonprofits. She was a member of the city’s Design Review Commission before joining the Planning Commission. She also served as co-chairwoman of El Camino Hospital’s Community Advisory Council and as board president of Mentor Tutor Connection.

“I’m running for city council because we need experienced and common-sense leaders who have a vision for Los Altos today and also accept responsibility and stewardship for tomorrow,” Meadows said in a statement.

She is running her campaign on the slogan “It’s About ALL of Us.”

“Effective leaders understand it’s about all of us, not just the people who vote for you, but also the ones who don’t,” she said.

“Not just the people who live and work here today, but also those who will live and work here tomorrow.”

Meadows established as goals:

• “Work together to strengthen the resilience of our community, our city government, staff and first responders, and our business districts;

• “Act in a common sense, financially responsible way to support the community and improve outcomes for all of us; and

• “Engage respectfully in tough conversations and make hard decisions in a timely and efficient manner.”

Three seats are open on the five-member council in November, with Mayor Jan Pepper and Councilwoman Jeannie Bruins terming-out. Meadows joins incumbent Councilwoman Lynette Lee Eng as the only candidates thus far who have declared their intent to run. The filing period begins July 13 and ends Aug. 7.

**Mountain View race**

With the filing period still roughly three weeks away, the field is already crowded in the race for four open seats on the seven-seat city council in November.

Incumbent Mayor Margaret Abe-Koga and community activist Alex Nunez both announced plans to run June 15. Incumbent Councilwoman Lisa Matchak and former council members Lenny Siegel and Pat Showalter also have declared their intent to run, as has Mountain View Whisman School District board member Jose Gutierrez.

**Farmers’ Market returns to Los Altos**

Town Crier Staff Report

The Los Altos Farmers’ Market will return Thursday after a one-week hiatus, according to the Los Altos Village Association. LAVA canceled last week’s market after taking issue with the California Farmers’ Market Association’s handling of an incident involving a vendor at the Livermore Farmers’ Market earlier this month.

CFMA Executive Director Gail Hayden allegedly told a vendor at the market to stop handing out rainbow flags for LGBTQ Pride Month because it was a violation of CFMA policy. CFMA officials said they requested the vendor distribute the flags in the market’s “free speech” area.

For more on the story, visit losaltosonline.com.
News

5th time’s the charm: Planning Commission sends ADU amendment to Los Altos council

By Melissa Hartman
Staff Writer/melissah@latc.com

The Los Altos Planning Commission last week voted unanimously to recommend approval of amended text addressing accessory dwelling units in the city’s Municipal Code.

For example, San Francisco leaders announced they were going to juggle, but this is frustrating," Parmar said. "The city council is being asked to consider the city’s Housing Element, he said. In his research, Persicone discovered that cities such as Hillsborough and Half Moon Bay conduct annual, voluntary surveys that monitor the rent of ADUs. Similar tracking could give Los Altos’ Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) a boost, as a certain number of ADUs are required by the Department of Housing and Community Development each five-year housing cycle. The city’s Planning Commission need for RHNA numbers, the majority of commissioners favored the idea. The survey will be paired with a mandatory inspection for regular recertification, supported by an annual inspection fee from property owners of $127. The commission directed Persicone to ensure the amended text reflected maximum square footage of 850 for detached single-family ADUs and 1,200 for attached ADUs, expanded from previous requirements of 800 and 1,000, respectively.

The Department of Housing and Community Development mixed a few sections of the language suggested by staff and commissioners, such as adding a requirement that property owners submit a letter if they plan to convert a garage to an ADU, thus creating parking nonconformance. Persicone lamented that the state was overriding much of cities’ local land-use control. Commissioner Phoebe Bressack said a good product still came from the city’s efforts, despite Housing and Community Development being “fairly oxymoronic.”

“The purpose is to ensure compliance with state law,” Bressack said. “I think the piece that I really want to focus on isn’t just complying with state law, but doing it in a manner that (is) the best way we can in reflecting the Los Altos community values.”

POLICE From Page 1

“(Other) alums feel they often intimidate and make students feel uncomfortable. .. Instead of criminalizing our students, we should be looking for other ways to use our money.”

Fellow Los Altos High grad Ishan Parmar brought up examples in other cities of direct change being made, not only in terms of police funding, but in restructuring police priorities. He noted, for example, that San Francisco leaders announced police would no longer be responding to noncriminal calls.

Mayor Jan Pepper thanked each speaker after his or her time expired, but the council offered no comment on the students’ statements.

“I am aware that the council has many priorities, many things to juggle, but this is frustrating,” Parmar said. “The city council is asking questions about whether or not funds are being used reasonably in regard to capital improvement and road maintenance, all of which are very important things, but are not raising such questions about the police.”

The city’s law enforcement policies were scheduled as a topic of discussion when an ad hoc committee organized by Pepper was due to report to the council at Tuesday night’s council meeting, which occurred after the Town Crier’s Monday print deadline.

Prioritizing projects

The 2020-2021 budget as of last week included funds for an additional school resource officer. The public safety budget currently accounts for nearly half of the city’s general fund expenditures. The council did not comment on the requested staff change.

Still, city leaders opted to delay the authorization of a $200,000 evaluation of the police station, labeled in budget documents as “annual civic facilities improvement.”

Councilwoman Neysa Fligor reasoned it would be smarter to do the assessment at a time when the council could afford to take action on the findings sooner rather than later. Pepper added that she was peevd the station study was included as a priority, while the design and construction of a new EOC was not, even after the council had directed it to be prioritized.

“This is very disappointing to me. Our city needs this new public building,” resident Harry Guy said, referring to staff’s recommendation to delay the EOC.

Longtime volunteers with programs such as the Block Action Team and the Community Emergency Response Team in Los Altos, Guy and his colleague Art Whipple were dismayed by the news that progress on the project nearly halted after the council asked for a “rapid” approach. The design is approximately 90% completed, according to engineering services manager Jim Sandoval. The design must be finalized and other documents must be mocked up before the project can go to bid. Guy recounted staffing reporting that the design was 75% completed at a Feb. 25 presentation.

“We really need to start spending money in places where it’s not very popular,” Whipple said. “I would like to see the council doing the talking at the town hall with emergency preparedness walk the talk.”

Despite Councilwoman Lynette Lee Eng’s opposition, the council reprioritized the EOC over the police station.
Restaurants see boon

Vickie Breslin, owner of The Post restaurant in downtown Los Altos, arrived at her restaurant 8 a.m. Thursday in workout clothes, a bundle of excitement as she spaced diagrams provided by the city. She and her staff began moving tables onto Main Street, taking advantage of the first day of the street closures.

“I’m so excited,” said Breslin, looking at outdoor tables full of customers during the 2 p.m. hour. “I’m, like, skipping around.”

Breslin, who said her sales have dropped “tremendously” since closing to dine-in customers March 15 – a day before the county’s shelter-in-place orders – was fully booked Thursday night and expected to be busy all weekend, a sign of the public’s eagerness to return to dining out. Mountain View, Sunnyvale and Redwood City are among the nearby cities that have enacted similar measures to close off streets.

“This community that comes to The Post – people want to go out,” Breslin said. “If we’re not going to offer this, then they’re going to go to a different city that is, so it would really hurt us.”

City workers gradually blocked off downtown streets Thursday morning. Signs mandating social distancing and face coverings were plastered on barriers, and orange cones directed cars to side streets. The city set up an information booth at the corner of Main and Third streets to provide handouts and answer questions from passersby.

City architects checked with restaurants to see if they met the distancing requirements in between tables while also trying to help create enough space for more tables.

Breslin helped spur the city council’s unanimous June 9 decision to close the streets through a Change.org petition that has collected more than 4,400 signatures. She reached out to her network to inundate the council with emails, and she credited Bruins with pushing the plan through to reality.

Detractors weigh in

Not every business supported the closure. Outside Brownhouse Design on Main Street, owner Julie Brown posted two large white sheets of paper with the words: “Street closure is hurting my business. There must be a better way that works for all.”

Brown, who said the pandemic has cost her more than half of her regular interior design business, did not like how the city council handled the closure’s rollout. She noted that some of her neighboring businesses didn’t know the street shutdown was happening, and that it will be a hassle for her to receive essential deliveries.

“We’re constantly ordering samples, products for houses,” Brown said. “Usually they’re time-sensitive and we have to bring them to a client or a job site.”

As Brown aired her grievances, a UPS driver arrived with a package for her. His plan for the weekend for downtown jobs: Park on one of the side streets and walk to deliver, which could take half an hour per stop.

“Today’s the first day,” the driver said. “I don’t have a real heavy load on Main Street right now, but on a day that Cooks’ Junctions gets 30 boxes, it’s going to be a problem.”

Bruins conceded that for retailers whose products are not being placed outdoors, shutting down the streets was not their first choice.

“We understand that,” she said. “But their willingness – they’re willing to say, ‘Look, we’re all in this together. We all want our neighbors on the street to be successful.’”

Patrons wait 6 feet apart outside Tin Pot Creamery at the corner of First and State streets Sunday afternoon. State and Main streets were closed to vehicular traffic over the weekend as part of a pilot program.
Hills council reconsiders, donates to CSA

By Megan V. Winslow
Staff Writer/meganw@latc.com

It required two appeals, but Los Altos Hills City Councilman George Tyson managed to change most of his colleagues’ minds and secure a $5,000 donation for Community Services Agency early Friday morning.

“After last time that we met and the proposal for a $5,000, one-time donation to CSA met with no other support, I have to say, it didn’t even occur to me that we wouldn’t support this,” Tyson said, explaining his decision to rehash the topic.

He is a volunteer and donor to the Mountain View-based social services organization, which counts approximately 16 Hills residents among its beneficiaries. Tyson first proposed the donation — meant to help CSA during the COVID-19 pandemic — while participating in a May 28 joint meeting between the council and town’s Finance and Investment Committee.

Last week, at the tail end of a marathon city council meeting that began Thursday evening and extended until 12:45 a.m. Friday, Mayor Michelle Wu and council members Roger Spreen and Kavita Tankha reversed their positions and voted in favor of the donation. Councilwoman Courtenay Corrigan praised CSA — and others like it — but reiterated her objection to giving taxpayer money to charities of the council’s choosing.

“These are all such needy organizations; they are all so worthy of every dollar,” she said. “But it’s my assertion that those dollars come out of the pocket of the individual — not from tax dollars that have been collected with the expectation they are to be spent on services.”

Holding up her checkout, Corrigan offered to personally split the $5,000 donation among council members, but a long silence followed the suggestion. Tyson explained the donation is more about the gesture than the actual dollar amount.

“There’s a message here. … Are we part of this broader community?” he said. “And does that mean that it helps inspire people to give individual contributions? Absolutely. I’m hoping so.”

Despite the late hour of the often-heated discussion, residents representing views on both sides of the argument chimed in during the teleconferenced council meeting.

The council’s reversal of opinion follows some public ridicule — and support — of its denial of a Los Altos Chamber of Commerce request to match Los Altos’ $250,000 donation to a small-business, COVID-19 relief fund. At the May 28 meeting, council members agreed to give $5,000 to the fund. They also agreed to make a one-time, $5,000 addition to the $11,500 already budgeted for the Community Health Awareness Council (CHAC) in the coming year.

Los Altos Hills leaders differentiate CHAC from other charities because the town has a formalized Joint Powers Authority agreement with the Mountain View nonprofit, and they have a voice regarding its governance through Tyson’s service on the board of directors, Corrigan explained Friday.

Council members agreed developing a town policy for regulating future charitable donations is a prudent idea.

Due to print space constraints, most of this article, including information on Planning Commission appointment and discussion on potential changes to town standing committees, is featured online at losaltosonline.com.
Letters to the Editor

End of an era for iconic ice cream cone

My parents, Henry and Sue Nesmith, have owned Los Altos Hardware for almost 40 years. Before the hardware store took ownership of the property in 1983, the building was home to the famous Clint’s Ice Cream shop, followed by a wonderful French restaurant. The building is known for its iconic ice cream cone that sat on the roof marking the spot of Clint’s Ice Cream Store.

In the midst of obtaining a new roof, Los Altos Hardware realized the historic ice cream cone had to be removed. Every rainy winter the cone would leak severely and merchandise would be ruined because of water damage. For years, we tried to patch the leaks from the inside, but they could never be fixed. When we started to investigate with the roofing company, we realized the foundation was made of narrow wooden beams that were decaying and full of termite damage. Unfortunately, the memorable ice cream cone had to be removed. It was a miracle it never fell over!

We understand the sentimental value of the ice cream cone and are terribly sad to see it go. Before the hardware store took over the storefront, we realized it was a wonderful community and we thank you for your continued support!

Nina Nesmith
Operations manager
Los Altos Hardware

LA council, mayor: ‘We can do better’

I find Los Altos City Councilwoman Jeanne Bruins’ off-hand ed comment to Councilwoman Neya Fligor extremely offensive. Her apology is hollow. She owes an apology to the community as well for her insulting remark. Racist language hurts all who hear it, regardless of their background. Mayor Jan Pepper’s defense of Bruins’ remark is equally concerning. She owes an apology to the community as well.

Their behavior is emblematic of a lack of awareness of council members as to the systemic racism present in American society and the implicit cultural bias that permeates our lexicon.

Apologize to the citizens of Los Altos and prove yourselves. Share your plan to work with the Los Altos Police Department on reducing racially motivated stops and inviting community oversight.

We can do better. We demand better from our leaders.

Gretchen Craford
Los Altos

LAH: All benefits, no assistance

Following is an open letter to Los Altos Hills Mayor Michelle Wu.

After reading your June 10 letter to the editor (“LAH mayor says town backs small businesses”) — your rebuttal to the negative response about the choice the town of Los Altos Hills made to provide just a molecule of fund assistance for the Los Altos Small Business Relief Fund (Los Altos Hills funded one business grant) — I was very unhappy to learn that Los Altos Hills seems to want all of the benefits from a close-in and charming downtown with free parking, but chooses not to assist in any meaningful way during an emergency shutdown of the business community.

The tax-base argument is groundless. Santa Clara County reported a very high rate of recent residential property tax payments, while retail businesses have been prevented from generating revenue, which in turn generates sales-tax revenue. These businesses have been forced to shut down and limit shopping for the sole purpose of keeping everyone in our community healthy.

It is a very unbalanced burden the retailers, service providers and restaurants are forced to endure. Their landlords and mortgage holders are not required by the same COVID-19 orders to stop collecting monthly rents and mortgages. The reason the fund was created was to help, in a small way, balance the inequitable financial burden that continues. The city of Los Altos understands how critical it is to help share the burden.

Due to lack of funding, 20 small businesses that qualify for a Small Business Relief grant will not be provided that assistance. Perhaps Los Altos Hills would prefer to pay on a “per trip” basis: a toll gate at each road artery leading into downtown Los Altos from the Hills.

Sherry Scott
President, Sherry Scott Design
Los Altos

The myth of the ‘model minority’

By Anushka Srinivasan

I f you are South Asian American and perpetuate anti-Blackness, you have fallen prey to an oppressive tactic of the United States government, the concept of “model minorities.”

To combat anti-Blackness, we need to understand the history behind the term “model minority.” In 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson enacted the Immigration and Nationality Act, prioritizing “individuals with specialized skills” in the immigration processes. Consequently, the only South Asians allowed to immigrate to America were exceedingly intelligent and/or talented in a specific discipline. By only allowing the “best” South Asians to enter the country, the U.S. government predetermined the South Asian immigrant population to be successful.

On the other hand, people from the African diaspora were forcibly brought to the U.S. through the transatlantic slave trade. They had no choice to come to America, let alone indulge in the opportunity to learn and develop special skills to “prove their worth.” Therefore, South Asian Americans were systematically supported to be more successful, making the U.S. government consider them a model minority. However, this detrimental approach to immigration policy allowed our government to rest on their laurels and believe that their work in supporting South Asian Americans was advancing the mission of all inclusivity and diversity in the U.S.

Meanwhile, African Americans, who were forced into immigrating and were not given the right resources to be engaged residents through social media to share photos of their favorite takeout and recent retail purchases.

We ask you to show your support of our efforts by donating to the Chamber — losaltoschamber.org.

Kim Mosley
President, Los Altos Chamber of Commerce

Letters to the editor

The Town Crier welcomes letters to the editor on current events pertinent to Los Altos, Los Altos Hills and Mountain View. Drop us a line at 138 Main St., Los Altos 94022. Attn: Editor, or email letters to bruceb@lache.com.
New Los Altos group aims to revitalize downtown area through public art

Town Crier Report

A fter more than eight years on the Los Altos Public Arts Commission and “not getting much done with city government,” Maddy McBirney figured it was time for an alternative plan for public art in the city.

“It has been brought to our attention that we can do public art on private property with private funding without the need of municipal process,” she said.

So McBirney and friend and former Public Arts Commissioner Karen Zucker – among other local art aficionados – founded a nonprofit, Arts Los Altos. Their goal, according to McBirney, is to “provide beautiful, outdoor art” for downtown Los Altos.

“Our downtown could use some artistic, heartfelt beauty to revitalize its spirit,” McBirney said. “Art created for public consumption can bring people together, whether residents or visitors.”

A year in the making, the group announced its formation last week, along with plans for its first public art installation. Arts Los Altos members plan to install “Dodi,” a sculpture from Oakland-based artists calling themselves HYBYCOZO, on the front patio of the Assistance League building at 169 State St. in downtown Los Altos.

Members plan to host an unveiling party in early July.

In a letter to potential donors, Arts Los Altos organizers noted that the piece “will bring color and light to downtown. It is math, science, art and technology at its best.”

Group members hope to raise $60,000 for their first two or three art installations.

“Dodi” is a 6-foot-tall, 12-sided shape with repeating pentagons. It will be illuminated from within, with colored LED lights that produce intricate patterns on the ground surrounding the artwork.

“The sculpture was inspired by the geometry of the flower of life, a symbol found in almost every ancient culture in the world, in plant and flower growth, as well as in the growing embryo during cell division,” Arts Los Altos supporters said in a June 9 press release. “Composed of overlapping circles forming petal shapes, it represents the creation of beauty through unity, a sum greater than the parts.”

Other key members of Arts Los Altos include Sherry Scott, a downtown merchant who runs Sherry Scott Design; Laura Roberts, retired executive director of the MVLA High School Foundation; resident Mike Buntensky; and former Los Altos City Council members Penny Lave and Mary Prochnow.

For more information, visit artlosaltos.org.

Pets In Need offers summer camp via mailbox

Town Crier Staff Report

T he COVID-19 pandemic may have rendered Pets In Need’s annual summer camp impossible, but the nonprofit has found a creative way to keep local children engaged while still raising money for the programs that further its rescue mission.

As of June 15 and throughout the year, the organization is offering Camp PIN Pal Buddy Boxes, curated collections of various pet-themed activities. A free version geared toward seniors is also available. The boxes may be purchased individually or through a subscription service.

“We are proud of our community programs at Pets In Need and are pleased to be able to offer an alternative, at-home experience for our summer campers and our seniors,” said Al Mollica, the organization’s executive director, in a press release. “Our Camp PIN Pal Buddy Boxes are kid-tested and senior-approved, and are a fun way to educate children and adults about animal welfare.”

PIN’s Buddy Boxes for children, which cost $65 each, are best suited for kids between the ages of 8 and 12, according to the press release. They include activities like learning how to design and operate an animal shelter. Buddy Boxes for seniors include trivia questions, a memory game, a word search and are a fun way to educate children and adults about animal welfare.”

See CAMP, Page 10

Volunteer

Ann Coombs: Author of book on LA trees

Town Crier Report

L ongtime Los Altos resident Ann Kleerup Coombs was the ultimate community volunteer. She was active in many organizations, conscientious and thorough in virtually every task she took on. Mrs. Coombs, 86, died April 4 after a prolonged struggle with Parkinson’s disease.

Mrs. Coombs lived in Los Altos for 54 years, contributing in multiple ways. She used her background in chemistry to work on issues related to water resources and toxic and waste materials. She was active in the League of Women Voters, the Girl Scouts, local schools, the city of Los Altos, Santa Clara County (including two terms – seven and a half years as a county planning commissioner) and the state of California.

Former State Sen. Becky Morgan of Los Altos Hills nominated Mrs. Coombs to serve on the Planning Commission, where she did her homework, traveling to sites all over the county where plans were being proposed in an effort to offer better-informed decisions.

She also served on numerous committees, including the Santa See COOMBS, Page 10

Restoring a downtown merchant to vibrant

Community Briefs

State of the Cities event slated Friday

The Los Altos Chamber of Commerce has scheduled a virtual State of the Cities event 11 a.m. Friday.

Los Altos Mayor Jan Pepper and Los Altos Hills Mayor Michelle Wu will discuss past accomplishments and city council priorities for the year.

Registration for the event, a fundraiser for the Chamber and small businesses, is $50. Registrants will receive a $20 gift card redeemable at local businesses.

After consulting with past winners, the Chamber decided this year’s event will not include a Walter and Marie Singer Award presentation recognizing an outstanding local merchant. The Chamber plans to resume the award next year.

To register and donate, visit losalitoschamber.org or 2020SOC.eventbrite.com.

LAH set to host July 4 ‘caravan’

Due to COVID-19 concerns, this year’s Los Altos Hills Independence Day will be a slightly muted affair compared to past iterations, featuring a “caravan” of participants instead of the regular parade, according to organizers.

The caravan, launching 10 a.m. July 4 from town hall, 26379 W. Fremont Road, is limited to representatives from the Santa Clara County Sheriff’s Office, the Santa Clara County Fire Department, 10-15 classic cars and city council members driving the route.

From town hall, the procession will travel west Fremont Road and complete a large circle with right turns onto Roblela, Purissima and Arastadero roads before ending after Palo Hills Drive. Residents are encouraged to walk to the nearest street or drive to Purissima Park, 27500 Purissima Road, or Gardner Bullis School, 25890 Fremont Road, to enjoy the festivities.

For more information, call Los Altos Hills community services supervisor Sarah Robustelli at 947-2518 or email srobustelli@losaltoshills.ca.gov.

Pets In Need’s Buddy Boxes include games and coloring activities

COURTESY OF PETS IN NEED

Pets In Need offers summer camp via mailbox

Town Crier Staff Report

The COVID-19 pandemic may have rendered Pets In Need’s annual summer camp impossible, but the nonprofit has found a creative way to keep local children engaged while still raising money for the programs that further its rescue mission.

As of June 15 and throughout the year, the organization is offering Camp PIN Pal Buddy Boxes, curated collections of various pet-themed activities. A free version geared toward seniors is also available. The boxes may be purchased individually or through a subscription service.

“We are proud of our community programs at Pets In Need and are pleased to be able to offer an alternative, at-home experience for our summer campers and our seniors,” said Al Mollica, the organization’s executive director, in a press release. “Our Camp PIN Pal Buddy Boxes are kid-tested and senior-approved, and are a fun way to educate children and adults about animal welfare.”

PIN’s Buddy Boxes for children, which cost $65 each, are best suited for kids between the ages of 8 and 12, according to the press release. They include activities like learning how to design and operate an animal shelter. Buddy Boxes for seniors include trivia questions, a memory game, a word search and are a fun way to educate children and adults about animal welfare.”

See CAMP, Page 10

Volunteer

Ann Coombs: Author of book on LA trees

Town Crier Report

Longtime Los Altos resident Ann Kleerup Coombs was the ultimate community volunteer. She was active in many organizations, conscientious and thorough in virtually every task she took on. Mrs. Coombs, 86, died April 4 after a prolonged struggle with Parkinson’s disease.

Mrs. Coombs lived in Los Altos for 54 years, contributing in multiple ways. She used her background in chemistry to work on issues related to water resources and toxic and waste materials. She was active in the League of Women Voters, the Girl Scouts, local schools, the city of Los Altos, Santa Clara County (including two terms – seven and a half years as a county planning commissioner) and the state of California.

Former State Sen. Becky Morgan of Los Altos Hills nominated Mrs. Coombs to serve on the Planning Commission, where she did her homework, traveling to sites all over the county where plans were being proposed in an effort to offer better-informed decisions.

She also served on numerous committees, including the Santa See COOMBS, Page 10

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COOMBS
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Clara County Hazardous Waste Planning Committee, the California Department of Health Services Integrated Site Management Advisory Committee and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Integrated Environmental Management Project Public Advisory Committee.

In 2004, Mrs. Coombs received the Los Altos-Los Altos Hills Joint Community Volunteer Service Award.

“She had an insatiably curious mind and was always learning about, and working on, new projects,” said Clyde Coombs, her husband of 64 years. “I think one of the things that made her so valuable, beyond her chemistry background and willingness to work hard for these groups, was the fact that she approached them with no agenda, other than making sense. It wasn’t always easy.”

Mrs. Coombs’ interest in other cultures helped her family fully experience the then-developing country of Singapore, where they relocated for two years in 1970. And passion for gardening and water issues prompted her to write the book “Trees of Los Altos” for the Los Altos Environmental Committee. The book describes trees that thrive in the local environment. It also includes information on drought-resistant landscaping plans, as well as city regulations. It is still available for purchase at the Los Altos History Museum, with proceeds from the sale of the children’s boxes will help PIN cover the cost associated with providing complimentary boxes to children’s boxes will help PIN cover the cost associated with providing complimentary boxes to

Nyberg funded and helped publish 3,000 copies of the book.

Mrs. Coombs was born in 1933 in San Francisco to Alex and Lilian Kleerup. The family moved to New York a year later, where she lived until they relocated to Fresno in 1946. She attended Fresno High School, where she edited the school yearbook and graduated as valedictorian. She graduated Phi Beta Kappa in chemistry from Stanford University, with highest honors. She worked for two years as a chemist in the lab of Melvin Calvin at UC Berkeley. She married high school sweetheart Clyde in 1956, and in 1957 left Berkeley for the life of a Navy wife. When Clyde joined Hewlett-Packard Co. in 1959, they settled in Mountain View, subsequently moving to Los Altos in 1965.

Clyde described his wife as “a very bright person, the smartest girl in the class. “She really wanted to make a difference – she tried to make things better,” he said.

Mrs. Coombs is survived by husband Clyde; daughters Catherine Coombs (McDonald) of Sunnyvale and Julie Coombs-Hahn of Davis; grandsons Lyle Hahn of Davis, Michael McDonald of Sunnyvale and Steven McDonald of Sunnyvale; and sister Jane Threlkeld and family of Los Banos. She is predeceased by daughter Donald) of Sunnyvale and Julie Coombs-

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced organizers to cancel the upcoming season of the Morning Forum of Los Altos, unprecedented in the series’ 70 years of speakers. The board of directors recently elected to scrub the 2020-2021 season in the wake of continued large-group restrictions. The group holds events Tuesday mornings at Los Altos United Methodist Church.

“I want you to know that this is not a decision we made quickly or easily,” board president Tim Farrell wrote in a June 12 letter to members. “We discussed the possibility of canceling only the fall/winter part of the season in the hope that restrictions on large-group gatherings would no longer be in place by February, but decided that, even without restrictions, the majority of our membership would still be reluctant to attend until a vaccine is widely available.”

Farrell added that the board considered holding virtual meetings.

“But this option removes a key element from the ‘formula’ that makes our program so special – an intelligent, receptive, and highly engaged audience that brings out the very best in our speakers,” he said.

Farrell indicated that Morning Forum would resume activity in 2021-2022, beginning its 71st year.

For more information, visit morningforum.org.

CAMP
From Page 9

and coloring activities. Both versions feature craft projects and PIN swag. Proceeds from the sale of the children’s boxes will help PIN cover the cost of providing complimentary boxes to the Ronald McDonald House locations at Stanford and in Pasadena, as well as the Webster House in Palo Alto, a senior living community where PIN volunteers regularly brought dogs to bond with residents pre-COVID. Remaining funds will go toward PIN’s animal rescue efforts.

Pets In Need is headquartered in Redwood City, but the organization’s Palo Alto shelter serves Los Altos and Los Altos Hills residents. Last year, 223 children enrolled in summer camp at the two shelters, participating in activities such as learning about veterinary medicine, exploring the Baylands and making crafts like cat toys and bird houses.

For more information on Camp PIN Pal Buddy Boxes, visit petsinneed.org/buddybox.

Give to the Los Altos Small Business Relief Fund – losaltoscf.org

Town Crier Report

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For more information, visit morningforum.org.
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Athletes return to campus – in small groups

By Zoe Morgan
Staff Writer/zoem@latc.com

Limited cohorts of local high school athletes are allowed to return to campus starting this week, though the broader school re-opening plan is still under consideration.

The Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District is preparing for a 10% reduction in unrestricted state funding, known as “minimum state aid,” which dates back to the Great Recession. That’s in line with Gov. Gavin Newsom’s May revision to his budget proposal, however the legislature has pushed back against the proposed cuts.

Because MVLA is largely funded through local property taxes rather than state dollars, the 10% cut only works out to approximately $300,000 out of an over $100 million budget. Mathiesen said the lost revenue won’t lead to any lost programs and is expected to be offset by property tax growth. However, the math could change if the state decides to make deeper cuts.

“Could stay at 10%, that could get deeper if the state has to make deeper cuts … it could improve if the legislature’s version of the budget goes through,” Mathiesen said.

The state also gives MVLA money from various other sources, such as lottery revenue. The district is budgeting for those funds to remain flat.

However, local property tax revenues make up the lion’s share of MVLA’s funding, accounting for 82% of total revenue. Property tax collections are expected to jump 7% next school year. Overall revenue growth for the district is projected to be 3.4%.

There is uncertainty around how the coronavirus pandemic will impact property taxes. According to Mathiesen, next year’s numbers appear relatively secure, but the following year’s are more of a question mark. Currently, MVLA is assuming the MVLA’s funding, accounting for 82% of total revenue. Property tax collections are expected to jump 7% next school year. Overall revenue growth for the district is projected to be 3.4%.

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Volunteers harvest produce to supplement hot lunches

By Alisha Parikh
Staff Writer/alishap@latc.com

It started with hens, explained Suzanne Kasso, who works as a substitute teacher in the Los Altos School District. While on a weekly town hall meeting call with the district superintendent, Kasso learned that the number of students collecting hot lunch from the three distribution sites in Los Altos had more than doubled since shelter-in-place orders forced schools to close.

“We have four hens and no one in my house really eats eggs,” said Kasso, who donated her eggs to the hot lunch program. “There are kids that are hungry, so I thought, ‘There has to be a way we can donate the extra eggs to kids that need it.’”

While brainstorming other ways to help, Kasso, who also serves as garden manager for the Living Classroom program, determined that the now-unattended planters were a great opportunity to supplement the hot lunch program, which no longer requires proof of a federal free lunch eligibility, with community-planted and-harvested produce.

“Living Classroom has extra produce in the gardens right now because we don’t have kids in the classroom,” Kasso said.

“So what we would normally produce in the gardens and use for our lessons as tastings, we’re no longer down that. I asked if I could I pull out our excess produce and get it to these kids and hand it out as part of our hot lunch distribution.”

Living Classroom volunteers have been repurposing school gardens to provide fresh produce for students receiving free meals during the pandemic.

MVLA maintains budget stability despite future uncertainty

By Zoe Morgan
Staff Writer/zoem@latc.com

The Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District is preparing for a 10% reduction in unrestricted state funding, known as “minimum state aid,” which dates back to the Great Recession. That’s in line with Gov. Gavin Newsom’s May revision to his budget proposal, however the legislature has pushed back against the proposed cuts.

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See PPP, Page 15

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See BUDGET, Page 17

MVLA maintains budget stability despite future uncertainty

By Zoe Morgan
Staff Writer/zoem@latc.com

The Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District is preparing for state budget cuts next school year, but currently it looks like the lost revenue will be more made up for with property tax growth.

The district’s board of trustees unanimously approved the budget June 15, in accordance with a state law requiring that districts adopt their budgets by the end of June. However, state budget negotiations are ongoing and there could still be changes.

“We build a budget on the latest information we have, knowing that’s going to change,” Associate Superintendent of Business Services Mike Mathiesen said. “We just have to be positioned that’s going to change,” Associate Superintendent of Business Services Mike Mathiesen said. “We just have to be positioned

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BCS gets over $2M PPP loan

By Zoe Morgan
Staff Writer/zoem@latc.com

Bullis Charter School recently received more than $2 million in federal COVID-19 relief funds, through the Small Business Administration’s Paycheck Protection Program.

The PPP is meant to help small businesses and nonprofits weather the pandemic, by providing loans that don’t have to be repaid if certain criteria are met.

Charter schools that are run as nonprofits, such as Bullis, qualify to receive the funds. Traditional public schools and other government entities, on the other hand, aren’t eligible for the program.

In a written statement, charter school officials said “PPP loans were designed to include small not-for-profits like BCS” and that they would be using the funds to “keep teachers and staff employed and continue providing online and in-person learning” to their roughly 1,100 students.

Bullis is not alone among charter schools in applying for the relief funds. According to a recent New York Times article, which included an interview with Bullis board chairman Francis La Poll, dozens of charter schools across the country are known to have applied for PPP loans.

Although, MVLA is largely funded through local property taxes rather than state dollars, the 10% cut only works out to approximately $300,000 out of an over $100 million budget. Mathiesen said the lost revenue won’t lead to any lost programs and is expected to be offset by property tax growth. However, the math could change if the state decides to make deeper cuts.

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Mountain View High School coach and athletic director Shelley Smith observes players during a 2017 football practice. Although the Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District is allowing sports practices to return, students will be mainly conditioning so that they maintain physical distance to prevent the potential spread of COVID-19.

REOPENING
From Page 14

convened a task force to work on multiple potential reopening plans. The options include remaining remote, returning to campus with safety measures in place, and a hybrid of the two.

“They’re sitting down and really having hard conversations about how we best meet the needs of students — and that is always the measuring stick,” Satterwhite said.

Regardless of the final plan, letter grades are going to be returning in the fall, curriculum director Margarita Navarro confirmed. Last semester, the district switched to credit/no-credit grading, a move that prompted an outcry from some parents and students.

Teachers also are planning to implement assessments in the fall to get baseline data on where students are academically, following the switch to distance learning.

“That will give teachers valuable information at the very start of the school year of any particular areas that they need to focus on,” Navarro said.

Added precautions

District officials plan to put safety measures in place for when students and staff eventually return to campus. Temperature screenings are going to be needed, as well as face shields for everyone on campus, human resources director Leyla Benson said.

“We are prepared. We have run through a variety of scenarios,” Benson said. “We anticipate the directions that are to come, and once we have those confirmed, then we really build and focus our discussions.”

Additional cleaning, especially of high-touch surfaces, also will be necessary. The district has purchased some supplies already. The state will be sending supplies, including masks, face shields, thermometers and hand sanitizer, according to facilities and budget director Mike Mathiesen.

Signage and directional arrows to help maintain physical distancing also may be used on campus. Plexiglass shields, similar to those used in grocery stores, are also an option for school offices, Mathiesen said.

Even once campuses reopen, Benson said there’s a strong possibility that some students and staff will have extended absences. That’s going to require trained, long-term substitute teachers. In addition, officials are preparing procedures in the event a student or staff member tests positive for COVID-19.

Plants are underway to support specific populations of students, including those in the special-education program. The data from last semester show those students were disproportionately likely to have limited engagement with remote learning, special-education director Kristen Hardy said. Staff are working to create plans to keep students on track, with options to support individual pupils.

Smaller programs, such as Alta Vista High School and Freestyle Academy of Communication Arts and Technology, are working on plans to return to campus in some capacity soon after school starts, alternative-education director Bill Pierce said. Their smaller numbers make it easier than bringing one of the large high schools back.

If the high schools’ instruction remains at least partially remote, teachers are developing plans to build a classroom community without meeting in person. That could include doing video sessions with smaller groups of students so they can better connect, teacher’s union president Dave Campbell said.

“The reality is none of this is going to happen overnight,” Campbell said. “(Even) in a traditional instructional setting, it takes weeks to months.”

Our Heroes

"Thanking and recognizing those on the frontlines and those being kind and helpful in our community"

Our thanks and deepest appreciation to Corine Bernard, Executive Director, and her staff for the incredible care our Mom, Grandma and Great-Grandma, Nella Lera, has received living at Villa Siena, both before and during the current COVID-19 Pandemic crisis. These difficult times make us realize how extra special the Villa Siena staff is and how much we value the quality and compassionate care they provide for our loved ones.

The Lera Family

ESSENTIAL HEROES TO US ALL

PEN From Page 14

for the loans.

Those decisions have met with opposition in some quarters. Critics object to charter schools receiving funds traditionally public schools aren’t eligible for, while also qualifying for other relief money Congress specifically set aside for public education.

Although the federal government is providing schools some extra funding, Bullis officials said in their statement that charter schools aren’t guaranteed to get a fair share of the money. That exacerbates an existing funding gap between traditional public schools and charters, officials argued.

“Bullis Charter School receives significantly less funding per student in state and local tax revenues compared to LASD schools. In the most recent audited year, it was approximately $5,600 less per student,” La Poll said in the statement.

Parent donations raise additional funds for the school. The Bullis-Purissima Elementary School Foundation, which is a separate entity, solicits parent donations, suggesting a gift of $5,000 per student. The school’s 2019-2020 budget showed fundraising and grants making up more than a third of the school’s roughly $15 million in revenue.

Traditional public schools also have foundations, which raise money to support their districts. The Los Altos Educational Foundation raises money for the Los Altos School District. Last school year the suggested donation was $1,200 per student, and LAEF’s expected fundraising was budgeted to be less than 5% of the school district’s roughly $65 million in revenue.

The economic impact of the pandemic is expected to hit both charter and traditional schools, with Gov. Gavin Newsom proposing education funding cuts to help balance the state budget. If property tax revenue drops, that would also impact local schools’ bottom lines.
New MVHS principal brings experience to reopening challenge

By Zoe Morgan  
Staff Writer/zoem@latc.com

Michael Jimenez may be new to Mountain View High School, but he’s already known the superintendent for more than a decade. The Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District Board of Trustees unanimously appointed Jimenez as Mountain View High’s principal at a meeting last week. Jimenez is set to start July 1.

He comes from the Mt. Diablo Unified School District, where he currently serves as assistant superintendent of secondary schools, that’s the same district Superintendent Nelie Meyer came to MVLA from. However, the two have known each other much longer. It was Meyer who appointed Jimenez to his first principal post when they both worked in the San Diego Unified School District.

According to Meyer, Jimenez’s experience working at both the school and district level, as well as his ability to build relationships with staff, parents and students, made him a good fit to lead Mountain View High.

“(He’s) very experienced and was very successful as a high school principal and very calm in a storm,” Meyer said.

That ability to remain steady during challenging times will be useful as MVLA navigates the pandemic and the start of next school year, Meyer said.

Jimenez has worked in education for more than 30 years, beginning as a substitute teacher in San Diego in the 1980s. From there, he became a physical education teacher. Ultimately, one of the principals Jimenez worked for asked if he was interested in school administration and he began pursuing that path.

Jimenez ended up serving as a vice principal at the elementary, middle and high school level, as well as being a high school principal. Ultimately, Jimenez moved up to Northern California, taking a job at Mt. Diablo, where Meyer was superintendent.

After Meyer left Mt. Diablo and took the job at MVLA last year, Jimenez said the district moved in a direction that was no longer a good fit for him. He reached out to Meyer and decided to apply for the job at Mountain View High.

Positive culture

Although he’ll be moving from being an assistant superintendent back to being a principal, Jimenez said “it’s more about the work and the working relationships that you have with people.” He said he respects Meyer, in particular her focus on students and attention to equity in education.

He will replace Dave Grissom, who is taking a job as commissioner of the California Interscholastic Federation’s

See PRINCIPAL, Page 17

Class of 2020

Following are Los Altos, Los Altos Hills and Mountain View graduates from two area private schools.

Hannah Ashby
Ally Dickson
Christy Garreau
Julia Kirsch
Elizabeth Ledwith
Georgia Nieh
Mabelle Pasmooij
Nicole Pavlik
Becca Row
 Roxana Scott
Lucia Shen
Lauren Sibley
Lily Taylor
Bella Vandenberg
Suzanna Wang

Kehillah Jewish High School

Spencer Ronald Richmond

Have an idea for a schools story?

Email Zoe Morgan at zoem@latc.com.

Schools

GARDEN
From Page 14

nine Los Altos School District schools, teaches students the importance of nature through hands-on gardening lessons. In the class, students learn to germinate plant seeds and harvest vegetables.

Harvesting volunteers

While Kasso and Jessica Speiser, member of the district board of trustees, collaborated to roll out a volunteer program, Kasso spent the past few weeks tending to and harvesting the winter crops originally planted by Living Classroom students at the different schools.

Speiser and Kasso shared the program in mid-May via Parent Teacher Association groups, Nextdoor posts and word of mouth. Most of the volunteers are directly associated with district schools, according to Speiser.

Each school is home to anywhere between 10 and 20 garden beds. Depending on volunteers’ experience and time, they can choose to adopt a bed or a group of beds to maintain. Kasso provided volunteers with a variety of seeds from tomatoes to beans and peppers to sow in their planters.

The 4-foot-by-8-foot beds become the respective volunteers’ responsibility, and they must bring their own tools and wear face masks when tending to their plants to comply with COVID-19 guidelines. Given the size of the beds, maintaining social distancing has been fairly easy, Kasso noted.

“A lot of families are biking over every night after dinner or doing their family walk, just walking by their garden and giving a little bit of water or pulling out a weed or two,” she said.

Abundant crop

Emily Harris walks to Covington School every other day to check on the two planters she adopted. She filled them with some quicker-growing plants such as radishes and beans.

She is using the opportunity to carry on the Living Classroom mission and educate her 8-year-old daughter about the importance of gardening and giving back.

“Something I talk to my daughter about is the powerful visual of the energy inside these seeds,” Harris said. “All we have to do is give it the light, the soil and the water that it needs and it does the rest. It does the hard part.”

Because not all 10 of the garden boxes at Covington were claimed, Harris is pitching in to help maintain the unclaimed beds as well by watering plants and picking weeds where needed.

“This is something that I felt compelled to do because I could use my hands to make a difference for other people in a very obvious, socially distanced, quarantined and so very impactful way,” Harris said.

During the weekly cycle, volunteers harvest produce on Mondays and drop it off at the Covington multipurpose center. Another set of volunteers clean the produce using a three-wash technique and place it in the refrigerator for a third set of volunteers to transport it to distribution centers on Tuesday mornings. This ensures that families are receiving the freshest produce possible to accompany their hot lunch.

The hot lunch program alone provides enough food for one meal a day, but with the additional produce, Speiser hopes that the families will have more meals covered.

“We want to make sure that our most underserved families in our district are served, that we are keeping as many kids and families in our district food secure,” she said.

Volunteers planted more than 100 seeds just a few weeks ago and as plants start to sprout, Kasso looks forward to an abundant yield.

“I’ve told families, even if it’s one or two tomatoes, pick them,” she said. “Because collectively at all the different sites and all the different garden beds, if everyone brings in five cherry tomatoes, suddenly you’ve got a lot of cherry tomatoes and you have enough to feed a family or two or three.”

To volunteer or to donate produce and nonperishables, visit bit.ly/3e4r9wt.
3% property tax growth in the 2021-2022 school year and 1% the year after that.

There’s typically a lag before school districts feel the impact of a recession, because of the time it takes to hit tax revenue.

In terms of enrollment, MVLA expects to see growth continue. Over the past decade, the district has seen its population grow by roughly 1,000. Next year, about 90 more students are expected, rising from 4,549 to 4,640 pupils districtwide.

That’s consistent with registration numbers so far, Mathiesen said, but he added that numbers won’t be nailed down until school starts. There are some students who didn’t log on for online learning, and Mathiesen said it’s possible the families may have moved out of the area. On the other hand, the economic uncertainty also could lead to some parents opting to send their kids to public school rather than a private alternative.

Program cuts

One area that’s expecting to see funding cuts is the Adult School. The budget includes a 12% reduction in the block grant the Adult School receives from the state, which makes up the vast majority of its funding. That means a cut of around $380,000. Currently, Mathiesen said the worst-case plan is to use a combination of deficit spending and reserves to cover the difference. Although it is late to make staffing changes, he said the school may see if there are vacant positions they can leave open or one-time expenses, such as equipment purchases, that could be cut. However, no program reductions are planned.

MVLA is also budgeting for a 50% cut in state funding for the Career Technical Education incentive grant program, which is used to support classes including engineering and computer science. Although 50% is a large cut, that only works out to approximately $125,000.

Mathiesen said MVLA officials will be looking to find other pots of money to tap, such as the site allocation each principal is given. The district hadn’t been using the grant to pay salaries, but rather for things such as supplies and teacher training.

“We want to still support those programs because they’re valuable and they’re growing,” Mathiesen said. “We want to try to stay away from cutting them to such a degree that it diminishes that growth.”

As MVLA tracks state budget deliberations and what property tax collections ultimately look like, there is a possibility the budget could be amended. However, Mathiesen said that unless something drastic changes, an amended budget is unlikely. Instead, district officials will make the fixes in December when they pass the first interim report.

“Right now, as we talk today, it’s a healthy budget that maintains our fiscal stability for next year and the years following,” he said. “We’re being ever watchful in preparation of needing to adjust if necessary.

To read about the Capertino Union School District’s budget, see next week’s paper.

Central Coast Section. As Jimenez settles into the new job, he said he wants to focus on continuing the positive culture Grissom is leaving behind.

“I want to make sure I can build upon that environment,” Jimenez said. “It’s not just a good place to learn, it’s a place … kids want to come and have fun in that environment — fun learning and fun with extracurricular activities.”

The goal is to foster a safe and trusting learning environment, where students know it’s OK to make mistakes and learn from them, Jimenez said. He’s also interested in focusing on closing the achievement gaps at Mountain View High, which refers to gaps in academic success among groups of students.

Beyond the larger goals, though, Jimenez will also be in charge of leading the school through the transition from remote learning to an ultimate return to campus.

“We have a lot of challenges as we open up, and so it’s nice to have someone who knows school operations inside and out,” Meyer said.

As he begins to get involved in planning for next year, Jimenez said he wants to concentrate on ensuring that students can access education, regardless of the ultimate form it takes when the start of the new school year arrives. There will be a learning curve at the beginning, Jimenez said, but he added that he wants to collaborate with the staff, students and the broader school community.

Said Jimenez, “I want to make sure I can support them and help them right now.”
Sports on the Side

SFHS grad Bramlett takes 2nd at tourney
Pro golfer and St. Francis High graduate Joseph Bramlett finished in a tie for second place at the Korn Ferry Challenge, held June 11-14 at TPC at Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra Beach, Fla. The 32-year-old Bramlett shot an 11-under-par 269 over the four rounds, putting him one shot behind champion Luke List. The event was part of the PGA’s developmental Korn Ferry Tour.

Local high schools seek coaches
Los Altos High seeks head coaches for varsity girls basketball and wrestling, both winter sports, and cheer rally, which runs through winter. To apply and for more information, contact athletic director Michelle Noeth at 960-8857 or michelle.noeth@mvla.net. Mountain View High seeks a head coach for girls golf, a fall sport. To apply and for more information, contact athletic director Shelley Smith at 940-4600, ext. 1421, or shelley.smith@mvla.net.

NFHS provides free officiating classes
With so many people stuck at home due to the coronavirus pandemic, the National Federation of State High School Associations recently made its officiating courses available online for free through July 1. Current high school officials and those interested in joining the officiating ranks can access the 11 courses at nfhslearn.com. Courses include basketball, football, soccer, swimming and diving, volleyball, wrestling and softball, in addition to a general course titled Interscholastic Officials. Multiple courses are offered in basketball, soccer and volleyball. Those interested in becoming an official after taking any of these courses are urged to visit HighSchoolOfficials.com for more information.

Finding her place

Gunn High graduate Smith to play goalie for Washington
By Pete Borello
Staff Writer/pete@latc.com

There was a time when all-league goalkeeper Nicole Smith preferred producing goals to preventing them. “When I first started playing soccer, I didn’t want to play goalkeeper,” the Los Altos Hills resident said. “I liked to score goals and run around in the field.” But when Smith’s dad became her coach when she was about 8 years old, everything changed. “No one wanted to play goalkeeper, so he forced me to do it,” said Smith, who graduated from Gunn High early this month. “By sixth or seventh grade, I was doing it full time. I started to realize it was really fun, and I appreciated the position more.”

The coaching staff at the University of Washington clearly appreciates how Smith plays the position, the Huskies offered her a scholarship that she accepted in April. “The (recruiting) process was different than most people’s because I had verbally committed to a (NCAA) Division III school my sophomore year,” Smith said, referring to MIT. “For academic reasons, it didn’t work out. … I was upset at first, but now I’m super excited by how it worked out. I get to play DI – and Seattle is such a cool city.”

Smith applied to the data science program at Washington and contacted coach Nicole Van Dyke about joining the Huskies, sending training video and game highlights of her playing for Gunn and the Palo Alto Soccer Club. It turns out Van Dyke was already familiar with Smith. “I went to a soccer camp at an Ivy League school (University of Pennsylvania) she previously coached at,” Smith said of Van Dyke, who is entering her first year as coach at Washington. “Our paths aligned.”

Smith will enter the Huskies’ fall season as one of only three goalies on the roster – and only one of them is a returning player. “I’m not sure what to expect,” Smith said of her freshman season. “I’ve met some of the players on Zoom, and I look forward to getting on campus. I plan to get there by late July and the preseason is supposed to start in August, but everything’s tentative right now due to coronavirus.”

Getting ready
In the meantime, Smith is preparing for the season by running in Los Altos Hills – “It’s good training, especially uphill,” she said – and working on her goalkeeping at open fields and parks with younger sister Natalie.

See KEEPER, Page 19

Alum of Mtn. View baseball club drafted in first round by Red Sox
By Joe Perrino
Town Crier Editorial Intern

For the first time in its nine-year history, Mountain View’s Brushback Baseball Club has produced a Major League Baseball draft pick. The Boston Red Sox selected infielder Nick Yorke in the first round of the 2020 MLB amateur draft June 11.

“We kind of figured early to mid-rounds,” Brushback head coach Kris Mims said of where he expected Yorke to be selected. “It was a nice surprise to see him drafted 17th overall by the Red Sox.”

A 2020 graduate of Mitty High, Yorke has been touted by MLB and college scouts as “the top pure hitter on the West Coast.” The San Jose native was batting .533 when his senior season was suspended due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

“His swing is one of the smoothest swings I ever saw as a high school player and as a little kid,” said James Hoyt, a 2020 graduate of Mountain View High who played with Yorke on Brushback.

That smooth swing helped Brushback on several occasions during the three years Yorke played for the club (2015-2017). Mims recalled Yorke’s impact on Brushback’s 13-and-under squad when it traveled to San Diego in the summer of 2015 to compete in the Xtreme Diamond Sports World Series. Brushback

See DRAFTED, Page 19

Los Altos Hills resident Nicole Smith, shown playing with her Palo Alto Soccer Club team, recently committed to play for the University of Washington.

COURTESY OF NICOLE SMITH

Los Altos Hills resident Nicole Smith, shown playing with her Palo Alto Soccer Club team, recently committed to play for the University of Washington.

COURTESY OF KRIS MIMS
Los Altos grad Shine headed to USTA-NorCal Hall of Fame

**Town Crier Report**

Los Altos High School graduate and Mountain View resident is set to receive a second hall of fame induction for his success as a high school tennis coach, but he’ll have to wait longer than expected.

Bill Shine – the boys and girls tennis coach at Menlo School – was slated to be inducted into the USTA-NorCal Hall of Fame Friday, but the event was recently postponed until Oct. 23, according to Menlo sports information director Pam McKenney, because of the coronavirus pandemic.

Two years ago, Shine was inducted into the Peninsula Sports Hall of Fame.

“This is quite an honor to be selected into the USTA NorCal Tennis Hall of Fame,” Shine said in a press release issued by the school. “To be able to play and coach nearly my whole life in Northern California is a dream come true.”

After taking over Menlo’s varsity tennis teams in 1996, Shine has led the Knights to a combined 25 Central Coast Section titles and 20 California Interscholastic Federation NorCal championships.

Shine has an overall coaching record of 1,074-154. His girls and boys teams both hold state records for consecutive league dual-match victories. His teams have never lost a league match.

The Menlo girls wrapped up their 26th straight league title last fall and also won CCS and NorCal crowns. The boys entered the spring season, cut short after three matches due to the coronavirus pandemic, having won 23 league championships in a row.

Before his successful run at Menlo, Shine coached the boys and girls teams at Pinewood School for 15 years. Prior to that, he spent a season coaching the boys team at Los Altos High; the Eagles went 19-3 that year.

Shine received several accolades during his playing career as well. As a junior player, he earned a top-10 ranking every year from 1962 to 1973. At Los Altos, he was named team MVP all four years and twice reached the Central Coast Section singles finals. He was also part of the CCS champion doubles team in 1971. Shine then played for the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, where he garnered All-Sun Belt Conference First Team honors twice (1976 and 1977).

“I owe this to a lot of people, like Dick Gould (former Stanford University men’s coach), who along the way helped me become the coach I am today,” Shine said.

Gould is scheduled to present Shine at the induction ceremony, set to take place at the Peninsula Golf and Country Club in San Mateo.
The Avenidas Rose Kleiner Center (ARKC) staff is used to welcoming in 60+ participants to our day health care center in Mountain View every day. In addition to medical support, our participants come in for socialization, lunch, exercise, and activities.

On March 16th, our whole model switched to a “Center without Walls.” Over the last few months, our staff have gone above and beyond to reach out to our participants in their homes. Some of the services we have provided are social calls, deliveries, service coordination, caregiver support, exercise videos, social-distanced visits, and activities.

The 130+ social calls we conduct each week are made primarily by our program aides. In addition, we are also conducting 60+ Wellness/Risk Assessment calls weekly. The goal of the calls is to increase social engagement, reduce depression, and to continue our connection with our participants and families. We call participants to “chat” but also to identify new needs that arise for home care, medical follow up, food and other delivery needs.

One participant remarked, “It makes me feel like I am not alone, and that people are thinking about me.” Another family reports “You all are doing so much good to get your people through this crisis. I’m sure I’m not the only one who feels enormous gratitude for all you are doing! Many, many thanks!”

In addition to calls and service referrals, we have also learned how to do caregiver support groups on Zoom. We continue to provide activities to participants to do at home weekly. Loretta, our Activities Manager, designed a special calendar to follow at home so that our participants and their caregivers can have a little structure to their days, and gives some ideas for fitness and activities.

We have a YouTube channel where participants and families can see Dina and Eileen lead exercises to follow along with them. We also are having fun with participants on Zoom, Facetime, and other ways that work for the participants and families.

Interested in learning more? Please visit our website at [www.avenidas.org/care](http://www.avenidas.org/care) or call (650) 289-5499. We are located at 270 Escuela Avenue in Mountain View.
Disease-resistant Poseidon rose boasts both beauty and vigor

By Michelle Isaac

Of all the roses I planted in my backyard, the Poseidon is one of the most disease-resistant. No matter the amount of rain, when other roses start to gain white, powdery mildew, this beautiful rose always stays strong and healthy. It has no issues with black spots or any other diseases either, and I do not spray it with anything.

In 1990, the Kordes family, famous for rose breeding, decided that all garden roses should be naturally healthy and disease-resistant. They subsequently required all of their trial fields for garden roses to be managed and then evaluated without applying fungicides.

The Poseidon rose was bred by Tim-Herman Kordes, the fourth generation of the Kordes family, in 2004 in Germany. It was originally known by the name Novalis. Novalis is named after the pseudonym of poet Georg Philipp Friedrich Freiherr von Hardenberg (1772-1801). Later, Newflora LLC introduced it as Poseidon to the U.S. market.

Poseidon is a bushy, upright shrub rose with repeat blooms. This vigorous, floribunda rose has cup-shaped flowers that grow in flushes throughout the season. It was a gold medal German ADR rose trial winner in 2013. Rose breeders often describe this trial as among the most challenging in the world. In ADR, trial roses are tested over three years, and the criteria analyzed include disease resistance, hardiness and attractiveness. Since 1997, no chemical pesticides have been allowed in this competition.

Poseidon shrubs can reach up to 5 feet tall by 2.5 feet wide. They have gorgeous and smoky purple-mauve buds that bloom into silvery, purple-ruffled delights. The bloom is fully petaled and the edges of the petals seem to be almost scalloped.

Ask a Designer

By Sherry Scott

Over my 30-plus years as an interior designer, there are many questions I’m consistently asked. For readers with a burning design question or two, or those frustrated with sorting through the myriad online information available without finding an applicable solution, perhaps a direct question-and-answer column on the subject matter will be helpful.

In my new “Ask a Designer” column, I’ll be answering some of those questions, based on years of experience problem-solving in commercial and residential design. I also invite questions from readers, which I may answer in a future column.

Q: What can a renter do to make an apartment feel more like a home than a “rental”? A: A good approach is to think about what you can do rather than what you cannot do in a rental home. Consider non-permanent elements in addition to furniture.

One way to add height to a room is to group a variety of pots together that are different shapes and heights. Bring in some lush greenery with living “rubber” plants, as they are commonly called. These originate from Southeast Asia and can grow upward of 100 feet tall there. The domesticated versions we see locally are between 6 and 10 feet tall.

Pots can be sourced at a variety of local places, from Maria’s European Lifestyle at 393 Main St. for more unusual metal options as well as traditional painted ceramics to Los Altos Hardware at 441 First St., which offers outdoor planters that can easily work inside. There are no strict rules.

Another option for adding height is a floor lamp. While these cost more than a table lamp on average, they can be very sculptural in design, which will elevate the drama factor as well as provide more functional reading or ambient lighting.

You can create a more custom look by installing modular bookshelves and media cabinets that hang, or “float,” on a wall, rather than plopping a bookshelf or media cabinet directly onto the floor. It takes the right composition on the wall for the elements to appear balanced and for a large TV screen to be integrated into that composition. This provides a more permanent look and feel, even though it can be removed down the road. The same floating concept applies to any type of storage system, for living rooms, dining rooms, offices or bedrooms.

An alternative to a walk-in closet is what furniture manufacturer Jesse Italia calls a “walk-in cabinet.” This modular clothing storage system provides self-supporting rods, shelves, drawers and cubbies.

Practical ways to make an apartment feel like home

By Sherry Scott

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Coming Up Roses

Disease-resistant Poseidon rose boasts both beauty and vigor

By Michelle Isaac

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DESIGN
From Page 21

removed. Once the screw holes are filled and the wall paint is touched up, there will be no sign of the chic custom closet that was once there. In a new location, the same fittings can be laid out differently to suit other wall lengths.

Another temporary design option is removable wall coverings. Tempaper.com offers fun patterns that can be ordered online. They are self-sticking, so that’s another benefit – no messy glue.

Don’t forget about area rugs if you are living with hard-surface floors. These are fantastic ways to create or continue a theme. Available in many sizes, all price points and almost endless color combinations and designs, rugs not only add comfort and softer acoustics but provide a more unique character or painted a contrasting color. Keep the demarcation line of the light and dark cabinets aligned top and bottom and in balance with the other darker colors in the room.

For wood cabinets that have been painted over, it is possible to remove the paint, however the process is much more labor-intensive. This would involve carefully sanding off all of the paint, then priming, then staining if another color is desired, and finally sealing the wood. A similar design concept can apply, with a portion of the wood cabinetry exposed, while a section can remain painted. Layering in a unique and updated light fixture will help your cabinetry face-lift look more like a major update.

Sherry Scott is a Certified Interior Designer in California, professional member of the American Society of Interior Designers and proprietor of Sherry Scott Design in downtown Los Altos, 169 Main St. Email questions to design@sherryscottdesign.com. For more information, visit sherryscottdesign.com.

Q: Our kitchen feels dark and outdated. All of the cabinets are dark. Is painting them a light color the way to go?

A: While painting the cabinets, either uppers or lowers, can be left darker or painted a contrasting color. Keep the demarcation line of the light and dark cabinets aligned top and bottom and in balance with the other darker colors in the room.

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The staff and management at the Los Altos Town Crier thank all of you who have stepped up to help us during this time of sheltering at home. You may have noticed that a number of our advertisers have stopped appearing in the paper because they have been forced to close. That means your support now is vital to keep us alive. Our reporters will continue to work hard bringing you the up-to-date information crucial during these ever-changing times.

We have been in print since 1947, and we hope to continue publishing throughout the duration of this unprecedented crisis. And we will, with the help of this wonderful community. Again, THANK YOU!

If you have not had a chance to support our independent local journalism, go to: losaltosonline.com/subscribe
Town Crier Report

Smuin streams ‘Indigo’ this week

Santan Welch’s “Indigo” is the next installment in Smuin Contemporary Ballet’s Hump Day Ballets series, performances from the company’s archives available for free streaming for 48 hours each week.

Set to Antonio Vivaldi’s Celio Concerto in B minor and Celio Concerto in G minor, “Indigo” examines the vagaries of romantic relationships as four couples come together, fall in love, fight and exchange partners.

Offered today through Friday, it will be accompanied by a video introduction from former Smuin dancer Erica Chipps-Adams, who danced in the West Coast premiere of the piece in fall 2016.

SmuinCast instructions are available through Smuin’s email list (sign up at smuinballet.org) or via Smuin’s Facebook (facebook.com/SmuinBallet) and Instagram (instagram.com/smuinballet).

For more information, visit smuinballet.org.

LA Stage Co. takes summer classes online

By Christina Cheng
Town Crier Editorial Intern

A global pandemic hasn’t stopped Los Altos Stage Company from offering a slew of brand-new, virtual online summer programs.

The local theater company is hosting 24 virtual classes on Zoom, created specifically with an interactive online format, for participants ranging in age from 4 to 22 through July 31.

This year’s summer camp program is “very” different from previous years, LASC education director Jillian Cummings said. In previous years, the company hosted seven weeks of camps at Hillview Community Center. Initially, LASC hoped it would be allowed to continue its normal program, because “teaching acting and dance online is tricky, (as) being able to make physical contact with the student is helpful,” according to Cummings.

However, at the onset of the pandemic, LASC began offering its spring classes on Zoom “as a way to keep the students’ creativity flowing and also trying to find a way to employ so many teaching artists who were abruptly out of work,” Cummings said.

“We had ups and downs learning to work with the system, but have come a very long way and have a good handle on it now,” she said.

With experience hosting online classes heading into the summer, Cummings and LASC are focused on crafting interactive and engaging programs.

“As a mother of two almost-8-year-old children, I understand how isolating learning from a screen can be. I have watched my children walk away from the classroom screens and think no one would notice or care,” Cummings said. “So we researched many different ways of including students and have learned what worked and didn’t from past classes. We are stressing the interactive part of teaching and are having training meetings on how to make sure you include and engage every student.”

As a result, the virtual summer classes have shifted in focus from performance-oriented programs to ones focused on technique for older students, and creativity and physical engagement for younger students, according to Cummings. In addition, an online format has enabled LASC to invite instructors from outside the Bay Area to teach, such as casting agents and Juilliard-trained performers.

“It was a complete rehaul, but I am so excited to offer the camps we have,” she said. “It is of the utmost importance to me that the students get the one-on-one attention they all deserve. We are not about the numbers, but about the quality – and although we keep our cost down so everyone can afford the camp, we want the students to get the learning experience they deserve.”

Camp offerings

For children ages 4-6, there’s the Broadway Babies Camps. Each one-week camp runs 9-10:30 a.m. and themes change weekly. Offerings include the Out of This World Outer Space Camp (Monday to July 3) and the Magical Dreams Unicorn Camp (July 20-24). According to Cummings, participants spend the first hour learning songs and a dance, as well as playing theater games that “work well without people around,” followed by 30 minutes of crafts with the help of parents. Each camp costs $95.

For older children (ages 7-12), the Rising Stars Camps focus on a musical franchise – like Troll’s Camp, for example, slated 10 a.m. to 12:15 p.m. July 6-10. Those who attend the weeklong camps spend each day learning a song and dance from the musical along with time to make crafts, according to the LASC website. Each camp costs $145.

For more information, visit losaltostage.org/virtual-summer-camps.
Puzzles Page

Town Crier Crossword

By Myles Mellor

Across
1. Los Altos mayor Pepper
4. Cause to fall
8. Wishes undone
12. "Lord of the Rings" bad guy
13. "Slow down!"
14. "My word!"
15. Heartfelt feelings
17. James Patterson story, e.g.
18. Coast Guard rank, abbr.
19. Place for a treatment
21. Jazz singer Carmen
24. Place to make a splash
28. Underground finds
31. "____ Woman" : Reddy hit
32. Meshing parts
33. Remote button
34. Sturdy and robust
36. SA ancient
37. Portable cone lodgings
38. Awaits action
39. Grasshopper's fable colleague
40. Auto insurer with roadside service
42. Chisel, e.g.
43. Great Lake
44. Chisel, e.g.
45. Business abbreviation
46. Salad topper
47. Autumn month, abbr.
48. Was ahead of everyone else

– Los Altos related clues bolded

Down
1. Pesci of "GoodFellas"
2. Hurler's pride
3. Officer, abbr.
4. Bale binder
5. Greek letters
6. Lithium-____ battery
7. Important document
8. Mideast capital
9. Traditional Olympics powerhouse
10. Order of corn
11. Lexicon abbreviation
12. Darjeeling and oolong
20. Places
21. Steamy
22. ____ and Barrel
23. Update, as cartography
25. Parlor piece
26. Carli of US soccer
27. Fitzgerald and others
29. Banquet attendees
30. Propel, in a way
32. No Doubt vocalist
33. Departs
36. Diet
38. Bel ____ cheese
40. Opposed, in Dogpatch
41. E or G, e.g.
42. Surliness
43. German article
44. Chisel, e.g.
45. Business abbreviation
46. Salad topper
47. Autumn month, abbr.
48. Was ahead of everyone else

Find A Word

By Myles Mellor and Susan Flanagan

Each Sudoku puzzle consists of a 9X9 grid that has been subdivided into nine smaller grids of 3X3 squares. To solve the puzzle each row, column and box must contain each of the numbers 1 to 9. Puzzles come in three grades: easy, medium and difficult. Level: Medium

Sudoku

Find A Word

Fifteen words related to the sea are listed by this puzzle. They may go across, up and down or diagonally in the puzzle. Circle each one when you find it.

Answers to puzzles on Page 23
Grassroots distribution brings big-city food to Los Altos

By Eliza Ridgeway
Staff Writer/elizar@laltc.com

Los Altos’ latest form of secret dining is welcoming to all comers – a grassroots improvisation of volunteer maitre d’s, with fancy foods in compostably plated takeaway. Many local restaurants have been creating new family meal options and offering takeaway on a scale never done before. The occasional big-city offering has started to make its way to Los Altos as well – and that’s bringing flavors and traditions previously impossible to experience in the 94022 sphere of eating.

Months into the shelter-in-place, when Los Altos resident Vivienne Hsu started wistfully craving food from a gifted chef and food entrepreneur she worked with in the nonprofit world, she proposed an experiment. Azalina Eusope’s Malaysian food enterprises are already legendary in San Francisco circles, but it took the deeply personal ties of woman-to-woman relationships to bring her dishes down the Peninsula.

Felicity and food

Hsu and Eusope talked through a neighborhood delivery model where Hsu would spread the word of a special one-evening opportunity, neighborhood diners would order online, Eusope would fill a van with food from the menu at her restaurant Mahila and drive it down the Peninsula, and Hsu would distribute the takeaway – at a social distance – from her front yard. They calculated what minimum order size could break even, and, as Hsu put it, “the rest is history.” They met the minimum within two hours of Hsu’s first post about the opportunity, and ended up having 30 families pass by during the pickup window to say a muffled hello through masks and grab a bag of roti with curry, roast chicken, turmeric noodles or kaya jam to go.

Hsu said she got a chance to terrorize her children with the fragrant wonder/horror of Eusope’s durian panna cotta, as well as a reprieve from lockdown doldrums for at least one night. She said the fun of brief, socially distanced catch-ups with friends and new acquaintances made her think that after the era of shutdowns, a block party that re-created this style of grassroots organization and brought in orders from different restaurants would be wonderful to try.

“One person gets comfortable with the idea of bundling orders together, delivery to a home is really not that far-fetched of an idea – it can make business or home events more fun,” Hsu observed.

Eusope said every day still feels like “survival mode,” particularly as the pandemic throwbacks the entire restaurant supply chain into crisis, but as her business has grown, she has been able to revel in the ways it is a truly passion-driven business.

“I started this business out of survival. I was about to get divorced, there was no income coming in. How was I going to support my two kids?” Eusope said in an interview earlier this month.

Eusope comes from generations of street vendors. “There’s stigma and prejudice against it – and I’m telling a story about that experience through my food,” she said. “That’s my focus – to highlight not only my people, but to highlight these generations of street vendors. They don’t really get the nod or appreciation that they deserve.”

Eusope’s roots in neighborhood food served from a sidewalk go back five generations, and her food reflects the very specific flavors of their Mamak Malaysian community, whose traditions stretch back to South India.

Eusope said her ancestors migrated from India during an era of imperialism and trade, when Malaysia was a pivotal trading nexus, situated in the midst of two oceans.

“So some would come and settle, some came through when the British were colonizing...”

See FOOD, Page 28

Alkalign Studios brings workouts to the streets

By Marie Godderis
Town Crier Editorial Intern

In a sign of a return to normalcy amid the COVID-19 pandemic, exercise classes popped up last week on the Bumble Green lawn on First Street in downtown Los Altos.

Led by instructors from Alkalign Studios, which has a location on First Street, the strength, cardio and mobility workouts abide by current social-distancing rules.

“The outdoor classes are great because you’re outside and you distance yourself while also being with people,” Alkalign founder and CEO Erin Paruszewski said. “I’m super excited to get back to the outdoor sessions, and eventually the indoor, because the difference between seeing someone on the other side of the screen versus seeing them in person is totally different.”

Capped at 20 participants, the outdoor classes are held three times a week. Several packages and memberships are available for interested participants, ranging from $28 for a single class to $75 for a group of five.

See ALKALIGN, Page 26

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Making Sense of Investing
**ALKALIGN**

*From Page 25*

$45 for three classes, along with 30-class packages. Classes run 45-60 minutes and cover a wide range of exercises applicable to everyday life.

“The classes over Zoom were definitely a great way to connect, but once Bumble on the Green classes became an option, I jumped at the chance to attend a class that allowed for social interaction with my fellow Alkaligners while maintaining appropriate social distance,” Los Altos Hills resident Margo Mynderse-Isola said. “What the Bumble class offers that the online classes can’t is the ability to see and interact with the Alkalign instructor and multiple attendees, see their facial expressions, and truly get a sense of how they are doing during this pandemic.”

Alkalign – which has been offering virtual fitness classes since the pandemic began – strives to provide strength, mobility, flexibility and mind-body connection through exercises and workouts, according to Paruszewski.

“Alkalign is a community first and fitness studio second,” she said. “It’s a very inclusive workout, so people can participate at different levels. It is very balanced in order to help people move better through life, with the idea being when you move better, you can feel better and live better.”

She added that those who attend the outdoor classes are required to bring their own masks and mats, and have a designated distanced space on the Bumble Green lawn. Paruszewski isn’t sure when Alkalign’s in-studio sessions will return, but the outdoor and virtual classes will continue in the meantime.

“We have to be innovative and constantly evolving and just be flexible so we can provide our clients and our community with what they need now, and it changes every day,” she said.

For more information on Alkalign, visit alkalignstudios.com.

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Real estate is extremely complex so my approach to leadership is to educate. Laws are changing all the time so the more I can share what’s happening, the better off our agents and clients will be.
India and Malaysia at the same time,” she added.
Eusope’s food combines Indian food-ways with a hearty dose of the pungent, herbaceous flavors of Malay cuisine. An infusion of technique from the Chinese community in Malaysia brings soy sauce and rice wine, fermented mustard leaves and black beans, and dishes cooked at high heat in a wok. Black mustard seed meets star anise and orange peel.

Her father worked as a street vendor who sold hand-pulled, Chinese-style noodles accented with roasted turmeric and fennel seed, and she said that for 45 years he sold only those noodles.

“I don’t make fusion food, I make food the way my people make the food,” Eusope said, a distinction that captures some of the excitement her menu sparks in first-time tasters.

Improvised catering
Eusope said she and her employees are like many other restaurants during the crisis: They face days with near zero business coming in. If they want to survive, they must find new ways to serve food.

A recent food drop-off in Mountain View, top, included only the menu items, above, chef Azalina Eusope thought could palatably survive an hour or more on the road.

“Getting support is an amazing feeling. My heart starts blooming bigger than its actual size,” Eusope said of the enthusiastic and swift response from Mountain View and Los Altos eaters when she put out the call for orders.

Trying this new mode of ad hoc, anarchic catering required experimentation: Which foods can safely travel the distance and delays of distributed pickups? How will the presentation of her elaborate dishes, which include many components, suffer over time before they are scooped and tipped from compostable containers?

After the successful test run with Hsu, Eusope turned to a dear friend in Mountain View as the next host, and said she plans to continue the experiment if others want to rally friends and neighbors to place coordinated orders.

“I want to see more restaurants do a similar thing. I want to try some food that I can only find in the South Bay or East Bay,” Eusope said from her own perch in San Francisco.

Find ongoing takeout and delivery food opportunities via posts on Los Altos Takeout and Delivery, an informal group started by residents, at facebook.com/groups/losaltostakeoutanddelivery.
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Offered at $3,488,000

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*Search Criteria as compiled by BrokerMerrices® using MLS Data: January 1, 2019 - December 31, 2019, Los Altos Hills, All Residential Properties.

For more information, video tour & more photos, please visit: www.12227Colina.com

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中文諮詢請聯繫Audrey Sun 電話：650.785.5822 | DRE #01933274
CLASSIC CLIFF MAY RANCH ON PEACEFUL 1-ACRE LOT

11275 Summit Wood Road, Los Altos Hills

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Congratulations to the Top Real Estate Agents & Teams in Santa Clara and San Mateo Counties 2019

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ranking</th>
<th>Agent/Team Name</th>
<th>Brokerage</th>
<th>Organized as Agent or Team</th>
<th>Key Team Members</th>
<th>Total Sales*</th>
<th>Listing Sales</th>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>Jim Arbeed</td>
<td>Coldwell Banker Realty</td>
<td>Agent</td>
<td>Jim Arbeed</td>
<td>$99,692,276</td>
<td>$75,112,388</td>
<td>$24,579,888</td>
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<td>Sternsmith Group</td>
<td>Compass</td>
<td>Agent</td>
<td>Casey Sternsmith</td>
<td>$99,409,000</td>
<td>$53,298,000</td>
<td>$46,111,000</td>
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<td>18</td>
<td>LeMieux Associates²</td>
<td>Compass</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Tom LeMieux Jennifer Bitter</td>
<td>$99,328,000</td>
<td>$74,923,000</td>
<td>$24,405,000</td>
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<td>Len Stone Group</td>
<td>KW Peninsula Estates</td>
<td>Team</td>
<td>Len Stone</td>
<td>$99,170,500</td>
<td>$60,761,500</td>
<td>$38,409,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Dave Clark</td>
<td>Keller Williams Realty - Silicon Valley</td>
<td>Agent</td>
<td>Dave Clark Troy Bambino</td>
<td>$97,507,500</td>
<td>$94,107,500</td>
<td>$3,400,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Although all DeLeon Los Altos/Los Altos Hills sellers work directly with Michael Repka, the DeLeon Team has far more resources and a more robust staff than any independent contractor agent or small team. That, coupled with our innovative business model, creates many operational efficiencies that allow us to do considerably more volume and offer more services than traditional agents. Nevertheless, clients regularly choose between the DeLeon Team’s integrated model, and the traditional approach practiced by most other agents and teams, so we believe a direct and transparent comparison is helpful.

Search criteria as compiled by BrokerMetrics® using MLS Data: January 1st, 2019 - December 31st, 2019, Santa Clara County and San Mateo County, Residential Property (Single Family Home, Condominium, Townhouse, Manufactured Home, Floating Home, Duet Home, Multiple on Lot, Farm/Ranch, Other Residential, Double Wide Mobile Home, Duplex). ¹Recip is an amalgamation of many out of the area agents ²Tom LeMieux operates functionally as a team but splits the team sales amongst the members when reporting sales to the MLS. For purposes of accuracy, we have combined the sales of the individual members of the LeMieux team. ³Total sales includes both the listing sales and buyer sales; No off-MLS sales were included in the rankings.
Resident of Cupertino
November 24, 1926 - May 23, 2020

Thomas Adam Rohrer passed away May 23, 2020 at the age of 93.

He will be laid to rest at the Alta Mesa Memorial Park.

Thomas Adam Rohrer was great man with a big heart, very charming and gentlemanly with a unique sense humor.

Thomas Rohrer was born on November 24th, 1926, he entered the world with as much zest and an expediency for life. Tom spent his days milking cows, cascading and sheering sheep on the family farm. Hard work was in his genes, which later proved to be a great strength during the Depression.

Tom loved to travel to many new and exciting places with his companions while speaking several languages. He broke bread all across his travels, while enjoying the countryside and culinary flavors. He traveled the world many times over. Tom was curious of the human condition which resulted in writing and publishing many books to his name manifesting in thrilling fictional writings.

The books were based on his journeys and adventure of the years he was in the War while serving in the Merchant Marines. Tom shared his stories with his family and friends of his life’s many journeys.

He earned an engineering degree and founded a company while serving his terms.

Tom met his first wife Joan in 1944, at an officer’s dance while serving his term. It was love at first site and they were married on Valentine’s Day in 1948. Tom and Joan both earned degrees, built a business, traveled the world and pursued philanthropy. Joan passed away in 1996, after battling ovarian cancer.

A few years passed, Tom was set up on a blind date at the Los Altos Country Club, where he met the ever enchanting Jean Hollands. Jean, like Tom had the same curiosity for the human condition. The two were married in 2005. Tom and Jean had the same excitement for traveling and loved their journeys together on many continents furthering their love for fine wine.

The two documented their adventures through narrative stories and published writings. The couple was well known for hosting large family gatherings by the pool. He provided a unique tale telling of his adventures and experiences which he shared with family and friends.

As life went on, Tom and Jean spent many hours developing pressing stories for their local community newspaper and creating thrilling works of fiction - many of which provide a clear window into his life long journey around the world and back.

His beloved wife, Jean passed away in 2016.

Thomas Adam Rohrer passed away May 23, 2020 at the age of 93.

He will be laid to rest at the Alta Mesa Memorial Park.
American Association of University Women, Los Altos-Mountain View branch. Open to women (and men) with a college degree who are interested in equity for women and girls. 207-6625; lamcv.aauww.net.

Los Altos Las Madres Playgroups, groups for moms and their babies 5 and under. Meet other new moms for weekly walks, park days and/or indoor play dates in and around Los Altos. Expectant moms, new dads and other caregivers welcome. 917-9914; lasmadres.org.

Quota International of Mountain View/Los Altos. Supports scholarships for hearing impaired students. El Camino Hospital Infant Hearing Screening Clinic, Community Services Agency and CHAC. Noon first and third Thursdays of each month. Michael’s at Shoreline, 2960 N. Shoreline Blvd. Mountain View. 967-5404; quotamvla.org.

U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, volunteer organization of boating enthusiasts who perform community service, including boating education, volunteer vessel inspections and boating operations. Not involved in military or law enforcement activities. Ages 17 and up. 7 p.m. second Tuesday of the month. Mountain View Senior Center, 266 Escuela Ave. 94041-5466.

Rotary Club of Los Altos, Service group. 12:15 p.m. Thursdays. Garden House at Shoop Park, 400 University Ave. 94045-1555; losaltosrotary.org.

Electric Toasters, Toastmasters group. Noon to 1 p.m. today. Electric Power Research Institute, 3412 Hilview Ave., Los Altos. 855-2270.

Los Altos Lodge No. 72 F. & A. M. 7:30 p.m. first Monday of the month. Los Altos Masonic Hall, 146 Main St. 94024-6615.

Weekly meditation practice group. Based on Jack Kornfield’s book “A Path with Heart.” 7 p.m. Tuesday. Foot-hills Congregational Church, Los Altos. 969-3452.

Bayshore Storytellers, 7 p.m. third Sunday of the month. Los Altos United Methodist Church, 1765 Emerson Ave., Los Altos. 94024-1833; 917-1920; southbaystorytellers.com.

Vasa Order of America, Lindbergh Lodge. Organization for experiencing the Swedish culture, open to people of Scandinavian descent and their families. 6:30 p.m. second Friday of each month; supper 7 p.m. American Legion Hall, 3412 First St., Los Altos. 94024-7125 (after 6 p.m).

Baha’i Faith of Los Altos. Fireside talks. 8:30-9.p.m. Thirds, 158 Coronado Ave., Los Altos. 94043-0143.

Mountain View Women’s Club, Community service organization. Monthly meetings. Masonic Temple, 890 Church St. 94020-1570.

Mountain View Fieldhounds International Training in Communication Club, 7 p.m. first and third Thursday of the month. Union Bank, El Camino Real, Palo Alto. 946-6466.

Technology and Society Committee, 11:45 a.m. alternate Tuesdays. Golden Wok, 895 Villa St., Mountain View. 967-2964.


Optimist Club of Palo Alto-Mountain View. Luncheon meetings noon to 1:30 p.m. first and third Tuesdays of the month. Hyatt Ricker’s, Palo Alto. 855-1847.

Peninsula Gem & Mineral Society. Includes mineral displays, field trips and a lapidary. 7 p.m. fourth Wednesday of the month. Hilview Community Center, Room 12, 97 Hilview Ave., Los Altos. ppgs.org.

VOLUNTEERS

Blood drive, American Red Cross, Northern California Region, is in desperate need of blood. (800) 733-2767; redcrossblood.org.

Share Conversational English with a Stanford International Student. Meet with a Stanford student, twice a month. 7 p.m. Thursday. El Camino Real, Palo Alto. 94303-6466.

Bidding on the City’s bid forms. A copy of the plans and specifications shall be obtained from the office of the City’s Public Works Department. Bids must be submitted at City Hall, 1 North San Antonio Road, Los Altos, CA 94022, AT 12 P.M. on the day of the bid opening.

If you are interested in bidding on the above project, you may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law. You may examine the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate and are not a creditor or a contingent creditor, you may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California statutes and legal proceedings. You may want to consult with a personal representative of the estate before taking any action. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law. You may examine the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate and are not a creditor or a contingent creditor, you may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California statutes and legal proceedings. You may want to consult with a personal representative of the estate before taking any action. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law. You may examine the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate and are not a creditor or a contingent creditor, you may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California statutes and legal proceedings. You may want to consult with a personal representative of the estate before taking any action. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California laws.

Public Notices

Notice to Contractors

City Hall, 1 North San Antonio Road, Los Altos, CA 94022, for a non-refundable fee of $60.00 or visit City website to download the PDF files: http://bids.losaltosca.gov. Copies may also be obtained from the City Engineer. To the extent permitted by Public Contract Code section 20103, the City will also make Contract Documents available for viewing at one or more plan rooms.

4. Labor Compliance. As provided in paragraph 7.1.01A, Labor Compliance Requirements of the District shall be published in the California Labor Code Section 1775. This Code requires the Contractor to pay workers based on prevailing wage rates established and issued by the Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Labor and Statistics.

Pursuant to Labor Code sections 1772.5 and 1771, all contractors or subcontractors performing work projects are required to report to the California Labor Code section 1775. This Code requires the Contractor to pay workers based on prevailing wage rates established and issued by the Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Labor and Statistics.

Pursuant to Labor Code sections 1772.5 and 1771, all contractors or subcontractors performing work projects are required to report to the California Labor Code section 1775. This Code requires the Contractor to pay workers based on prevailing wage rates established and issued by the Department of Industrial Relations, Division of Labor and Statistics.

No contractor or subcontractor may be awarded a contract for public work on a public works project without registering with the Department of Industrial Relations. Any contractor or subcontractor obtaining a bond pursuant to this section shall post a bond in an amount equal to 10% of the total Bid Price.

9. Payment & Performance Bonds: The successful Bidder shall be required to furnish the City with a Performance Bond and a Payment Bond, each equal to 5% of the total Bid Price, prior to execution of the Contract. All bonds are to be secured from a surety that meets all of the State of California bonding require- ments, as defined in Code of Civil Procedure Section 1011.050 and is admitted by the State of California. The cost of said bonds shall be included in the Bid amount.

10. Award of Contract: Said bids will be presented to and considered by the City Council at a regularly scheduled meeting. The City shall award the Contract for the Project to the lowest responsive, responsible乙方 on the basis of the low responsive Bid amount.

11. Time of Completion of Work: The work shall be completed and ready for full use within a one-hundred sixty (160) calendar days, from the first day of which shall be the date specified in the City Engineer’s “Notice to Proceed.”

12. Substitution of Securities: Pursuant to Public Contract Code section 20303, the successful乙方 may substitute certain securities for funds withheld by City to ensure his performance under the Contract.

13. Rights of the City: The City reserves the right to cancel the project, and to reject any or all bids if not satisfied as to the price for the work or the responsi- bility of the乙方.

The Bidder may be awarded a contract for the project for the sum of $1,000,000.00. The City shall have the right to cancel the project and to reject any or all bids if not satisfied as to the price for the work or the responsibility of the乙方.

The City reserves the right to cancel the project, and to reject any or all bids if not satisfied as to the price for the work or the responsibility of the乙方.

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**Real Estate Market Snapshot**
Sales were brisk in May with "shelter in place" and June has started out strong with multiple offers on many homes.

### FOR SALE

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<th>Inventory</th>
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<tr>
<td>Shortest/Longest: 1 Day / 146 Days</td>
<td>Listings Currently For Sale: 33</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average: 38 Days</td>
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### PENDING

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<th>Inventory</th>
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<td>Shortest/Longest: 1 Day / 73 Days</td>
<td>Pending Listings: 30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Average: 22 Days</td>
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### SOLD

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Months of Supply</th>
<th>Monthly Sales</th>
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<tr>
<td>1.27 Months</td>
<td>Total Sales: 37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>30-Day Sales: 26</td>
</tr>
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### Sales Price

- Avg.: $2,615,000
- High: $7,700,000

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**10520 Sundown Canyon Way, Los Altos Hills**

- **SOLD**
- **$3,600,000**

---

**930 Springfield Drive, Campbell**

- **SOLD**
- **$1,720,000**

---

**505 Calle Siena, Morgan Hill**

- **SOLD**
- **$1,325,000**