

Mountain View VOICE



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Holiday Spirit 2018



MAGALI GAUTHIER

Kathy Patterson quizzes a student on a word problem at Benjamin Bubb Elementary School on Nov. 13. Patterson was one of two Mountain View teachers honored as a Teacher of the Year in Santa Clara County.

Local teachers forge a path for student success

COUNTY HONORS TWO MOUNTAIN VIEW TEACHERS FOR GOING THE EXTRA MILE

By Kevin Forestieri

For people keeping a close eye on local schools, Santa Clara County's recognition of two Mountain View teachers was a long time coming.

Last month, the county's annual Teacher of the Year award ceremony celebrated the work of Mountain View High School teacher Sarah Block and Bubb Elementary School teacher Kathy Patterson. Both teach in schools where student

backgrounds range from low-income families who don't speak English at home to affluent, well-resourced families seeking enrichment, which often leads to the huge gaps in

► See **TEACHERS**, page 14

After years of cyberstalking, Los Altos man arrested

By Kevin Forestieri

A Los Altos man was arrested Monday after police linked him to a chain of explicit, sexually violent and threatening messages sent to a Mountain View woman.

The suspect, identified as 29-year-old Matthew Cringle, attended a local high school with the victim, and reportedly had a history of harassing her,

according to a statement from the Mountain View Police Department. The woman told officers during her initial report to police on April 23 that she believed it was Cringle sending the messages.



Matthew Cringle

View's Cyber Crimes unit eventually linked Cringle to the series of messages sent to the victim and arrested him without incident on Monday, Nov. 19.

In the initial April report, the suspect had sent explicit messages to the victim's Facebook account inbox, according to police, and that the accounts used to send the messages appeared to

Investigators in Mountain

► See **STALKING**, page 9

Waymo presses ahead on driverless testing

CONSUMER WATCHDOGS WARN REGULATION FALLS SHORT

By Mark Noack

With a new state permit in hand, the autonomous car company Waymo will soon be kicking off its training wheels — i.e. its human drivers. The company's self-driving vehicles are now cleared to travel with no humans behind the wheel on the streets of Mountain View, Palo Alto and other nearby cities.

Waymo's new permit from the California Department of Motor Vehicles, which the *Voice* obtained through a public records request, indicates the company is largely being allowed to set its own guidelines and protocols for driverless testing. The permit document, which appears to be authored entirely by Waymo, provides little insight as to how DMV regulators interpreted and scrutinized the company's driverless testing program.

Almost letter for letter, the permit granted by the DMV largely matches an application filed by the company six months earlier in April, except for one major change. Originally, Waymo requested permission to test drive up to 59 Chrysler Pacifica

minivans, but its final certified permit reduced that number down to 39. Exactly why that reduction was made remains a mystery — DMV officials said it was Waymo's decision, and the company, a division of Google's parent company Alphabet, did not respond to questions submitted by the *Voice*.

DMV officials acknowledged that Waymo designed many facets of its driverless testing protocol, but they gave assurances that the company's proposal satisfied all the regulatory requirements. DMV regulators analyzed Waymo's application and pressed the company to clarify elements of its vehicles' operational design and interaction plan for law enforcement, said Martin Greenstein, DMV spokesman.

"A lot of this is going to be authored by Waymo," he said. "This a big step obviously for driverless testing, so we took time to thoroughly review the application. We're not going to issue a permit until they've met our requirements."

But while this marks a new milestone, consumer advocates

► See **WAYMO**, page 9



MAGALI GAUTHIER

A Waymo autonomous car drives past Monta Loma Park on Oct. 10. The DMV granted Waymo permission to test vehicles on city streets without a backup driver inside.

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Michael Lowe and Leighton Shiveley in Menlowe Ballet's "It's a Wonderful Nutcracker."

COURTESY OF ERIC RAEBER/MENLOWE BALLET

IT'S 'NUTCRACKER' SEASON

Tchaikovsky's holiday ballet classic "The Nutcracker" is once again well represented by dance companies and schools around the Midpeninsula. Waltzing flowers, warring mice, Sugar Plum Fairies and handsome princes will take to the stage in a variety of incarnations.

The professional company **Menlowe Ballet** will continue its annual tradition of presenting its original mash-up of "The Nutcracker" and the beloved holiday film "It's a Wonderful Life." "It's a Wonderful Nutcracker" this year is boasting an expanded second act and runs Dec. 14-16 and 21-23 at the Menlo-Atherton Performing Arts Center, 555 Middlefield Road, Atherton. There will also be a sensory-sensitive performance on Dec. 16. Go to menloweballet.org/nutcracker.

Other local "Nutcracker" productions include **Pacific Ballet's** (Nov. 23-25, Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., pacificballet.org/nutcracker/), **Western Ballet's** (Nov. 30-Dec. 2, Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, westernballet.org/performances-the-nutcracker/), **Ballet America's** (Dec. 7 & 9, Fox Theatre, 2215 Broadway St., Redwood City, americanballet.com/nutcracker/) and **Peninsula Ballet's** (Dec. 22-24 and 29, Fox Theatre, peninsulaballet.org/nutcracker/).

—Karla Kane

RENAISSANCE CONCERT CANCELED

The Mountain View High School choir's Renaissance Concert event, a 20-year tradition at the school, was canceled due to poor air quality caused by smoke from Butte County. Catering

services intended for the event were instead re-routed to victims of the fire.

Jill Denny, the school's choir instructor, told families that the weekend concerts were canceled in response to high levels of smoke generated by the Camp Fire, which cast a haze over the Bay Area for more than 10 consecutive days. The concert involves heavy labor to set up, lots of outside movement and signing for a grand total of 12 hours, raising safety concerns for students and volunteer staff.

"It is not safe for students, parents and volunteers to participate," Denny wrote to choir families. "The Renaissance concert has been a tradition in the MVHS choir department since 1998, and we are very sad to cancel this event."

Instead, the school's choir opted to use the catering services for the event — which had already been paid for — to provide 200 meals for victims of the fire. Volunteers helped transport the food to the area on Saturday, Nov. 17. Food left over from the meal service was donated to the Salvation Army distribution center in the area.

The Renaissance concert is the choir's biggest fundraiser, and people hoping to attend the concert are being asked to consider turning their ticket purchase into a donation. Tickets can also be exchanged for the choir's Dec. 21 Holiday Concert.

"I know that students are disappointed to miss this performance, especially seniors," Denny said in the email. "This is one of those times when things are out of our control, and all we can do is look for the most positive solution possible. I think that taking this as an opportunity to help others will help take the sting out of our pain."

—Kevin Forestieri

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■ COMMUNITY BRIEFS

CITY TRANSPORTATION BONDS

The Mountain View City Council agreed to issue a total of \$68.8 million in bonds in order to help construct a variety of North Bayshore transportation projects. The bond were approved at the council's Nov. 13 meeting in a 6-0 vote with Councilman Ken Rosenberg recused due to a potential business conflict.

The City Council issued the bonds through the Shoreline Regional Park Community Fund, which collects property taxes and development fees. While officially intended for North Bayshore recreation, the Shoreline Park funding has been used in recent years to finance various other improvements, particularly transportation-related projects.

The identified projects include a \$14.1 million realignment of the Highway 101 off-ramp at Shoreline Boulevard and a \$20 million bike and pedestrian crossing over Highway 101. The money is also earmarked for a \$28.5 million land purchase from Google, which is needed to realign Plymouth Street to improve traffic along Shoreline Boulevard.

NEW MINI-PARKS

At its Nov. 13 meeting, the City Council approved plan for two new mini-parks: Wyandotte Park, located at 2254 Wyandotte St.; and Evandale Park, located near the corner of Evandale Avenue and Piazza Drive.

Wyandotte Park is a 0.9-acre former dog kennel. The city acquired the parcel and demolished the former buildings. The planned park is expected to include a play area, a small waterway and a loop trail through some trees. Originally, the play area was planned to have mounded lawns, but that feature was removed by the City Council out of concern it would restrict usage.

The 0.3-acre Evandale Park is expected to include a central plaza and playground.

Both new parks are expected to be completed by the end of 2019.

More information on the new parks, including design layouts, can be found in the city's Nov. 13 meeting packet at <https://tinyurl.com/y8ks2u9q>.

STATE'S LARGEST SOLAR PROJECT

After launching last year, the new South Bay utility — Silicon Valley Clean Energy (SVCE) — is taking part in what is expected to be California's largest expansion of solar power and storage. At a board meeting last month, the utility's board of directors signed

► See **COMMUNITY BRIEFS**, page 7

■ POLICE LOG

AUTO BURGLARY

- 1500 block N. Shoreline Blvd., 11/15
- 1500 block N. Shoreline Blvd., 11/15
- 700 block E. EL Camino Real, 11/16
- 700 block E. EL Camino Real, 11/16
- 700 block E. EL Camino Real, 11/16
- 700 block E. EL Camino Real, 11/16
- 700 block E. EL Camino Real, 11/16
- 1500 block N. Shoreline Blvd., 11/16
- 1500 block N. Shoreline Blvd., 11/17
- 1500 block N. Shoreline Blvd., 11/17
- 1500 block N. Shoreline Blvd., 11/17
- 1500 block N. Shoreline Blvd., 11/17

- 800 block E. El Camino Real, 11/17
- 1000 block Grant Rd., 11/17

GRAND THEFT

- 800 block San Carlos Av., 11/15
- 2900 block N. Shoreline Blvd., 11/16

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

- 500 block Del Medio Av., 11/13
- 500 block Del Medio Av., 11/13
- 1100 block W. El Camino Real, 11/16
- 1500 block Fordham Way, 11/17

STOLEN VEHICLE

- W. Dana St. & Pettis Av., 11/15
- Old Middlefield Way & Sierra Vista Av., 11/18

VANDALISM

- California St. & S. Rengstorff Av., 11/14

COMMERCIAL BURGLARY

- 1200 block Terra Bella Av., 11/16

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NATALIA NAZAROVA

Alison Hicks is in a tight race for the Mountain View City Council, dropping from second place on election night to fourth place, only a few votes away from securing one of three open seats.

Showalter holds lead, but council race still in limbo

If you need any evidence that every vote matters, this election is it.

Two weeks after the Nov. 6 election, the battle for one seat on the Mountain View City Council is still too close to call. Councilwoman Pat Showalter and Alison Hicks remain locked in a tight race that may not be decided until every last vote is tabulated by Santa Clara County elections officials.

As of the latest results released Tuesday, Showalter has 17.69 percent of the vote, compared to Hicks at 17.67 percent. That difference between the two is

extremely small — just 14 votes separate them.

“It’s certainly been dramatic,” Hicks told the *Voice* in an email. “Whatever the outcome, it seems voters sent a very clear message that they want changes.”

The two candidates are competing for the third seat that was up for election on the council. The other two seats have been secured by Ellen Kamei (19.03 percent) and Lucas Ramirez (18.13 percent). Mayor Lenny Siegel, in fifth place with 15.92 percent and former Councilman John Inks, coming in last

with 11.55 percent, haven’t seen a change in their standings and appear to be out of the running.

As of Tuesday, approximately 95 percent of the ballots in the county had been counted. Mostly provisional ballots remain, which are more time-consuming to tally, the Registrar of Voters announced on Tuesday.

The office is releasing daily updates at 5 p.m. on its website, sccvote.org. It is unknown how many of those yet-to-be-counted votes are from Mountain View.

—Mark Noack

Fire’s smoky haze disrupted life on Midpeninsula

By Kevin Forestieri

Unhealthy air quality caused by smoke from the Camp Fire lingered throughout the Bay Area for more than a week, forcing school closures, canceling events and sparking a local shortage of protective breathing masks.

The Camp Fire, which was 70 percent contained as of Tuesday morning, ravaged the town of Paradise and has burned through more than 150,000 acres in Butte County. With a growing death toll and hundreds of people reported missing, it’s the deadliest and most destructive fire in California history. Smoke from the fire drifted into all parts of the Bay Area, and weather conditions did little to waft it out of the region. The result was sustained unhealthy air quality on the Peninsula spanning from Nov. 9 through at least Nov. 19.

Data from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District shows that the Air Quality Index (AQI), measured from the closest readings in Redwood City, averaged between 142 and 185 over the 11-day period. The metric gauges how much small particulate matter, only 2.5 micrometers in diameter, is in the air, and a reading of 150 or higher signals unhealthy air conditions.

Residents across all Bay Area counties were asked to stay inside with doors and windows closed and limit outdoor activities. Elderly residents, children and people with respiratory illnesses were at particularly high risk. Concerns over air quality prompted many residents to seek

protective masks — particularly N95 masks and P100 respirators — but the sudden spike in demand cleaned out most local retailers.

The conditions prompted the air district to issue Winter Spare the Air alerts for 12 straight days, which places a temporary ban on the burning of wood or any other solid fuel that could worsen already poor air conditions.

Although several days of bad air quality had already passed, school officials throughout Santa Clara County began shutting down campuses late last week. All schools and district facilities in the Foothill-De Anza Community College District closed on Thursday, Nov. 15, and remained closed through Monday this week.

Many Santa Clara County school districts including the Mountain View Whisman School District and the Mountain View-Los Altos High School District followed suit, and opted to close schools on Friday, Nov. 16. The decisions were made late into the evening on Thursday with little advance notice. The high school district left its libraries open.

St. Francis High School was also closed on Nov. 16 and remained closed through Thanksgiving week.

School was back in session for both school districts on Monday, despite only a slight improvement in air quality that day, and remained open on Tuesday. Schools in both districts were closed again from Wednesday

► See **SMOKE**, page 11

Uncertainty remains over housing a bigger Bullis in Los Altos

SCHOOL BOARD MEMBERS UNLIKELY TO PITCH A BATTLE OVER ENROLLMENT NUMBERS

By Kevin Forestieri

Los Altos School District board members agreed last week that they won’t contest Bullis Charter School’s enrollment growth projections for next year, leaving a burning question as to how the district will find accommodations for the charter school’s

1,105-student campus.

Bullis officials submitted a facilities request under California’s Proposition 39 law earlier this month, revealing plans to grow from its current enrollment of 915 students to 1,105 in the 2019-20 school year. Under the state law, the district is on the hook for providing “reasonably equivalent” facilities for all of

the students who reside within the district, which in this case is 1,058 kids, from kindergarten to eighth grade.

While this is typically the time school districts and charter schools would butt heads over enrollment projections — if it happens at all — Los Altos

► See **BULLIS**, page 11



MAGALI GAUTHIER

A smoky haze hung over commuters wearing face masks as they waited for the train in downtown Mountain View on Nov. 16.

Holiday Fund



How to Give Your gift helps children and families in need

Contributions to the Holiday Fund will be matched dollar for dollar to the extent possible and will go directly to seven nonprofit agencies that serve Mountain View residents. Last year, more than 170 Voice readers and the Wakerly, Packard and Hewlett foundations contributed a total of \$105,000. We are indebted to the Silicon Valley Community Foundation which handles all donations, and deducts no administrative costs from your gifts, which are tax-deductible as permitted by law. All donations will be shared equally with the seven recipient agencies.

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This year, the following agencies will be supported by the Holiday Fund:

Day Worker Center

The Day Worker Center of Mountain View provides a secure place for workers and employers to negotiate wages and work conditions. It serves workers with job placements, English lessons, job skills workshops and guidance.

Mentor Tutor Connection

Mentor Tutor Connection matches adult volunteers who serve either as mentors with under-served youth in high school or as tutors to students in elementary and middle schools in Mountain View and Los Altos school districts.

Community School of Music and Arts

The Community School of Music and Arts provides hands-on art and music education in the classrooms of the Mountain View Whisman School District.

MayView Community Health Center

The MayView Community Health Center in Mountain View offers primary care services to low-income and uninsured patients in northern Santa Clara County. No patient is turned away for inability to pay for services, which include prenatal and pediatric care, cancer screenings and chronic disease management.

YWCA Support Network for Domestic Violence

This group operates a 24-hour bilingual hotline and a safe shelter for women and their children. It also offers counseling and other services for families dealing with domestic violence.

Community Services Agency

CSA is the community's safety-net providing critical support services for low-income individuals and families, the homeless and seniors in northern Santa Clara County, including Mountain View, Los Altos and Los Altos Hills.

Community Health Awareness Council

CHAC serves Mountain View, Los Altos, Los Altos Hills and seven school districts. Among the services it offers are school-based counseling and programs to protect students from high-risk behaviors.

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Landlords' measure to curb rent control headed for 2020 ballot

By Mark Noack

A voter measure to nullify most provisions of Mountain View's rent control program is headed for the 2020 ballot.

The so-called "Mountain View Homeowner, Renter and Taxpayer Protection Initiative," passed its last major hurdle last week when Santa Clara County elections officials announced that thousands of voter signatures submitted with the measure appear to be valid.

The measure needed at least 5,150 signatures from registered voters to qualify, and it surpassed that requirement by about 600, according to City Clerk Lisa Natusch. On Thursday, Nov. 15, she informed the

City Council that the measure would be added to its Nov. 27 meeting agenda so that it could be certified for the 2020 ballot.

The proposed ballot initiative is being spearheaded by the California Apartment Association with funding from several of Mountain View's largest apartment owners, according to mandatory financial disclosures. Since first announcing the measure in April, advocates have spent more than \$260,000. Much of that money went toward hiring a team of signature gatherers, who were reportedly paid a premium for any names they could collect. Several hundred people requested that their signatures be withdrawn, saying they were

duped into believing the measure would preserve or expand rent control.

Ever since its inception, the proposed measure has been denounced as a "sneaky repeal" by activists who passed the original Measure V rent control program in 2016. While the landlord-backed measure purports to fix problems in the city's rent control program, they point out that it would actually repeal nearly all of its tenant protections.

The new landlord-backed measure was originally intended to be placed on the 2018 ballot, but it failed to meet a June deadline for submitting its required signatures. ■

Email Mark Noack at mnoack@mv-voice.com

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

► Continued from page 4

a deal worth up to \$337 million to draw power for upcoming years from two planned new solar facilities.

When complete, the twin projects are expected to comprise the largest solar expansion in California, providing enough capacity to power 39,000 homes, according to SVCE officials. The projects will also include about 47 megawatts of storage capacity, allowing the utility to save power during peak times for inclement weather.

The new solar arrays are being built through a partnership between SVCE and Monterey Bay Community Power. The two utilities will roughly split the energy generation when the projects are complete.

The two projects are planned to be built in Kings County and Kern County.

SVCF PICKS NEW HEAD

The Mountain View-based giant of the philanthropic world, the Silicon Valley Community Foundation (SCVF), announced it has selected a new top executive following a months-long search. Nicole Taylor, a Bay Area native who most recently served as vice president of the Arizona State University Foundation, has been picked to take the helm of the influential \$13.5 billion nonprofit.

The change of leadership comes amid a focused effort by SVCF officials to rebuild the organization's reputation following a series of scandals involving workplace harassment and bullying. A storm of complaints

from employees and donors led to the resignation of at least three SVCF executives, including CEO Emmett Carson, who had headed the organization since its inception in 2006. Since April, the SVCF has been temporarily led by former board member Greg Avis.

In a press release, the SVCF board of directors praised Taylor as the right person to manage the nonprofit and connect the private sector with the philanthropic world. She has previously served as CEO and president of the East Bay Community Foundation and the Thrive Foundation for Youth in Silicon Valley. At Stanford University, she worked as associate vice provost of student affairs and dean of community engagement.

Taylor will officially begin her role at SVCF on Dec. 19.

—Mark Noack

STANFORD CHILDREN'S HEALTH PICKS NEW CEO

The board of directors at Stanford Children's Health has chosen Paul King as president and CEO of Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford and Stanford Children's Health, hospital officials announced.

King's appointment will take effect early next year, Stanford Children's Health officials said in a press release. He will succeed Dr. Dennis Lund, who served as interim CEO following the retirement of Christopher Dawes, who stepped down in March for health reasons after serving in the position for nearly 30 years.

"I look forward to working with the board and executive

leadership, the physicians and staff, as well as with partners at the School of Medicine and Stanford Health Care, to continue to advance pediatric care and research and raise the bar for patient experience and outcomes not just for our patients, but for children and expectant mothers everywhere," King said in a press release.

Since 2013, King has been executive director of the University of Michigan Health System's C.S. Mott Children's Hospital and Von Voigtlander Women's Hospital, which gained the highest employee engagement levels as well as patient satisfaction rating throughout the university health system.

Before that, he was vice president of clinical programs and professional services and for Pediatric Management Group, a group associated with Children's Hospital Los Angeles. He then became the president and CEO of the group.

"With more than 35 years in health care, including 22 years in executive roles leading pediatric health care enterprises, Paul brings a wealth of experiences and leadership experience to Stanford Children's Health," said Jeff Chambers, chair of Lucile Packard Children's Hospital Stanford board of directors, said.

Stanford Children's Health is a nonprofit organization that provides medical care to children and expectant mothers through 60 locations in Northern California and 100 locations in the Western region of the United States. It also serves as the pediatric and obstetric teaching hospital for the Stanford University School of Medicine.

—Cameron Rebosio



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New special needs school won't open in Mountain View

By Kevin Forestieri

Plans to open a small private school in Mountain View serving students with and without physical disabilities won't be opening in the city after all. Mountain View city officials found the proposed building wasn't safe enough to serve as a school.

But founders of the school, called Up Academy, say they were undeterred by the setback, and plan to open a campus in an alternate location — downtown San Mateo — by early December. The school is already up and running with a handful of students at a temporary location at the Unitarian Universalist Church of Palo Alto.

Earlier this year, a team of local parents announced plans to open up a small private school at 284 Moffett Blvd., aimed at teaching an inclusive group of kids with and without disabilities. The goal was to create an environment for young children, particularly students who are capable of handling grade-level content but would otherwise be held back in a normal classroom because of

significant physical disabilities — cerebral palsy chief among them.

Leading the charge is Mountain View resident Tanya Sheckley, galvanized by her own experience as the mother of a child with cerebral palsy who, as Sheckley saw it, wasn't getting the help she needed in the classroom. Sheckley's daughter, Eliza, died unexpectedly in 2016, but she resolved to move forward with her school plans anyway.

The nonprofit Up Academy signed a lease for the Moffett property and planned to open a school there in September, but ran into some costly challenges. The office building wasn't equipped with fire alarms and automatic fire sprinklers — something the building department would have required in order to grant the conditional use permit — and installation would take extensive work costing upward of \$100,000.

Sheckley maintains that the city's interpretation of the building code was off, citing language that states fire sprinklers are required in the event of a "change in the character or

occupancy" of a building over 3,600 square feet in size. The 284 Moffett building was under 3,000 square feet, and Sheckley said she signed the lease thinking they would be exempt from the requirement.

A hired land use lawyer and multiple phone conversations later, Sheckley said the city wouldn't budge, and the property owner wasn't interested in paying for the costly upgrades to an older building.

"The costs were pretty prohibitive," she said. "We were going to incur the entire cost, on a building that was a rental, to be able to open our school in the space because the city was interpreting the code in a way that we believe is incorrect."

Shellie Woodworth, the city's chief building official, said she sympathized with Sheckley's situation, but said the building had a whole host of safety problems that would need to be resolved. Sprinkler requirements notwithstanding, Woodworth said the major concern was that the school would need a 20-foot-wide direct point of access between the school and a public road so kids can

get out of the building in case of an emergency. Accommodating that would require a major remodel of the structure, Woodworth said.

Woodworth also contends that California building code is crystal clear that changing the use of the building to something more intense — like a school, particularly for students with physical disabilities and mobility issues — means it must comply with new construction standards, regardless of the square footage.

"A school, no matter how big, would need fire sprinklers and a fire alarm," she said.

Once the writing was on the wall that the building wouldn't work, Sheckley said she terminated the lease in September and returned to the real estate hunt. The new location on W. 20th Avenue in San Mateo seems to be a better fit — recently remodeled, the former home of a school and, yes, equipped with fire sprinklers — even if it is farther from home.

Bay Area parents with children who have cerebral palsy told the *Voice* earlier this year that it's an uphill battle

advocating for their child in the public school system. They described a constant need to fight for adequate accommodations in the classroom and guard against ongoing pressure to reduce academic standards even when it's unnecessary.

Sheckley said the start-up style school is making do with its limited opening year, operating out of a classroom at the Unitarian church on Charleston Road in Palo Alto until the relocation to San Mateo. It's tiny, she said, but it will grow.

"It's been a roller coaster but it's all been positive," Sheckley said. "Everything is moving in the right direction, but as with any startup, it's had its ups and downs."

Sheckley said she didn't begrudge Woodworth for taking a cautious approach to safety.

"I think that the codes are supposed to be written to keep people safe, so if we follow the code that should be sufficient," she said. "But I can't fault them for looking out for children's safety." ▣

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WAYMO

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are raising alarms that there are plenty of unanswered questions about the technology and the regulations underpinning self-driving cars. Many details regarding Waymo's system for human safety monitors and vehicle certification are skimmed over in the DMV permit, they note.

In some ways, human drivers face tougher scrutiny of their driving safety than Waymo's software-piloted vehicles, said John Simpson, an advocate with the nonprofit Consumer Watchdog. For years, Simpson's organization has raised skepticism about the promises of self-driving technology, warning the industry and regulators were racing ahead without adequate safeguards in place. A person seeking a driver's license has to undergo a written exam and a test behind the wheel. But in Waymo's case, Simpson alleges the agency is largely trusting the company to vouch for its own safety.

"There's a fundamental problem with the DMV's approach here," Simpson said. "The industry is rushing way too fast beyond the safety of where we are."

In particular, Simpson singles

out Waymo's proposed certification system approved by the DMV to test the safety and driving capability of its vehicles. It is not explained what this testing will entail. Under the permit, Waymo is being allowed to handle this certification internally without outside review — a level of discretion the DMV wouldn't give human drivers, he points out.

Each Waymo vehicle is equipped with sensors and software technology that the company has been developing for nearly a decade. Under the DMV rules, Waymo is required to also have human monitors who keep an eye on the self-driving vehicles remotely from computer terminals. The company's permit calls for two separate teams who will continuously monitor the fleet and check on each vehicle's diagnostics and driving.

Simpson points out that Waymo's permit does not disclose how many vehicles each human monitor will be tracking simultaneously. The DMV regulations do not set a limit on this.

In its original application filed in April, Waymo said it would insure each of its vehicles for up to \$10 million in personal injury claims. It is unclear if this coverage remains intact — the final permit disclosed by the DMV

has most information on insurance coverage redacted. At a minimum, self-driving car companies are required to cover each vehicle for \$5 million in potential liability. While this is a higher standard than human drivers face, Simpson warns that insurance is still insufficient since a major multi-vehicle crash with injuries could quickly deplete that coverage.

Waymo is required to report any vehicle crashes involving self-driving cars to the DMV within 10 days. If safety problems with the technology emerge, the DMV has the authority to suspend or revoke Waymo's permit, Greenstein said. He said that would be unlikely — Waymo has already test-driven its vehicles over millions of miles with humans on board, and safety hazards haven't popped up so far. In the vast majority of cases, crashes involving Waymo vehicles have been the fault of human drivers, he said.

According to California Secretary of State filings, Google and Waymo hired KP Public Affairs for \$62,000 to lobby the DMV and other agencies while its application for driverless testing was under review. The exact nature of this lobbying activity is not clear from the

public filings. Asked about this, Greenstein gave assurances that the DMV autonomous vehicle team was never in contact with any lobbyists.

Dealing with police stops

Under the DMV rules, Waymo is required to set an interaction plan with law enforcement, basically laying out rules for how police or firefighters can stop or disable a self-driving vehicle in emergency situations. In that scenario, officials are being asked to call a 24-hour hotline (which was dead when the *Voice* called). Officers are asked to provide Waymo's support team with a self-driving car's company ID number and license plate number.

Waymo vehicles are reportedly able to detect police and emergency vehicles automatically, especially if they have their sirens or flashing lights turned on. If that happens, Waymo cars are programmed to pull over and stop at the first available spot.

If a self-driving car gets in an accident, it is designed to immediately stop and contact Waymo's response team. The company's responders may call 911 or send out its own support team, depending on the circumstances.

If for some reason a car's

self-driving system goes haywire, then it can be disabled if emergency officials can open one of its doors, put the vehicle in park or set the emergency brake. The law enforcement interaction plan also contains instructions to completely shut down a vehicle by severing its electric power, but it is not clear when that would be necessary.

Waymo officials met briefly with the Mountain View Police Department last week, but the company is still expected to hold a training session to teach police officers how to engage self-driving vehicles. Once that is done, Waymo will be allowed to begin deploying its driverless cars.

"I can say that in our conversation with them, it is very clear that any testing conducted will be done with a very measured approach with plenty of training time so that (police officers) are ready and comfortable with the technology," said police spokeswoman Katie Nelson.

Waymo has announced a public forum in Mountain View to discuss its self-driving cars and its planned rollout. That event is scheduled for 6-8 p.m. on Thursday, Dec. 13, at the Historic Adobe Building at 157 Moffett Blvd. ▀

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STALKING

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be fake. Police say the repeated messages to the victim and her friends and family went on for over a decade. Cringle allegedly took the bold step more recently of using his personal email to communicate with the victim and ask about her whereabouts.

"This is the first holiday season in over a decade where the victim can relax and not worry about looking over her shoulder," Mountain View police Sgt. Tim Dahl said in the statement. "She shouldn't have to live in fear."

Police said the accounts Cringle allegedly used to harass the victim were created when Facebook allowed a greater level of anonymity, so the department had to use a series of search warrants to figure out the identity of the suspect. While the investigation began in April, Cringle had allegedly been in and out of contact with her through fake accounts since he and the victim were in high school, according to police spokeswoman Katie Nelson.

"There was a lot of messages that were coming from many different 'people,' but they were all very similar," Nelson said. "This poor woman was receiving it repeatedly over the course of about 12 years."

The victim told police she believes Cringle began stalking her after an incident in the one high school class they shared — he coughed in class, and she asked him to cover his mouth, according to the statement.


Cringle was arrested on suspicion of felony stalking, stalking under a prohibited restraining order, stalking following a prior felony conviction and making criminal threats. He was booked into Santa Clara County jail and is being held without bail. Cringle had previously been convicted of stalking against the same victim several years ago, Nelson said, and it's unclear how or why the stalking was allowed to continue after the conviction.

Police believe there may have been additional victims, and that the fixation behavior exhibited by Cringle could have extended to other people, Nelson said. Cringle also worked for a ride-sharing company, potentially putting him in contact with people who could have triggered a similar fixation, Nelson said.


Anyone who may have been contacted by the suspect is encouraged to contact Sgt. Dahl at timothy.dahl@mountainview.gov — refer to case number 18-02540. ▀

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BULLIS

► Continued from page 5

School District trustees and district administrators didn't show an interest in contesting the 1,058-student number. Assistant Superintendent Randy Kenyon told board members at the Nov. 13 school board meeting that he believes the district can accept the projections without any objections, and that he and other district staffers need to trust that the addresses of interested families are genuine. Board member Steve Taglio added that he wouldn't question what appear to be solid numbers.

Bullis Charter School is currently housed in portable classrooms at Blach and Egan junior high schools, with roughly two-thirds of the students at Egan. The in-district enrollment, however, is expected to jump by 26 percent in the coming school year, from 838 students today to 1,058 students in fall 2019, and it's unclear where extra classrooms would go. Board member Bryan Johnson said he knew charter school officials planned to expand the school, but was disappointed to see they wanted to increase the size so quickly.

"The issue I have is their needs always seem to drive what we then have to do, rather than a more collaborative effort," he said. "Maybe less growth all in one year would've gone a long way to reduce the amount of disruption that is likely if we have to find a third campus to house some of these (students) because Egan and Blach are both pretty full."

The facilities request, which charter school officials cautioned

is just an initial offer and part of a larger process, asks for the "exclusive use" of all 20 acres of Egan in order to house Bullis on a single site. It went on to state that charter school students on the campus outnumber Egan's enrollment, and that displacing the incoming eighth-grade Egan students would "disrupt the education of far less public school students" than displacing Bullis from the site.

The request calls for an additional seven classrooms, which would include two kindergarten classrooms, in order to accommodate the growth. The estimates are that the charter school would need 48 "teaching stations" — or classrooms — at the very minimum in order to be roughly equal to what students would get at a district school. It goes on to say that any fewer would be a "indication that the facilities are not reasonably equivalent" under Proposition 39 law, which has been the sticking point of lawsuits between the charter school and the school district in the past.

Estimates show that the largest number of Bullis students, 163, are expected to come from the Santa Rita Elementary School attendance boundary, followed closely behind by Covington Elementary (162) and Almond Elementary (133). The new school is also estimated to draw 122 students from the Gardner Bullis Elementary School, which is significantly smaller than the other schools, but is in an area where families previously had enrollment priority in the charter school.

Despite attempts to hedge the request as a starting point,

the school district immediately responded with a press release stating that Bullis sought to close Egan, in effect evicting 600 junior high school students from the campus while denying future enrollment at the site. While the statement did not announce outright opposition to the proposal, it did state that the district has to look out for all students in the district.

"While BCS's demand for exclusive use of Egan would favor BCS students, LASD must equally consider the needs of all public school students when responding to Proposition 39 requests," according to the press release.

Almond parent Peipei Yu, who started a petition called "Save Egan and Our Los Altos Community" that drew nearly 5,000 supporters, told board members at the Nov. 13 meeting that many people in the community were shocked to hear the request was asking for so much, even if it is part of the process. She suggested the best path forward is to bring both parties together and find some type of common ground, walking back some of the harsh language she used in the online petition.

"This petition is very strongly worded ... but I want you guys to know a lot of families, I believe, want collaboration," she said. "A lot of families want a compromise on both sides."

Oak Elementary School PTA president Tara Williamson took a similar consensus-building approach, and said the school district and the charter school's leadership have an opportunity to work together on housing the more than 1,000 students

— and preferably quickly. She said it might be time to brush off some old ideas about site-sharing between neighborhood schools and Bullis Charter School, and to get "creative" when it comes to handling the traffic problems that would undoubtedly follow.

District officials are still negotiating a land purchase in the San Antonio area of Mountain View that could house a 10th school site, which would likely be part of the solution. The only problem is that the land still hasn't been purchased, and estimates put an

opening date sometime in 2022.

Although the preference may be for collaboration, board president Vladimir Ivanovic argued that the charter school's growth plans were done without any sense of cooperation, setting the stage for an antagonistic process.

"BCS has taken unilateral actions to increase their enrollment numbers without consulting with anybody, and that's a concern to me," Ivanovic said. "It does not speak to collaboration and cooperation." ■

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SMOKE

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through the end of the week for the Thanksgiving holiday.

On days when school was in session, outdoor activities were heavily curtailed. Physical education, lunch, recess and sports were all either relocated indoors or canceled. The unhealthy air quality also led Central Coast Section officials to relocate the cross-country championships and several football playoff games.

The Mountain View High School choir's Renaissance Concert event, a 20-year tradition at the school, was canceled due to the air quality. Choir participants opted to use the catering services for the event to provide 200 meals for victims of the fire. Volunteers for the choir helped transport the food to the area last week.

Other local organizations mobilized to aid victims of the fire. For information on how to help, go to <https://tinyurl.com/ButteFireHelp>.

The long duration of hazy smoke and poor air conditions hanging over the Bay Area were blamed on poor weather conditions, particularly weak offshore winds that — instead of whisking the smoke out of the air — swept the smoke right back into

the Bay Area, according to a spokesperson from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District. The only relief from the haze was rain that arrived on Wednesday. ■

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MAGALI GAUTHIER

Mountain View High was closed last Friday, as were all of the other public schools in the city.



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TEACHERS

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academic performance many see as an intractable problem.

But neither Block nor Patterson see gaps in performance as a fact of life, and have worked overtime throughout their careers to get students up to speed or keep them from falling behind. Along with long hours, colleagues interviewed by the *Voice* say the two have gained huge respect from both the students and the staff, and have led the way on new initiatives and major changes in the classroom, showing flexibility as changing state standards shifted the ground beneath their feet.

Recipients of the county's annual awards are nominated by fellow teachers and, in the case of the Mountain View Whisman School District, a committee selects the finalist based on a list of criteria. Coincidentally, this has led to Bubb teachers receiving the award for three straight years. Second-grade teacher Emily Campion received the award in 2016, followed by first-grade teacher David Franklin in 2017.

Both Block and Patterson were recognized at a county award ceremony on Oct. 22 at the Campbell Heritage Theatre.

Putting avid learners on track

After joining Mountain View High School nearly three decades ago, Sarah Block quickly found herself in the driver's seat of a major undertaking: making sure students who are underrepresented in colleges and universities are on track to get college acceptance letters.

The goal was a major undertaking that remains a top priority, as district officials push to get as many students as possible to fulfill the requirements to get into University of California and California State University schools. State data shows that the demographics were roughly the same when she undertook the task in 1990, but the network of support for these students was tenuous at the time.

"Right when I started teaching at Mountain View the school identified we needed to make some changes so the students, who would be our first-generation college students, were indeed going to college," Block said.

Steve Hope, a former district administrator who was principal of Mountain View High at the time, told the *Voice* that he and Block got to work on finding a way to support those students. Shortly after starting, Hope said the school discovered a fairly new program called AVID — short

for Advancement Via Individual Determination — in San Diego, and sought to emulate the success schools were having in Southern California. It helps that the superintendent at the time, Don Philips, had just relocated from San Diego and was familiar with the program.

Hope said he remembers how Block, with the help of teacher Joy Hellman, spent an "enormous" amount of time going to the middle schools and junior high schools, interviewing students, talking to counselors and poring over test scores to identify the kinds of students who, with a bit more help, could achieve the dream of going to college. The result was a comprehensive AVID program that enrolls hundreds of students each year and continues to this day.

"They spent a lot of time identifying, recruiting and working with the kids and the parents," Hope said. "I am very proud of what they have accomplished."

Hellman, who Block described as her sister in teaching over the years, said Block has built a strong relationship with her students, who always seem to be in her classroom during after-school hours. She said Block also has a penchant for trying new things in the classroom without fear, adopting new technologies — for example, teaching kids with laptops when it was still cutting edge — and making it seem like a seamless transition.

"When we introduced tech in the classroom, she was the first to experiment," Hellman said. "She led some education technology sessions because of how quickly she learns."

Running parallel to her work with AVID, Block said she was also one of the first teachers in the school to pioneer social studies classes tailored for students still working on their English skills. The group of students, English learners, is often the least likely to meet state standards and the most in need of remedial help. Getting around the language barrier is an added level of difficulty, and Block said she has found creative ways to convey messages and themes.

Take civics and economics, for example. For many of the students in her class, language is only just the start of the steep learning curve for teens who need to soak up an entirely new culture and system of governance in the United States. Instruction suddenly gets a lot more complicated, and involves lots of Googling images to help define new vocabulary, playing the "I'm Just a Bill" Schoolhouse Rock segment in different languages, and even doing some front-of-the-class acting.

"It is thinking a little differently



MAGALI GAUTHIER

Sarah Block explains veto power to students in her civics class for English learners at Mountain View High School on Nov. 15. She is a recipient of the county's Teacher of the Year award.

than what you do in a regular classroom, but I like the challenge," Block said. "It's not an impossible task — it makes it more fun — and I think the kids enjoy the variety of learning experiences."

Ever since graduating from high school, Block said she has found herself helping students who need a hand, starting with volunteer work at schools and events like the Special Olympics. She recalls helping Mountain View High with what she calls "whole school" improvement — helping out all students, including newcomers ready to accept help that the school offers.

"They always ask a lot of questions, and they want to dig deeper into the subject," Block said. "They're coming to the United States eager to learn."

Putting in the hours when it matters

Work is hardly done when the final bell rings at 2:40 p.m. at Bubb Elementary.

Starting a few years ago, first-grade teacher Kathy Patterson added another job to her already busy teaching schedule, extending her day for students in need of after-school intervention. It wasn't even for her own students — she was helping fifth-grade kids with their reading skills — but the students needed the extra class time and weren't getting what they needed at home, often times because parents are busy or lack the resources.

"I wish there were more hours in the day or I could do more than I can do, but these kids need our help," Patterson said. "The kids have the ability and just need the help."

The after-school program evolves each year based on where it's needed most, which this year targets first-grade students who

need more reading support. Ten children "pinpointed" by teachers are getting help three days a week, with a goal of getting them at grade level within the next few years.

"The research shows we gotta get these kids on grade level by third grade," she said. "We've got to catch them early on."

Possibly a benefit of working in the field for just shy of three decades, Bubb parents and teachers alike have come to see Patterson as a mentor and a source of valuable advice that goes beyond just teaching tactics, according to Bubb Principal Cyndee Nguyen, who previously worked as a teacher. Nguyen said she looked to Patterson as a mentor when she taught at Bubb, and has only come to appreciate her more.

"She builds really strong relationships with kids and her families year after year," Nguyen said. "Families will ask about parenting things for their own kids because she's so knowledgeable."

Patterson joined Bubb Elementary in 2001 after teaching in communities in Arizona and Illinois that serve as a stark contrast to Mountain View. She taught in a poor mining town in rural Arizona, and in the Phoenix area where she encountered students experiencing violence in the home — something she did her best to report. She said the tight-knit community at Bubb has been "wonderful" since she moved to California, and that the school has gone out of its way to celebrate diversity.

Over time, the demographics have shifted and the school has lost a bit of that diversity, with busing now gone and new boundaries, set to take effect next year, that will accelerate that trend. And Patterson said no one — including teachers who can't afford to stay — wants to leave Bubb.

"Things have always stayed the same in the sense that Bubb is a school that everyone loves to be at and everyone hates to leave," she said. "There are a lot of tears when teachers leave."

Patterson is the first to admit that teachers have a tough job and put in a lot more hours than one might expect. This is particularly true when standards change and new curriculum is foisted onto veteran teachers. The latest example was the implementation of California's Common Core standards.

In the lead-up to the first Common Core-aligned state test in 2015, Patterson told the *Voice* that it was the biggest shift in education she could recall, and that she and her colleagues were putting in 60-hour work weeks to read, learn and plan for lessons that meshed with the new standards. Patterson gave an unequivocal thumbs-up to Common Core, and said she only wished she was teaching like this 30 years ago.

"Even though at times it can be overwhelming with so much to learn and figure out as a teacher, kids are learning so much more with a much deeper understanding of the content," she said.

Nguyen said Patterson has gained a reputation for maximizing every minute of her class time and quickly adapting to change, taking what she learns — whether a new curriculum or some type of staff development — and implementing it in the classroom the very next day. Part of that initiative, Patterson said, comes from the fact that she has decades of experience.

"I've only got so many years left, so I want to make sure I have the greatest impact I can with the time I have with the kids," she said. ▀

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Measure A funding skips over Mountain View

By Mark Noack

Santa Clara County has doled out more than \$110 million in bond money approved by voters to help solve the area's withering housing crisis. How much is going to Mountain View? Zero.

Despite a firm commitment and proven track record of building affordable housing, the city of Mountain View is still facing difficulties in accessing the \$950 million in bond money approved under Measure A. Recent projects have reportedly fallen short of the county's requirements for housing the homeless, and city officials say they are trying to reach a compromise to access future funding for a series of upcoming projects.

"The best that I can say is that we're actively trying to work on finding a project that works for Mountain View and for the county," said Housing Director Wayne Chen.

The 2016 bond measure was seen as an urgent response to the Bay Area's housing crisis that continues to hinder the region's

economy, transportation and quality of life. As of last year, nearly half of Silicon Valley residents living in rental housing were considered "housing burdened," meaning more than 30 percent of their income was paying for a roof over their heads.

To gain funding under the criteria laid out in the measure, housing projects need to be designed particularly for homeless or extremely low-income residents. Housing projects can qualify if half of the units are dedicated for rapid rehousing or permanent supportive housing for homeless clients. Alternatively, projects can also gain funding if they target low-income households earning less than half of the area's median income (about \$56,500 for a family of four).

For Mountain View, Chen said some projects have had trouble reaching the threshold for permanent supportive housing and how qualified residents are counted by the county.

One example came earlier this year when the City Council reviewed a 71-unit project by

Palo Alto Housing at 950 W. El Camino Real. About 17 of the units were designed for developmentally disabled adults, and city officials tried to make the case that these households should qualify under the county's guidelines for permanent supportive housing.

The funding was ultimately declined, and Mountain View elected leaders stepped in to fill the gap, providing about \$22.7 million from the city's affordable housing fund.

A total of 817 new apartments are slated to be built using Measure A funding over the next three years. San Jose will be building the majority of those homes; the city currently has five separate projects totaling about 440 homes. In the North County, only one project — a 19-unit apartment building in Cupertino — has been approved for funding so far.

More information on the Measure A allocation can be found at tinyurl.com/y7wxf7we.

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NOTICE INVITING BIDS

Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District is pleased to announce posting of Requests for Proposals for YR 2019 (YR22) E-Rate Eligible Projects: Ethernet Service. The bids are due no later than 3:00 p.m. on December 6, 2018 at the Main Office, 1299 Bryant Ave., Mountain View, CA 94040. Interested vendors are referred to the Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District website for details, instructions, bid forms and submittal due dates. Mountain View Los Altos Union High School District website may be accessed at: <http://www.mvla.net/District/Department/126-Technology-Department>.

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2018 Annual Water System Flushing

The City of Mountain View Public Services Division will begin its annual water system flushing program in October. Flushing will occur throughout the City and should be complete by approximately March 1, 2019.

Water main flushing is a process used to clear water lines of sand and sediment that may have accumulated during the last year and helps us provide high quality water. Signs and barricades will be posted in neighborhoods the day before flushing to alert residents. The flushing process accounts for approximately 0.1% of all water use in the City.

If you would like more information about the City's water main flushing program or have questions or concerns while City personnel are in your neighborhood, please contact the Public Services Division at 650-903-6329.



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Arts & Events

MOUNTAIN VIEW VOICE



WINTER WONDERS



HOLIDAY EVENTS THAT WILL GET YOU IN THE SPIRIT

By Karla Kane

When deciding on the theme for this year's holiday concert, Ragazzi Boys Chorus Artistic Director Joyce Keil turned to nature for inspiration.

"I noticed how many composers set texts that positioned the contrasting stories of roses growing from the bleak hard snowy frozen ground, of the sadness of loss with the joy of hope for peace in the world, and the paradox of light in the midst of winter," she said. The concert, "For the Beauty of the Earth," includes the hymn of the same name as well as various other seasonal music that celebrates nature's gifts. "We all have

different interpretations when it comes to faith, but we all can count on the coming again of the beauty of the Earth, the blooming of the rose, the outbreak of spring and the renewal of hope in the midst of the dreariness of winter," she said.

The chorus, which includes around 200 boys from the local community, will perform Dec. 1 at 5 p.m. at First United Methodist Church of Palo Alto, 625 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto, and Dec. 2 at 3 p.m. at Messiah Lutheran Church, 1835 Valota Road, Redwood City. The organization's alumni chorus, Ragazzi Continuo, will present "An English Christmas," featuring English carols and seasonal songs from the past to the modern era on Dec. 1 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Peter's Episcopal Church, 178 Clinton St., Redwood City, and Dec. 2 at First Presbyterian Church, 1140 Cowper St., Palo Alto. For tickets and more information, go to ragazzi.org and ragazzicontinuo.org.

Below are some of the upcoming holiday offerings, listed in roughly chronological order. As usual, there are plentiful "Nutcracker" productions for ballet lovers (see sidebar). For more event listings, or to submit your own, check out the Midpeninsula event calendar at mv-voice.com/calendar.

PALO ALTO TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY

What: Live entertainment, cookies and hot cocoa will be offered as part of Palo Alto's annual holiday tree lighting ceremony. **Where:** Lytton Plaza, Palo Alto. **When:** Nov. 30, 6-7 p.m. **More information:** cityofpaloalto.org/gov/depts/csd/events/holiday_tree_lighting.asp.

MENLO PARK TREE LIGHTING CEREMONY

What: Menlo Park's tree lighting event will feature a visit from Santa Claus along with other treats. **Where:** Fremont Park, Menlo Park. **When:** Nov. 30, 5:30-7 p.m. **More information:** menlopark.org/treelighting.

'PRESENTS FROM THE PAST'

What: The J. Gilbert Smith House will be decorated in 1930s holiday splendor for an exhibition of Christmas gifts, including toys, books and more, from yesteryear. **Where:** Los Altos History Museum, 51 S. San Antonio Road, Los Altos. **When:** Through Jan. 6. **More information:** losaltohistory.org/exhibits/presents-from-the-past/.

HOMETOWN HOLIDAYS

What: Redwood City's annual downtown celebration includes snow and a tree lighting. **Where:** Downtown Redwood City. **When:** Dec. 1, 10 a.m. to 8 p.m. **More information:** hometown-holidays.org/HTH/index.html

GALTRAIN HOLIDAY TRAIN

What: Caltrain's festive Holiday Train will make nine stops along the Peninsula, boasting lights, entertainment, characters and a chance for locals to donate a new, unwrapped toy to the annual toy drive. **Where:** The train will stop in Redwood City at 6:10 p.m. and Mountain View at 7:25 p.m. on



PHOTO COURTESY OF CALTRAIN

Santa and Mrs. Claus greet the crowd at a stop of Caltrain's annual Holiday Train.

Dec. 1, and Menlo Park at 7:05 p.m. on Dec. 2.

More information: holiday-train.org.

'BUON NATALE'

What: The California Bach Society will celebrate five centuries of Italian Christmas and Advent music.

Where: All Saints' Episcopal Church, 555 Waverley St., Palo Alto.

When: Dec. 1, 8 p.m.

More information: calbach.org/season#buonnatale.

"T'WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS'

What: Dancers Repertory Theatre presents the annual dance and theater production of the classic holiday poem.

Where: Woodside Performing Arts Center, 199 Churchill Ave., Woodside.

When: Dec. 2 and 9 at 1:30 and 4 p.m.; Dec. 8 at 3 p.m.

More information: twasthe-night.org/.

HANUKKAH ON THE SQUARE

What: Chabad Mid Pen hosts a Hanukkah celebration featuring festive refreshments, a glow-in-the-dark menorah, music and games.

Where: Courthouse Square, downtown Redwood City

When: Dec. 2, 4-5:30 p.m.

More information: www.redwoodcity.org/Home/Components/Calendar/Event/34339/2055.

MOUNTAIN VIEW TREE LIGHTING

What: The city of Mountain View will hold its community tree lighting ceremony, including a visit from Santa Claus.

Donations of canned food for the Community Services Agency are encouraged.

Where: Civic Center Plaza, 500 Castro St., Mountain View.

When: Dec. 3, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

More information: mountainview.gov/depts/cs/events/treelighting.asp.

'THE CHRISTMAS BALLET'

What: Smuin presents its annual holiday performance, incorporating classical ballet and contemporary dance into a two-act show ("Classical Christmas" followed by "Cool Christmas") suitable for all ages.

Where: Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View.

When: Dec. 5-9, 7:30 p.m., plus 2 p.m. matinees on weekend.

More information: tickets. mvpca.com/eventperformances.asp?evt=252.

'THE SANTALAND DIARIES'

What: TheatreWorks Silicon Valley presents a staged version of David Sedaris' comedy, starring Max Tachis. The one-man show (for mature audiences only) chronicles the misadventures of a department-store elf.

Where: Lohman Theatre, Foothill College, 12345 El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills.

When: Dec. 5-23, 8 p.m. plus 3 p.m. matinees on weekends.

More information: theatreworks.org.

HANUKKAH CELEBRATION AT STANFORD SHOPPING CENTER

What: The Oshman Family JCC hosts a free family Hanukkah celebration with a musical performance by Noa Levy and her band, who will lead dancing both in English and Hebrew, plus arts and crafts, dreidel games and a

candle lighting ceremony. **Where:** Stanford Shopping Center, The Plaza (near Neiman Marcus), Palo Alto.

When: Dec. 6, 5:30-7:30 p.m.

More information: paloaltojcc.org/Events/hanukkah-celebration-at-stanford-shopping-center-11.

'METROPOLITAN KLEZMER'

What: Metropolitan Klezmer will perform a family Hanukkah-celebration concert incorporating a variety of fresh sounds and eclectic arrangements.

Where: Oshman Family JCC, 3921 Fabian Way, Palo Alto.

When: Dec. 8, 5:30 p.m.

More information: paloaltojcc.org/Events/metropolitan-klezmer.

FRIENDS OF MUSIC HOLIDAY MUSICALE

What: The Friends of Music at Stanford present their annual holiday showcase featuring the Stanford Philharmonia, Stanford Chamber Chorale, Early Music Singers and other guests.

Where: Memorial Church, 450 Serra St., Stanford.

When: Dec. 8, 2:30 p.m.

More information: music.stanford.edu/events/friends-music-holiday-musicale.

'THE ELVES AND THE SHOEMAKER'

What: Peninsula Youth Theatre's production of "The Elves and the Shoemaker" is a premiere adaptation of a classic folk tale about two helpful elves.

Where: Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View.

When: Dec. 7-8, multiple showtimes.

More information: pytnet.org/boxoffice/the-elves-and-the-shoemaker/.

'PACO HOLIDAY EXTRAVAGANZA'

What: The Palo Alto Chamber Orchestra will be joined by special guest TwoSet Violin and dancers from Pacific Ballet Academy for its annual performance of holiday music.

Where: Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College, 12345 El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills.

When: Dec. 9, 3 p.m.

More information: brownpapertickets.com/event/3695012.

Email Karla Kane at kkane@paweekly.com.

Viewpoint

- EDITORIAL
- YOUR LETTERS
- GUEST OPINIONS

MountainView
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■ WHAT'S YOUR VIEW?

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Support female entrepreneurs on Small Business Saturday

By Luz Urrutia

When Small Business Saturday arrives this Saturday, Nov. 24, it will offer an easy-going, community-oriented alternative to the crowded frenzy of Black Friday and the chair-bound isolation of Cyber Monday.

For those of us on the Midpeninsula, it's a chance to bump into neighbors, catch up on news and remind ourselves how much we owe our local entrepreneurs for making our various main streets — for us that means Santa Cruz Avenue, University Avenue and Castro Street — so reflective of who we are and what we value.

Although they are often overshadowed by corporations and box store chains, small businesses remain the true engine of the American economy. According to the Small Business Administration, there are 30 million small businesses in the U.S., and they account for nearly half of all jobs. Since 2010, small business has accounted for nearly half of the gross domestic product.

It is at the local level that most of us understand small business, which is why we at Opportunity Fund are encouraging everyone to get out Nov. 24 and support

our local entrepreneurs. This year, let's particularly seek out women entrepreneurs, who systematically face a tougher lending and start-up environment than their male counterparts. Ninety-nine percent of women-owned businesses are small businesses, and by every measure — access to capital, wooing venture capital, building a credit history — women entrepreneurs are still playing catch-up.

Women get only 4 percent of commercial loan dollars and 7 percent of venture capital funding. Immigrant women and women of color have an even harder time.

I head the San Francisco-based community development financial institution Opportunity Fund, which focuses on turning these numbers around by giving microbusiness loans to women, immigrants, people of color and other underserved populations. But I well remember the sting of biased lending practices in my own life. Thirty-three years ago, I couldn't get a credit card from the very bank I worked for. The reason: As an immigrant and recent college graduate, I had no credit history. I also remember the sea change that occurred in 1988 when Congress passed the Women's Business Ownership Act, which allowed women to get a loan without a male relative needing to cosign for it.

We have come a long way since then in advancing women's entrepreneurship, but we still have a long way to go. We must build a more inclusive financial system that gets women business owners the responsible and affordable capital they need to grow and sustain their businesses for themselves and their families. If not, we are cutting ourselves off from a tremendous source of entrepreneurial dynamism — one that creates jobs and economic activity, at home, where we can see it and benefit from it.

The economic impact of increased female entrepreneurial participation is already significant and holds the potential to continue to be a major driver of economic growth. According to data compiled from the U.S. census, the economic impact of women-owned businesses now stands at \$3 trillion. Women-owned businesses are credited with creating or sustaining 23 million jobs.

Let's build on this momentum — starting now. Get out there Saturday and support local women entrepreneurs. See you on Castro Street.

Luz Urrutia of Mountain View is the CEO of Opportunity Fund, a community development financial institution with the largest portfolio of microbusiness loans under management among nonprofit lenders in the nation.

Guest Opinion

■ LETTERS

VOICES FROM THE COMMUNITY

KEEP THE CITY'S LAST DEPARTMENT STORE

I have been reading about the possibility of a Los Altos charter school being built on the corner of California and Showers in Mountain View. That is a very high-traffic area for a school. Also, why a Los Altos charter school in Mountain View?

If they were to build where Kohl's is, we lose our last department store. My husband and I have lived in Mountain View for 65 years and shopped many local stores. On that corner there was Rhodes, then Mervyn's and now Kohl's.

Target and Walmart are in a different category. Present and future Mountain View residents will have to leave town to find a department store. I feel that a lot of people will be put at a disadvantage for a small number of charter-school children who should have a safer place to begin with.

*Elinor Westphal
Bryant Avenue*

INCREASE BIKE CAPACITY

Multi-modal transportation is one part of the process to

reduce vehicle miles traveled, congestion, emissions and other negative impacts associated with passenger, and especially single-passenger, vehicles. I take Caltrain with my bike every day to work and rely on Caltrain and my bike as my main modes of transportation to work. Any reduction in the bike capacity is ill-informed and should be suspect from the start; the presumption should be toward increasing bike capacity.

*Ben Gustafson
California Street*

VTA MEASURE B LAWSUIT

More than two years ago, the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority's 12-member Board of Directors voted to place on the November 2016 ballot a countywide half-cent sales tax increase estimated to raise \$6.3 billion over its 30-year duration. The measure authorized the VTA to borrow money against the revenue stream (by selling bonds) and seemed to promise that the money would be used for transportation projects across the county.

Desperate for traffic relief,

71 percent of voters (who voted) supported Measure B. It required two-thirds of the vote. But there was a quirk. The measure purports to authorize the VTA board (by 3/4 vote) to redirect the tax proceeds to virtually anything it chooses. For example, all of the money could be used to finish extending BART to Santa Clara or for other South County projects never even mentioned in the measure. This provision for shifting the use of funds seemed to run afoul of a state law (Government Code section 50075.1) which mandates, among other things, that every local special tax measure state or indicate its "specific purposes" and promise to use the money only for those "specified purposes."

The VTA had a history of advertising some plans (bait) and later using money mostly for higher salaries or South County (switch). That is why a former Saratoga City Councilwoman sued on January 9, 2016, to have Measure B declared invalid. The trial-level court sided with the VTA as did the Court of Appeal in San Jose (on October 18, 2018). I am the pro bono (no charge)

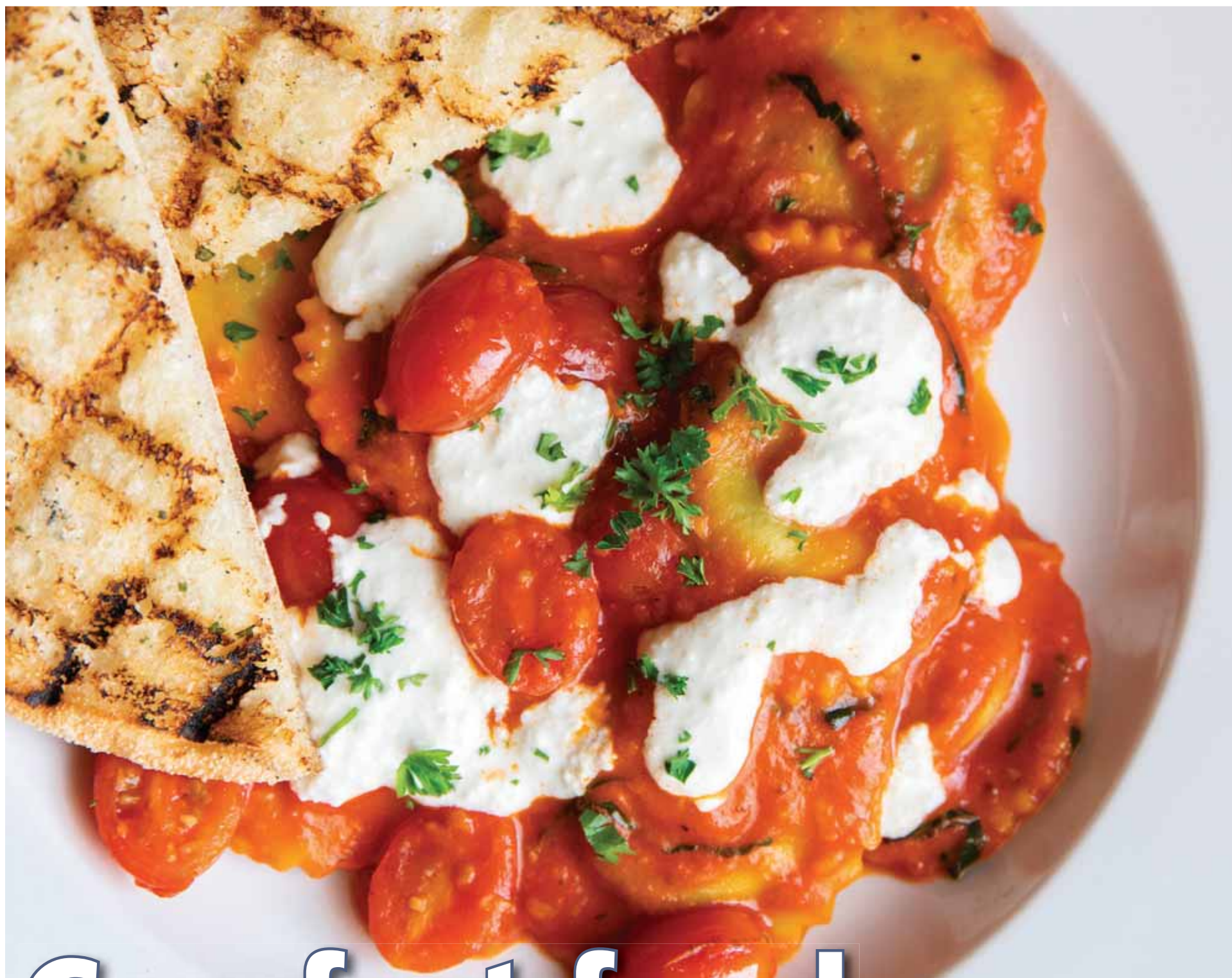
attorney for the plaintiff-appellant in the case and will soon file a petition asking the California Supreme Court to address the legal issue created by the VTA's switch provision. The Supreme Court only grants review to in one in 100 civil cases in which review is sought. So, while the case against Measure B could be over in two more months, the issue of whether North County will receive anything from the tax would continue for years to come.

*Gary Wesley
Continental Circle*

BIKE CARS

I had a bike stolen on Caltrain around Sunnyvale on June 16, 2017, simply because I was not able to sit in the bike car to see it. Overcrowded bike cars demand regulations to allow bikers' sitting priority over passengers with no bikes. It's a simple and easy-to-implement rule to (1) reduce train delays, (2) deter bike thefts, and (3) promote eco-friendly commutes for generations to come.

*Wei Liu
Stanford*



Comfort food *that delivers*

THE POST *BREATHES*
NEW LIFE INTO FAMILIAR
SURROUNDINGS

By Dale F. Bentson | Photos by Magali Gauthier



Christian Morales, a bartender at The Post, prepares a drink on Nov. 16.

■ RESTAURANT REVIEW

By the time you read this, the menu will have changed, maybe a couple of times. That's the confident vow from owner Vickie Breslin, who recently opened The Post in downtown Los Altos.

Breslin was already familiar with the property, having worked at First and Main Sports Lounge for years. It is in the historic Copeland Building, which was built in 1911 and once housed the Los Altos Post Office. When the sports bar closed, she signed a lease and also took over the adjacent space, Estatements consignment shop. She then hired the Midglen Studio Architects in Woodside to create a "modern, rustic feeling restaurant," Breslin said.

Uniting the two spaces took some doing, but the results work. While the old First and Main dining room had cosmetic updates, the Estatements side was completely gutted and rebuilt into a sleek, contemporary 16-seat bar with

booths and tables for dining and imbibing.

Breslin is a born and bred Peninsulan who has spent 15 years in the local restaurant business doing everything from event planning to bartending. When First and Main closed, she said, "it was time to strike out on my own and I knew Los Altos better than anyplace else." Breslin's intent is to provide comfort food "you can feel good about."

On my visits, the bar was loud when busy, but the dining room was subdued and filled with families. A wall with windows separates the two. While The Post is bar-centric, the food was not an afterthought. Servings were generous. Service was good, though on one occasion, our table wasn't bused before the next course arrived.

For starters, the chicken Parmesan meatballs (\$15) served in an iron skillet oozed with mozzarella, pomodoro sauce and basil leaves — comfort food of the highest order. Breslin plans to rotate different kinds of meatballs, including pork, beef, lamb, chicken and prosciutto.

The whimsical Totcho's (\$12) were tater tots blanketed with melted cheddar cheese, bacon jam and ranch dressing. It's a riff on nachos, fun as bar bites, but not quite up to the other appetizers.

The cauliflower hot wings (\$11) were terrific. Roasted cauliflower was tossed with buffalo wing sauce and drizzled with ranch dressing. The wing sauce had a slight zing but could be amped up on request. That was a table favorite.

The fresh, delicate, seared ahi tuna (\$16) was served with seaweed salad, pickled ginger and wasabi, with a ginger-soy sauce. It was melt-in-your-mouth delicious.

For entrees, the American heritage pork shoulder (\$24) had been slow-cooked with beer, citrus, red chilis and onion, served with cilantro rice and roasted spicy squash, and topped with tangerine-serrano salsa and crema. Sounds complicated but it had ample flavor, texture and color.

The wild salmon (\$28) was plated with lemon quinoa, kale, asparagus and shaved pecorino and topped with a lemony beurre blanc sauce. The red-orange salmon was very fresh. Fortunately, the kale was unobtrusive.

The tasty spinach and roasted garlic ravioli (\$19) were wrapped in a pomodoro sauce with house-made ricotta cheese and basil. Pomodoro sauce is thicker and less chunky than a marinara but with the same basic ingredients.



Far left: The spinach and garlic ravioli at The Post. Above: Vickie Breslin owns The Post on Main Street in downtown Los Altos.

► See POST, page 20

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Mountain View, CA 94040
Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on 05/05/2001.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Santa Clara County on October 26, 2018.
(MVV Nov. 2, 9, 16, 23, 2018)

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Corkage first bottle free, \$20 thereafter

Parking city lots

Noise level loud in bar

Bathroom excellent

Cleanliness



The Post's chicken Parmesan meatballs are cooked in fresh mozzarella and tomato sauce and topped with torn basil.

POST

► Continued from page 19

The fried chicken (\$24) came with mashed potatoes, a large homemade buttermilk biscuit, sausage gravy and a mountain of vegetables. It was an enormous serving of goodness. The biscuit

and gravy alone would have made an appetizing meal. The chicken was crisp and juicy. My single complaint was that the half breast had been cut in half again, but not a good cut, and each bite resulted with a splinter of bone in my mouth.

Desserts, all large, were \$9.

The warm chocolate chip cookie ice cream sandwich was locally sourced but the bread pudding and brownie sundae were house-made and delectable.

The Post creates its own cocktails and also offers craft beers and a reasonably priced wine list that pairs well with

the comfort food menu. There's a daily happy hour and brunch on Sundays.

At first glance, the corner of First and Main looks like it has for years. Once inside, though, the vibe says good food, good libations and good times for families and for friends. ▣



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MOVIE OPENINGS

Friends who click

'RALPH BREAKS THE INTERNET' BY LIKING TOO MUCH

★★★ (Century 16 & 20)

"Life's complicated." Those words of wisdom sum up the best parts of "Ralph Breaks the Internet," a satisfying sequel to 2012's animated Disney feature "Wreck-It Ralph." When the new film opens, life seems pretty simple for video-game characters and best friends Wreck-It Ralph and Vanellope von Schweetz. But Vanellope's yearning for something different sends the two on an adventure that puts their friendship to the ultimate test.

Six years after the events of the first film, Litwak's Family Fun Center Arcade gets an upgrade: Wi-Fi. Its possibilities become too tempting to ignore when Vanellope becomes homeless following accidental damage to her racing game, Sugar Rush. Ralph (John C. Reilly) and Vanellope (Sarah Silverman) plunge into the internet on a quest to repair her game, but in the process Vanellope stumbles onto her dream game, Slaughter Race. This wider, vastly more unpredictable digital space — a "Grand Theft Auto" pastiche — amusingly appeals to Vanellope, whose smiley little-girl appearance has always belied an edge, while terrifying her hulking but more sensitive buddy Ralph.

But what truly scares Ralph

— more than Slaughter Race's smoggy air and dangerous thugs (including Gal Gadot's personable hot-rodder Shank) — is the possibility of losing his best friend to a whole new world. And so "Ralph Breaks the Internet" spins from being a simple quest to restore the status quo into something far more interesting: an exploration of insecurities (symbolized by the cyberspace vulnerabilities that allow viruses to spread) and an earnest examination of the meaning of true friendship. Ralph must confront his "needy, clingy, self-destructive behavior" and become profoundly selfless in his love to be the best friend that he can be.

In exploring the internet, directors Rich Moore and Phil Johnston up the ante from the previously established universe of Game Central Station (the surge-protector backstage of Litwak's arcade). Where the first film played with a coterie of real and knockoff video-game characters (who return for the sequel), the new installment does the same for the much bigger world of the World Wide Web. This means the appearance of many brand-name internet destinations (such as eBay, on which a major plot point hinges) and a few



COURTESY OF WALT DISNEY STUDIOS MOTION PICTURES.

Ralph (John C. Reilly) and Vanellope's (Sarah Silverman) friendship is tested in "Ralph Breaks the Internet."

invented ones (Alan Tudyk, who voiced King Candy last time, now plays KnowsMore, the Jeeves-y embodiment of a search engine). The filmmakers also serve up funny variations on clickbait and pop-up windows, such as the somehow endearingly slimy JP Spamley (an uncredited Bill Hader).

The adventure also allows for a snake-eating-its-tale synergy when Vanellope, established last time as a princess, meets her Disney kin on the corporation's much-ballyhooed destination website. Disney fanatics will love the cameos by all the Disney princesses, satirically teased about their pre-feminist tendencies and largely played by the original actresses who voiced them; the sequence also tees up Vanellope's own "I Wish" anthem, "A Place Called Slaughter Race" (music by Alan Menken, lyrics by Phil

Johnston and Tom MacDougall).

If a plot thread involving the YouTube stand-in BuzzTube (presided over by Taraji P. Henson's Hollywood agent-like algorithm Yesss) makes mastering the internet too easy, its shallowness — and side trips to the Dark Net and the hurtful cyber bullying of comments areas — productively acknowledges real-life dangers, with stellar animation

and designs shoring up the storytelling of Johnston and Pamela Ribon's witty script. Add the relatable message of curbing one's own smothering instincts when it comes to the important people in one's life, and you get a useful all-ages fable for our time.

Rated PG for some action and rude humor. One hour, 52 minutes.

— Peter Canavese



MOVIE REVIEWS

INSTANT FAMILY ★

Let me first try to be nice to "Instant Family," a comedy-drama about foster care and adoption. The film's premise, "inspired by" co-writer/director Sean Anders' own family life as a husband and father, isn't a bad one for an innocuous family comedy with laughs and heart, a withering-to-wacky satire of misbegotten parenting, or a thoughtful, psychologically insightful look at the social work and family dynamics around adoption. But the tonal whiplash you'll get from the pileup crash of all three may have you wishing he picked a lane. Mark Wahlberg

plays Anders' surrogate Pete Wagner, and Rose Byrne his wife, Ellie. Together, they're a complacent team at home and at work flipping houses. But when Ellie gets an itch for children, it sends the couple on an adventure in foster parenting. Shepherded by a social-worker double act comprised of Octavia Spencer and Tig Notaro, the Wagners soon find themselves surrounded by prospective foster parents and active ones that can only be described as ridiculous caricatures. The lazy writing and directing that spawns the film's mostly tone-deaf attempts at humor undermine an otherwise sincere attempt to promote the wins of the foster-care system. Rated PG-13 for thematic elements, sexual material, language and some drug references. Two hours. — P.C.

NOW SHOWING

A Private War (R) Palo Alto Square: Friday

A Star is Born (R) ★★1/2 Century 20: Saturday

An American in Paris (1951) (Not Rated)
Stanford Theatre: Fri.-Sun.

Beautiful Boy (R) ★★★
Palo Alto Square: Friday

Bohemian Rhapsody (PG-13)
Century 20: Saturday

Boy Erased (R) ★★1/2
Aquarius Theatre: Fri. - Sun.

Can you Ever Forgive me? (R)
Aquarius Theatre: Fri. - Sun.

Creed II (PG-13)
Century 16: Fri.-Sun. Century 20: Fri.-Sun.

Dr. Seuss' The Grinch (2018) (PG)
Century 20: Saturday

Fantastic Beasts: The Crimes of Grindelwald (PG-13) Century 16: Fri.-Sun.
Century 20: Saturday

Free Solo (PG-13)

Century 20: Saturday Guild Theatre: Fri. - Sun.

Green Book (PG-13) Century 20: Saturday

Instant Family (PG-13) ★ Century 20: Saturday

The Nutcracker and the Four Realms (PG)
Century 20: Saturday

The Old Man & the Gun (PG-13)
Palo Alto Square: Friday

Ralph Breaks the Internet (PG)
Century 16: Fri.-Sun. Century 20: Fri.-Sun.

Robin Hood (2018) (PG-13) Century 20: Fri.-Sun.

Widows (R) Century 20: Saturday

The Young Girls of Rochefort (Les desmoiselles de Rochefort) (French, 1967)
Stanford Theatre: Fri. - Sun.

Complete movie times were not available by the Voice's early press deadline on Tuesday. Check with theaters for the most up-to-date schedule.

Aquarius: 430 Emerson St., Palo Alto (For recorded listings: 327-3241) tinyurl.com/Aquariuspa

Century Cinema 16: 1500 N. Shoreline Blvd., Mountain View tinyurl.com/Century16

Century 20 Downtown: 825 Middlefield Rd, Redwood City tinyurl.com/Century20

CineArts at Palo Alto Square: 3000 El Camino Real, Palo Alto (For information: 493-0128) tinyurl.com/Pasquare

Guild: 949 El Camino Real, Menlo Park (For recorded listings: 566-8367) tinyurl.com/Guildmp

ShowPlace Icon: 2575 California St. #601, Mountain View tinyurl.com/iconMountainView

Stanford Theatre: 221 University Ave., Palo Alto (For recorded listings: 324-3700) Stanfordtheatre.org

★ Skip it ★★ Some redeeming qualities ★★★ A good bet ★★★★ Outstanding

For show times, plot synopses, trailers and more movie info, visit www.mv-voice.com and click on movies.

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GOINGS ON

MOUNTAIN VIEW VOICE

HIGHLIGHT

PACIFIC BALLET ACADEMY'S CHILDREN'S NUTCRACKER

Pacific Ballet Academy will put on a production of the holiday classic. The children's Nutcracker was created for audiences 3 and up who may appreciate a shorter performance. Act I and Act II are performed separately. Nov. 23, noon and 2 p.m. \$15. Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. pacificballet.org/nutcracker

THEATER

'Girls Kill Nazis' In "Girls Kill Nazis" by James Kopp, the American Nazi Party has been elected to the highest office in the United States. Nazi law is now American law. But the women of the Book Club of Bisbee, Arizona, are fighting back, in part by killing Nazis and storing their decapitated heads in jars. Through Dec. 2, times vary. \$15 preview, \$35 opening, discounts for seniors/students. The Pear Theatre, 1110 La Avenida St., Mountain View. thepear.org

TheatreWorks Silicon Valley Presents 'Tuck Everlasting' TheatreWorks Silicon Valley will produce a showing of "Tuck Everlasting." The play tells the story of a young girl who meets a family who has found immortality and must decide between returning to her life or choosing immortality as well. Nov. 28-Dec. 30, times vary. \$40-\$100. Lucie Stern Center, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. theatreworks.org

'The Nutcracker Sweet' with the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra The San Francisco Chamber Orchestra and The Puppet Company will present "The Nutcracker Sweet," a presentation of the story of "The Nutcracker" with puppets. Nov. 25, 3:30-4:30 p.m. Free. Costano Elementary School, 2695 Fordham St., East Palo Alto. www.thesco.org

CONCERTS

Ragazzi Boys Chorus Presents 'For the Beauty of the Earth' This holiday season, the Ragazzi Boys Chorus will perform their program "For the Beauty of the Earth." From "Deck the Halls" to Wendell Whalum's West Indian "De Mornin' Come," these works honor composers through the ages who have contemplated natural surroundings. Dec. 1, 5-7 p.m. \$12-\$32. First United Methodist Church of Palo Alto, 625 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto. ragazzi.org/performances

Stanford Afro-Latin Jazz Ensemble: Fall Concert The Stanford Afro-Latin Jazz Ensemble will present their first performance of the academic year with classic salsa and arrangements by American artists. Dec. 1, 7:30-9:30 p.m. \$13-\$18. Campbell Recital Hall, 541 Lasuen Mall, Stanford. latinjazz.stanford.edu

VS Guitar Duo Concert in Palo Alto: Tour 2018 Guitar virtuosos Vadim Kolpakov and Sasha Kolpakov will perform original music and tunes in a Gypsy style. VS Guitar Duo consists of Russian, 7-string guitarist Vadim Kolpakov, a special guest artist of Madonna's world tour "Sticky & Sweet," and his nephew, Sasha Kolpakov, a virtuoso guitarist. Nov. 23, 7-9 p.m. \$30-\$50. Samovar, 1077 Independence Ave., Mountain View. Search eventbrite.com for more info.

Stanford Jazz Orchestra with special guest Carl Allen, drums Michael Galisatus directs the Stanford Jazz Orchestra's program, featuring guest artist Carl Allen on drums. Nov. 28, 7:30 p.m. \$18-\$23. Bing Concert Hall, 327 Lasuen St., Stanford. Search events.stanford.edu for more info.

Buon Natale, California Bach Society All Saints Episcopal Church will present a program of Italian music written for Advent and Christmas spanning five centuries. From the Renaissance and Baroque eras, the church will perform traditional canzoni natalizie alongside pieces by Giovanni Croce, Claudio Monteverdi and Domenico Scarlatti. Dec. 1, 8-10 p.m. \$30. All Saints Episcopal Church, 555 Waverly St., Palo Alto. Search brownpapertickets.com for more info.

MUSIC

Open Mic @ Red Rock Coffee Open Mic Mondays at Red Rock Coffee gives people the chance to sing in front of a supportive audience, meet fellow musicians and performers or simply listen to live music. Sign-ups start at 6:30 p.m.,

but arrive early to secure a spot. The show starts at 7 p.m. Mondays, 7 p.m. Free. Red Rock Coffee, 201 Castro St., Mountain View. redrockcoffee.org/open-mic

Open Mic Music Wednesdays Musicians and poets can share material appropriate for all ages. Performers must be 21 or older. Wednesdays, 7-9 p.m. Free. Los Altos Tasting Room, 366 Main St., Los Altos.

Sing & Play Along Ukulele Beginners and ukulele enthusiasts are welcome to join a sing-and-play-along session on the ukulele on the fourth Monday of every month. Attendees can bring their own or borrow one from the library. Registration welcome, but not required. Fourth Monday of every month, 6-8:30 p.m. Free. Mountain View Library, 585 Franklin St., Mountain View. mountainview.libcal.com/event/4694416

FESTIVALS & FAIRS

Annual Holiday Faire Waldorf School of the Peninsula's 33rd annual holiday fair will include wreath making, handcraft workshops for all ages, games, prizes and more. Dec. 1, 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Free admission, activity costs vary. Waldorf School of the Peninsula, 11311 Mora Drive, Los Altos. waldorfpenninsula.org/event/annual-holiday-faire

FAMILY

West Bay Model Railroad Holiday Train Show Watch trains run on the scenic two-level layout while club members answer questions. See the Polar Express, the California Zephyr and long freight trains. Lots of scenery: industries, buildings, bridges, trestles, tunnels. Dec. 1, 1-5 p.m. Free, donations appreciated. South end of the Menlo Park Caltrain station, 1090 Merrill St., Menlo Park. wbmrra.ning.com

MUSEUMS & EXHIBITS

Christmas Gifts from Yesteryear on Display in Historic Home The Los Altos History Museum opens a holiday-themed exhibit, "Presents from the Past: A Look Back at Christmas Gift-Giving," featuring a collection of vintage toys, shaving mugs, children's books and other items. On display in the historic J. Gilbert Smith House, trimmed in 1930s holiday decor. Through Jan. 6, Thursdays-Sundays, noon-4 p.m. Free. Los Altos History Museum, 51 S. San Antonio Road, Los Altos. losaltoshistory.org/events/presents-from-the-past

Gallery 9 Holiday Show An extended all-gallery show will feature unique and affordable fine art paintings, jewelry, photography, wood work, mixed media, sculptures and ceramics. Through Dec. 23, times vary. Free. Gallery 9, 143 Main St., Los Altos. gallery9losaltos.com

DANCE

'The Nutcracker' Dance Connection and Palo Alto Dance Connection Youth Ensemble present the 20th annual production of "The Nutcracker." Nov. 30, 7-9:30 p.m. \$15-\$30. Smithwick Theatre, Foothill College, 12345 El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills. danceconnectionpaloalto.com

Pacific Ballet Academy's 28th Annual Nutcracker Pacific Ballet will show a performance of "The Nutcracker," a holiday show about a young girl's journey to the Land of Sweets. Nov. 30-Dec. 2, times vary. \$26-\$30. Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. pacificballet.org/nutcracker

FOOD & DRINK

'Buy Fresh Buy Local: The Case for Being a Locavore' Greentown Los Altos will host a discussion on buying local. Peter Ruddock, a local food policy expert, will

lead the talk. Nov. 29, 6:30-9 p.m. Los Altos Library, 13 S. San Antonio Road, Los Altos. Search eventbrite.com for more info.

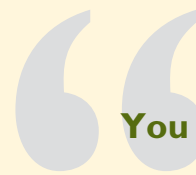
Kankana Saxena Bengali native Kankana Saxena shares her cookbook, "Taste of Eastern India: Delicious, Authentic Bengali Meals You Need to Try." Samples will be served at the event. Nov. 29, 7-9 p.m. Free. Books Inc. Mountain View, 317 Castro St., Mountain View. booksinc.net/event

TALKS & LECTURES

Book Launch: 'Just Giving: Why Philanthropy Is Failing Democracy and How It Can Do Better' This talk with Rob Reich aims to answer the question,

"What attitude and what policies should democracies have concerning individuals who give money away for public purposes?" Nov. 27, 6:30-8:30 p.m. Free. Bechtel Conference Center, 616 Serra St., Stanford. Search eventbrite.com for more info.

Karen Wickre Karen Wickre, former Google executive and editorial director of Twitter, joins Books Inc. in Mountain View for a book launch and celebration of her guide, "Taking the Work Out of Networking: An Introvert's Guide to Making Connections That Count." Nov. 28, 7-9 p.m. Free. Books Inc. Mountain View, 317 Castro St., Mountain View. booksinc.net/event



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