

Mountain View VOICE

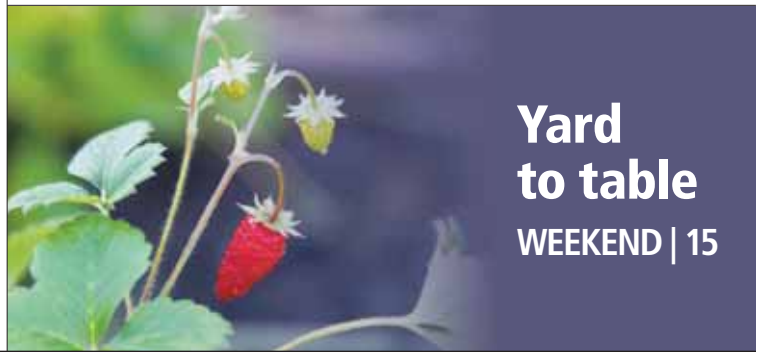


NOVEMBER 30, 2018 VOLUME 26, NO. 45

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650.964.6300

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to table
WEEKEND | 15



MAGALI GAUTHIER

RAIN, RAIN COME TO STAY

The first significant winter rain was a welcome sight, clearing the air of unhealthy levels of smoke pollution and helping firefighters finally douse the deadly Camp Fire in Butte County. After being advised by health officials to stay indoors and out of the smoke for nearly two weeks, what better reason to dig the raincoats and umbrellas out of the closet and go for a stroll down Castro Street?

CHAC fights to make therapy affordable to all

LOCAL NONPROFIT STRAINS TO MEET UNPRECEDENTED DEMAND FOR MENTAL HEALTH SERVICES

By Kevin Forestieri

For thousands of North County children and adults, Mountain View's Community Health Awareness Council (CHAC) is far more than a nonprofit — it's a home-grown effort to patch up a glaring hole in the U.S. health care system.

Whether it's counseling for depression and anxiety,



substance abuse treatment or support for adults and children experiencing trauma, CHAC has sought to provide mental health services unattainable to many. Similar services can cost huge

sums, are located far away or have long waiting lists, creating barriers that leave many to suffer without help.

CHAC is one of seven nonprofit organizations serving Mountain View residents that benefit from the *Voice's* annual Holiday Fund. Donations to the fund are divided equally among the

► See **CHAC**, page 7

City approves downtown hotel, offices

RESIDENTS CONCERNED PARKING WON'T BE ADEQUATE

By Mark Noack

A pair of downtown parking lots will be rebuilt into a high-end hotel and office complex as a result of a City Council decision on Tuesday, Nov. 27. The project was approved in a 5-2 vote, with councilwomen Margaret Abe-Koga and Lisa Matchak opposed.

Originally pitched about three years ago, the development by the Robert Green Company calls for a five-story Joie de Vivre hotel with a new restaurant, bar and cafe to be built along Hope Street, just a block from the city's downtown transit center. On the opposite side of the street, the developer would construct a four-story office complex, about 52,000 square feet in total.

As part of the negotiations, the developer promised to build a new underground garage that will provide 385 spaces, 225 of which will be available to the public. City staff pointed out this would be an increase of 76 spaces over the two parking lots currently in use.

Speaking for his company, Robert Green Jr. described the new project as an attractive destination that would "activate" properties not being used to their full potential.

"We developed a project that we think the city will be proud of," he said. "We tried our best to create a classic design, something that will reflect the different features of downtown Mountain View but also something sophisticated."

For its supporters on the City Council, it was a win-win deal — the downtown area will get more free parking while the city gets a lucrative new source of revenue. Early on, the city would receive about \$330,000 in rent and taxes each year, but that amount is expected to steadily increase. Within 30 years, the city is expected to receive about \$6.8 million annually. All told, over the 55-year lifespan of the deal, city officials estimated the city would net about \$292 million.

Yet parking remained a sticking point for city officials as they considered the plan. Members of the downtown preservationist group Livable Mountain View spoke out against the development, alleging it was downplaying its parking needs. A study assessing the parking needs was released only a few hours before the meeting. Speaking for the group, Mary Hodder estimated the hotel and offices would actually need

► See **DOWNTOWN**, page 7

Voice celebrates 25 years of covering Mountain View

By Andrea Gemmet

The *Mountain View Voice* started as a labor of love: love for the city and for local journalism.

In 1992, *Voice* founders Kate Wakerly and Carol Torgrimson teamed up to bring Mountain View its own independent

newspaper, something that Wakerly had long wanted to do. Their ambitions were somewhat modest: start a publication that could support itself through advertising and hopefully stay in business long enough to make endorsements in the 1994 City Council election, according to a draft of the

business plan written in 1993.

"Kate always had a passion for community newspapers, starting with her first job in 1972 after finishing her Stanford master's degree at the long-gone Fremont News-Register," recalled John Wakerly, Kate's husband. Starting in 1982, she contracted with the city of

Mountain View to publish its monthly municipal newsletter, "The View."

"She did add a certain amount of quality and class to the publication, but because of its strong ties to city government, she jokingly called it 'Pravda' in private," he said. "She still dreamed that someday

Mountain View would get its own independent newspaper."

A reporter and editor for a number of community newspapers, Wakerly sought advice from her contacts in the business, and was told "Mountain View is the graveyard

► See **25 YEARS**, page 14

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GOINGS ON 19 | REAL ESTATE 20

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THE EXPERIENCE IS ALAIN PINEL



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SUNNYVALE \$2,188,000

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 License # 01856274 | 01898271



SUNNYVALE \$2,098,000

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 Bogard-Tanigam Team | 650.924.8365
 License # 00298975 | 01918407



MENLO PARK \$1,795,000

657 Roble Avenue | 3bd/2.5ba
 Patrice Horvath | 650.520.7675
 License # 01708418



SAN JOSE \$1,599,000

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 Barbara Conkin-Orrrock | 650.996.4106
 License # 00943512



SAN JOSE \$749,000

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 Jerylann Mateo | 650.743.7895
 License # 01362250



SAN JOSE \$729,000

636 Gridley Street | 3bd/1ba
 Ashley Mateo | 650.279.7475
 License # 02007368



SAN JOSE \$674,999

144 S 3rd Street #333 | 1bd/1ba
 Cheryl Okuno | 650.209.1577
 License # 01051270



MOUNTAIN VIEW \$635,000

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COURTESY OF THE PEAR THEATRE

Susan Claassen plays Edith Head at *The Pear*.

PEAR'S POSTHUMOUS 'CONVERSATION WITH EDITH HEAD'

With eight Oscars on her shelf and a star on the Hollywood Walk of Fame, costume designer Edith Head (1897-1981) dressed legends such as Mae West, Clara Bow, Bette Davis, Elizabeth Taylor and Grace Kelly during a six-decade career. She also fashioned her own inimitable image: severe bangs and chignon, dark-rimmed glasses and tailored suits in neutral colors, and a sparrow-like appearance that could not subdue an opinionated, larger-than-life personality. Told she would never be beautiful, she opted to be distinctive.

"She really came up with this persona and she was like a sponge. She learned it and kept redefining herself," award-winning actress Susan Claassen said during a phone interview from Coronado, where she was performing in "A Conversation With Edith Head." The show's Bay Area premiere runs Dec. 7-16, with a Dec. 6 preview, at Mountain View's Pear Theatre, 1110 La Avenida St., where Claassen will be joined onstage by local actor Michael Saenz, who serves as host.

While the script grew out of Paddy Calistro's authorized biography, "Edith Head's Hollywood," co-written with the designer but published after her death, Claassen spent months researching everything about Head she could get her hands on, including the designer's books, "The Dress Doctor" and "How to Dress for Success," and hours of audiotaped interviews. In the process, she discovered information that the designer guarded during her lifetime. She knew everybody's secrets, but she never repeated them and she was cagey about her own backstory.

"There haven't been any

kiss-and-tell books about Edith," said Claassen, who unveils some of these secrets in the show. Tickets are \$35. Go to thepear.org.
—Janet Silver Ghent

DRAGON ENDS SEASON ON A HIGH NOTE WITH 'K2'

In Patrick Meyers' "K2," on stage now at the Dragon Theatre, friends Taylor (Chuck Phelps) and Harold (John Rutski), have successfully summited the world's second-tallest mountain but ended up stranded. Harold has a badly broken leg while Taylor has a bum shoulder. They've also lost much of their critical gear along the way but, against all odds, have managed to survive the night on the ledge and have a window of a few sunlit hours in which to try and attempt to get down. If they can't, they're sure to perish.

Over the course of the one-act play, the two bicker, wax philosophic and come to understand that they'll both need to make some pretty big sacrifices in order to hold out any hope that one of them might make it home alive.

Since it's a two-man show, establishing the rapport between the two climbers is key. Meyers' script lays out the differences between them clearly. Taylor is a foul-mouthed, hot-tempered district attorney who revels in his lonesome, chauvinistic bachelor life. Harold is a devoted family man with a beloved wife and young son. He's a nuclear physicist, a big thinker and the gentler of the two. He also has the tendency to drone on for long passages about the meaning of life, the universe and everything while active Taylor is risking life and limb to climb up and down an ice wall to retrieve some critically needed rope.

It's a tense and cleverly designed production. Set designer Tom Shamrell manages to ingeniously transform the small Dragon space into a mighty mountain top using fog machines, a platform, some shimmering ice-crystal backdrops and a climbing wall.

Because the actors are costumed in thick jackets and other cold-weather gear, the theater is kept at an even chillier temperature than usual, so audiences are advised to dress warm. (There are hot drinks for sale and cozy blankets available to rent for \$2.) The show runs through Dec. 2. Tickets are 27-\$35. Go to dragon-productions.net.

—Karla Kane

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RENTAL HOUSING COMMITTEE VACANCIES

The City of Mountain View is accepting applications at the City Clerk's Office until 4:00 p.m. on Friday, December 21, 2018 for Mountain View residents wishing to serve on the:

RENTAL HOUSING COMMITTEE

- The Rental Housing Committee is tasked with implementing and administering the voter-approved Community Stabilization and Fair Rent Act.
- The City Council will appoint new committee members to fill current vacancies and for new four year terms beginning in April 2019.
- All members of the Committee are required to be residents of the City of Mountain View and no more than two members of the committee may own or manage any rental property, or be realtors or developers. The current request for applications is for members that do not own or manage any rental property or are not realtors or developers.
- Meeting dates and times are established by the Rental Housing Committee.

Members of the Committee are volunteers and, per the charter amendment known as The Community Stabilization and Fair Rent Act ("CSFRA") or Measure V, are tasked with setting rents at fair and equitable levels; establishing rules and regulations for the administration and enforcement of the CSFRA; determining the annual general rent adjustment; appointing hearing officers; adjudicating petitions and holding public hearings; establishing a budget and charging fees necessary to support that budget; administering the withdrawal process for the removal of rental units from the rental housing market; conducting studies, surveys, and investigations; reporting periodically to the City Council; publicizing the Charter Amendment and the rights and responsibilities of landlords and tenants; establishing a schedule of penalties for noncompliance; and pursuing civil remedies and intervening in litigation, subject to City Council approval. The CSFRA can be found on the City's website and is also available upon request.

Supplemental Statement:

* Candidates are required to submit, along with their City application form, a typewritten statement to the following:

A statement under penalty of perjury setting forth the applicant's interests and dealings in real property, including, but not limited to, ownership, trusteeship, sale, or management, and investment in and association with partnerships, corporations, joint ventures, and syndicates engaged in ownership, sale, or management of real property during the three years immediately prior to the applicant's application. This documentation will be available to the public.

If appointed, a Statement of Economic Interests Form 700 will need to be completed annually.

Appointments are available on an equal opportunity basis.

Call the CSFRA Program at 650-903-6131 for further information and an application. An application can also be downloaded at: https://www.mountainview.gov/council/rental_housing_committee/default.asp

MountainView VOICE

Founding Editor, Kate Wakerly

STAFF

EDITOR

Andrea Gemmet (223-6537)

EDITORIAL

Assistant Editor

Julia Brown (223-6531)

Arts & Entertainment Editor

Karla Kane (223-6517)

Special Sections Editor

Linda Taaffe (223-6511)

Staff Writers

Kevin Forestieri (223-6535)

Mark Noack (223-6536)

Contributors

Dale Bentson,
Peter Canavese, Magali Gauthier,
Natalia Nazarova, Ruth Schecter,
Monica Schreiber

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Design and Production Manager

Kristin Brown (223-6562)

Designers Linda Atilano, Amy Levine,
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editor@MV-Voice.com

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CRIME BRIEF

SUSPICIOUS PACKAGE AT GOOGLE

A suspicious package found at a Google building Tuesday afternoon was deemed safe, according to the Mountain View Police Department.

Police and firefighters in Mountain View responded to the report of a suspicious package, described as a "substance in an envelope," shortly before 3 p.m. at a Google building in the 2600 block of Casey Avenue.

Seventy employees were evacuated from the building "out of an abundance of caution," Mountain View police said in a social media post. A hazardous materials team from the fire department responded and determined the substance was not dangerous.

"The building is clear and safe," police said.

Police are continuing to investigate the source of the envelope as well as the substance contained inside, according to police.

Fire department spokesman Robert Maitland said employees were evacuated for a little over an hour and were allowed to return to the building shortly after 4 p.m. Police cordoned off a portion of Casey Avenue during the investigation.

—Bay City News Service contributed to this report.

POLICE LOG

AUTO BURGLARY

800 block California St., 11/19
1500 block N. Shoreline Blvd., 11/19
1100 block N. Rengstorff Av., 11/19
1100 block N. Rengstorff Av., 11/19
1500 block N. Shoreline Blvd., 11/20
1100 block N. Rengstorff Av., 11/20
1100 block N. Rengstorff Av., 11/22
200 block Palo Alto Av., 11/23

BATTERY

500 block San Antonio Rd., 11/18
2000 block California St., 11/19
Escuela Av. & Latham St., 11/22

COMMERCIAL BURGLARY

700 block W. Evelyn Av., 11/21

GRAND THEFT

500 block Showers Dr., 11/20

POSSESSION OF STOLEN PROPERTY

1 block Fairchild Dr., 11/22

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

1500 Begen Av., 11/23

ROBBERY

Jane Ln. & N. Rengstorff Av., 11/19

STOLEN VEHICLE

Old Middlefield Way & Sierra Vista Av., 11/18
2000 block Rock St., 11/21

VANDALISM

2100 block W. El Camino Real, 11/20
W. Middlefield Rd. & Terra Bella Av., 11/21

COMMUNITY BRIEF

POP-UP ARTISAN MARKET

A three-week artisan holiday market that debuted last year will be returning this week to downtown Mountain View, kicking off with a fundraiser to support homeless services.

ArtPop, a pop-up market for locally made handcrafted wares ranging from jewelry and fashion accessories to home decor and honey, will kick off on Friday, Nov. 30, at 275 Castro St. It runs for three weeks, and vendors will rotate in and out of the venue during the course of the event.

The market will host a fundraiser on Saturday, Dec. 1, for the nonprofit Hope's Corner, which provides meals and support services to hundreds of homeless and needy residents. The nonprofit is also closely associated with the downtown cold weather shelter at Trinity United Methodist Church, which opens its doors to homeless women and children during the winter. Fifteen percent of the Dec. 1 proceeds at the market will go to Hope's Corner.

The Dec. 1 fundraiser will kick off with a ribbon-cutting at 11 a.m. with officials from the city of Mountain View and the Mountain View Chamber of Commerce.

A second fundraiser will be held on Saturday, Dec. 8, with a

► See **COMMUNITY BRIEF**, page 10

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MAGALI GAUTHIER

RVs and trailers line Shoreline Boulevard on Nov. 27. Mountain View's three-year quest to get occupied vehicles off the streets has so far only netted eight safe parking spaces for cars and none for RVs.

City slowly searches for a safe-parking spot

NO SUITABLE PLACE IN MOUNTAIN VIEW FOR ITS 300 INHABITED VEHICLES, STAFF SAYS

By Mark Noack

Creating safe parking lots around Mountain View has been the favored option to address the growing number of people living out of their vehicles. But that solution is falling woefully short, leading city officials to question whether their ambitions will succumb to a growing political backlash to push the homeless out of town.

As of this month, there are spaces for just eight vehicles at

safe parking lots in Mountain View, which is estimated to have about 300 inhabited vehicles throughout the city. Currently, these sites can only accept standard-size cars and vans, and not the RVs and motor homes that have become emblematic of the city's homeless population.

For an issue mired in controversy, pretty much everyone agrees on one point — the current system simply isn't working. "I'm not going to point fingers at anybody, but what we're doing

right now is just not working at the rate we need it," said Councilwoman Pat Showalter. "But I really don't think people are really aware of how much effort has gone into trying to ameliorate this problem."

The consensus among city officials is that Mountain View needs to locate more large parking lots to temporarily house the homeless. But city officials say they are coming up

► See **HOMELESS**, page 9

Hicks regains lead for City Council seat

By Mark Noack

The pendulum has swung back once again. Alison Hicks has regained the lead for the undecided City Council seat, overtaking incumbent Pat Showalter, who had a narrow lead until Sunday.

The latest round of election results posted Tuesday afternoon shows Hicks with 17.7 percent of the vote, giving her an 94-vote lead. That the biggest gap between the two in the past week, and could be difficult to close for Showalter, who now trails with 17.6 percent of the vote.

Approximately 98 percent of the county's ballots from the Nov. 6 election have now been tabulated, according to the Santa Clara County Registrar of Voters. As ballots are tabulated,

voter turnout in the county has steadily climbed, reaching nearly 70 percent as of Tuesday.

The election has been marked by an incredibly close race for the third of three seats up for election on the seven-member City Council. The immediate results from the Nov. 6 election night showed Hicks, a retired city planner, as the second highest vote recipient. But her lead narrowed in the following days as more absentee and provisional ballots were counted. Lucas Ramirez (18.2 percent) quickly moved up from third place to the second spot behind frontrunner Ellen Kamei, (19



Alison Hicks

percent) and as ballots were slowly tabulated in the subsequent days, Showalter inched past Hicks for the third seat.

For much of last week, Hicks and Showalter were locked in a neck-and-neck race for third place, with only about a dozen votes separating them. That changed on Sunday, Nov. 25, with Hicks pulling ahead by more than 80 votes.

Hicks ran on a platform of preserving and enhancing Mountain View's appeal, taking a skeptical view of rampant office development and seeking to protect the public spaces and small businesses that give the city character.

The county posts updated election results daily by 5 p.m. They can be found at the Registrar of Voters website, scvvote.org. ■

Email Mark Noack at mnoack@mv-voice.com

Monta Loma military kids can stay together

STUDENTS IN MILITARY HOUSING ALLOWED TO ATTEND SAME SCHOOL FOLLOWING BOUNDARY MIX-UP

By Kevin Forestieri

Families of military service members will be able to send their children to Monta Loma Elementary next year, despite a recent letter sent by the Mountain View Whisman School District stating that new boundaries would divert them to another school.

Last year, the school district revamped its school attendance boundaries to reduce overcrowding and create "neighborhood schools," which often meant ditching non-contiguous areas that went over major thoroughfares and cleaning up the patchwork of legacy school boundaries caused by school closures.

From the start, district officials and school board members agreed that no matter what, children of military personnel serving at Moffett Field ought to stick together, and that the de facto school for those families — Monta Loma — should always be open them. But due to some kind of confusion or oversight, some military families received notices in October stating that their children would have to attend Theuerkauf Elementary.

Glenn Bates, a parent and member of Monta Loma's school site council, alerted board members to the problem earlier this month. He said the military families attending Monta Loma were blindsided by letters about an impending move to Theuerkauf, and that the district was out of touch by failing to understand the effects of splitting up military families.

"Their understanding was that the military community was staying together at Monta Loma — a site which we have specifically built to support them as part of our family," Bates said. "And now we're being fractured without really clear communication from the district."

The comments were met with confusion from members of the school board, who said they were under the impression that they gave clear direction to allow active military service members the opportunity to keep their

children at Monta Loma. The district's leadership has long felt that the military community is best served together, and that the families — who frequently face having to move — feel more connected at Monta Loma while they're here in Mountain View.

District spokeswoman Shelly Hausman confirmed that eight military families in the district had received letters stating they were being assigned to Theuerkauf, which runs contrary to the district's goals. Subsequent letters clarifying their child's placement at Monta Loma will be sent to the affected families, she said.

The mix-up likely has to do with the split between service members residing at the base north of Highway 101 and at Shenandoah Square, a small carve-out of federal land at the corner of Middlefield Road and Moffett Boulevard. The old Monta Loma attendance boundary used to curl south along Moffett to include Shenandoah, but the school board approved boundary changes that rezoned the neighborhood for Theuerkauf.

Between the two locations, the district has roughly 125 students from military families, 88 of whom attend Monta Loma. The district provides busing service for the families at two stops — one at Shenandoah and one at the base north of Highway 101 — to transport children to Monta Loma and Crittenden Middle School. All eight families who received the erroneous letters live at Shenandoah, Hausman said.

While it may seem sensible to just leave Shenandoah within Monta Loma's attendance boundary, Shenandoah Square's 126 apartments aren't exclusive to military personnel. Lacking enough enlisted residents, the eligibility requirements were expanded to civilian federal employees, including NASA Ames employees. The guarantee to stay at Monta Loma does not extend to these non-military families, and their children are assigned to Theuerkauf. ■

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Mountain View Voice

Holiday Fund

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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:

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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

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CHAC

► Continued from page 1

nonprofits and are administered by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation at no cost, so 100 percent of contributions go to the recipients.

Providing individual and family therapy on a fairly tight budget has been a tall order, particularly in recent years, said Marsha Deslauriers, CHAC's executive director. Fees are based on a sliding scale and no one is turned away, but demand continues to climb each year. The huge number of families who earn too much to qualify for Medi-Cal but not enough to pay for private practice therapists are particularly vulnerable, with fees that range from \$150 to \$800 an hour, depending on what they need, Deslauriers said.

"Take substance abuse — that's a family disease," she said. "Services are not just needed for the victim of the disease but the family, and that can get very expensive. To offer those services to the community here is an important part of the safety net. We're here for everyone."

Although CHAC serves residents of all ages at its headquarters on El Camino Real near downtown, the bulk of the work happens on school campuses throughout the region. A workforce of 80 CHAC therapists — most of them marriage



MAGALI GAUTHIER

Vanessa Rodriguez and Kelly Saam, both marriage and family therapist trainees at CHAC, discuss work on Nov. 27. CHAC provides affordable mental health services to local residents and is one of the beneficiaries of the Voice's Holiday Fund.

and family therapists accruing hours needed for their license — fan out to 34 schools on any given weekday. In the Mountain View-Los Altos High School District, one-on-one support services are held in discrete locations throughout the campuses, tucked into any space available short of broom closets.

The number of children and adolescents served has been going up by a staggering amount. About three years ago, Deslauriers said CHAC was providing counseling sessions for about 5 percent of the student population in those 34 schools. Now that number is approaching 16 percent, or about 3,200 kids.

It's difficult to pin the rise in demand on any given problem, and how much of it simply comes from a reduction in stigma and better education. At least partly responsible, Deslauriers said, is the high-stress culture of Silicon Valley and the constant pressure to measure up, which brings a significant number of clients from families working in high tech.

On the other end of the spectrum, she said, are the residents served by CHAC's

Latinx program, which serves hundreds of families each year — a majority of whom are low-income Spanish-speaking families. These are families who are dealing with problems ranging from neglect, domestic violence, child abuse, divorce, financial stress and homelessness.

Clinicians running the Latinx program told the Voice earlier this year that many of the families in the program qualify for Medi-Cal, but there's an unfamiliarity and uneasiness with government-run programs and a perception that the county-run system doesn't extend into the realm of mental health. As a result, some families decline referrals to outside services until CHAC's Latinx has space for them.

CHAC's roughly \$3.7 million budget comes from a mix of fees, contracts with public agencies, grants and donations. The vast majority — 83 percent — goes directly toward paying for services. While the nonprofit has traditionally stretched every dollar it can to meet the needs in the community, Deslauriers has made it a goal to make some long-anticipated upgrades to make life easier for CHAC's workforce.

Starting in August, CHAC

rolled out its electronic records system, doing away with a slow and unwieldy paper trail covering every facet of case management. The next much-needed improvement could be repairing the roof, which leaked during the storms last week and caused water to trickle and pour into a second-story room used to hold records. Buckets to catch the rainwater were still on the floor on Tuesday, set out beneath exposed wires and fiberglass insulation, preparing for another onslaught of rain.

Additional funding could also allow CHAC to expand its already broad range of services, which includes the Family Resource Center, substance abuse programs — which fill a special niche in the area, given that they don't require abstinence — and prevention programs aimed at educating third- and fifth-grade children about sensitive subjects related to emotional self-awareness, bullying and self-harm.

"Our scope of practice is wide," Deslauriers said. "Our goal is to be able to provide access to as many clients as there are calling and walking in for services." ▣

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DOWNTOWN

► Continued from page 1

214 additional spaces to avoid spilling over into the public lots.

"We don't have the transit infrastructure to support the kinds of parking estimates that we're making," she said. "We don't want to see hotel staff or office workers utilizing those public spaces, and we don't see what will happen if that does occur."

Some of those concerns were taken up by Abe-Koga, who implied the compromise wasn't actually as good as it seemed. The deal includes an agreement for the city to forgo a portion of the hotel (transient occupancy) tax to subsidize the public parking. Eventually, the hotel will pay the full amount. Abe-Koga pressed the city's finance staff to explain how much money the city would forego in taxes to make the project work. The answer: \$7.8 million.

"That's over \$100,000 a parking space — I've never heard of anything like this amount," she said. "We're being asked

for quite a large subsidy ... but there's other hotels who aren't asking for this."

Abe-Koga and Matichak said they could not support the project, in part because it was an office project that would worsen the city's jobs-housing imbalance.

Yes, it would have been nice to build housing instead of offices, agreed Mayor Lenny Siegel, but he said the project was still worthwhile. He was skeptical the hotel and office would create the parking nightmare that opponents were envisioning. He pointed out the project was situated right next to the transit center. Caltrain and ride-sharing services should reduce the parking demands of the project, he said.

"An enormous amount of time and energy has been spent working out these details," he said. "I think we've done a pretty good job addressing these issues."

The project is expected to be completed in late 2021, according to the Robert Green Company. ▣

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LASD: San Antonio school will serve neighborhood

By Kevin Forestieri

Los Altos School District board members cautiously endorsed a plan to build a San Antonio school serving children in the area, hoping to push ahead with a complex land deal for a new campus.

With barely a quorum and using ambiguous language, the three trustees agreed at a special meeting Monday night that, if the school district succeeds in building a school at the corner

of California Street and Showers Drive, it ought to serve neighborhood kids. It remains unclear whether it would serve Mountain View kids from day one, or if it would be a traditional elementary school. Trustees did not take formal action at the meeting.

Since the spring, Los Altos School District officials have been negotiating with Federal Realty to buy roughly 9.5 acres of land on the northeast corner of the San Antonio shopping center, currently home to several businesses.

The school board has held a dozen closed session meetings over the last two months about the acquisition, which would allow the district to redevelop the existing businesses as a new school site.

In order to offset the high cost of buying real estate, the district has sought significant financial support from the city of Mountain View, including \$23 million in park fees and permission to sell to developers any “unused” density for building projects elsewhere in the city. But Mountain View City Council members were reluctant to sign off on the support last month until they had more clarity on what kind of school would be put there.

The decision to postpone any action came abruptly at the end of the Oct. 9 City Council meeting, just after midnight, after hearing that the school board made no definitive call on the 10th site usage at a school board meeting the night before.

But clarifying the plan has been difficult for the school district, with the leadership uneasy about making a concrete decision before buying the property and trustees receiving mixed messages from the community. On the one hand, the Mountain View

City Council expressed its support for a school serving children in the San Antonio area, where the district’s boundaries extend into Mountain View. At the same time, the majority of a Los Altos district task force concluded in August that relocating Bullis Charter School out of Los Altos to the new site would be best.

Other groups in the community, notably Bullis families, have advocated for killing the deal entirely, arguing that the land is too expensive and ill-advised at a time when the district’s enrollment is dropping.

At the Nov. 26 meeting, school board member Jessica Speiser said she believes the school district needs to plan for the residential boom in the San Antonio area, both now and in the future.

“I want to make sure that we have a school that will serve the neighborhood,” she said.

Board member Bryan Johnson spoke broadly about the site usage and said he “agreed” with what Speiser said, but did not respond to requests for clarity on his position. Board president Vladimir Ivanovic doubled down on his prior position, which was that a school serving neighborhood students would be the best option.

“This is a school that ought

to serve the neighborhood. It’s the one area that we don’t have a school, so it seems like a no-brainer,” he said.

Trustees Steve Taglio and Sanjeeth Peruri were both absent.

District administrators will be crafting a letter to the city of Mountain View expressing the board’s opinion, in hopes of getting the financial support deal back in front of the City Council. Ivanovic told the *Voice* that the language of the letter, while still in flux, gives the district some flexibility. Serving neighborhood students doesn’t necessarily lock the district into building an elementary school or a junior high school for kids in the area, nor does it preclude the “temporary or permanent siting” of students outside the neighborhood, he said.

Council members Margaret Abe-Koga and Pat Showalter have argued that the city shouldn’t be ponying up so much money without a guarantee in writing that the district will create a neighborhood school serving the nearly 700 Mountain View children living near the shopping center. It’s unclear how the new council members elected in November — Ellen Kamei, Lucas Ramirez and likely Alison Hicks — might upset the majority that has granted the district flexibility in the future school’s use. ■



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Dr. Bhowmik holds adjunct and guest professor positions, advises graduate research and lectures on human-computer interactions and perceptual computing technologies at the Liquid Crystal Institute of Kent State University, Kyung Hee University, Seoul, Indian Institute of Technology, Gandhinagar, Stanford University, and the University of California, Berkeley,

where he is on the board of advisors for the Fung Institute for Engineering Leadership. Dr. Bhowmik has over 200 publications, including two books and 34 issued patents.

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HOMELESS

▶ Continued from page 5

short in that search.

For about three years, Kimberly Thomas, the assistant to the city manager, has been Mountain View's lead person on homeless issues. Over that time, she said her team has looked into every available parking lot in the city, including publicly owned properties. Across the board, she said, there was no property that was a perfect fit. Each site had its own restrictions and challenges for converting into a temporary vehicle encampment site.

"We've looked at every possible lot," Thomas said. "The challenge has always been to find something workable for this type of need. And that match simply hasn't occurred."

There is one exception. In October, the city signed an agreement with the nonprofit Palo Alto Housing to use a Terra Bella property temporarily to house up to 11 vehicles. It is a welcome addition, but still not the large area needed to get occupied vehicles off the streets.

Obvious ideas

There are a few potential sites that are frequently brought up. At the top of the list is Shoreline Amphitheatre, which has five dirt parking lots capable of accommodating nearly 7,000 vehicles, according to city records.

The site has many obvious advantages: It is city-owned with room to spare, especially during the offseason when the amphitheater's summer concert series ends. Also, the space is located far away from the city's residential centers, allowing city officials to avoid any neighborhood pushback from situating a homeless campground in one of the city's neighborhoods.

While Shoreline Amphitheatre is publicly owned, the city of Mountain View leases the property for about \$1.8 million per year to Live Nation for concerts and events. That long-term contract lasts through 2020, but it doesn't prohibit the city from using the amphitheater's parking lots. The 2006 lease explicitly gives the city the right to use three of the parking lots as needed — even for a homeless campground — so long as it doesn't interfere with Live Nation's scheduled events.

One problem, however, is the city has also agreed to allow Live Nation to sublease two of the parking lots to Google until 2025. In an agreement approved last year, Google is paying the city \$2.25 million for exclusive rights to park about 1,200 vehicles in the lots.

Could the remaining Shoreline lots be used for the homeless? In recent months, the amphitheater's parking lots have been frequently brought up by City Council

members and candidates.

Thomas said city staff has given the lots a cursory examination, but the full range of restrictions haven't been analyzed. She explained this was because the City Council never added it to the city's list of goals or made it an explicit priority for staff.

City staffers have also performed a cursory examination of Moffett Field, another site that is frequently proposed for a safe parking encampment. As federal land, that site faces a wide range of restrictions, and city staff consider it a non-starter, Thomas said.

Even if a perfect site materialized, a new safe parking site would also have to run through a series of roadblocks. Technically, any site with more than four parked vehicles should have a special temporary use permit, according to a city report published in October. City staffers haven't developed the framework for this permit yet, and it likely won't be ready until next year.

Any safe parking site would also be expected to apply for city building and fire permits, which normally include attached fees, as well as comply with the California Environmental Quality Act, according to the city report.

In addition, a safe parking operator would also be expected to obtain a signed letter from every adjacent property owner consenting to the site's use. In the likely event that at least one neighbor opposed having a homeless camp next door, the city would require the proposal to go through a public hearing process.

Could these conditions be scaring away any property owners who might be willing to help? Thomas wouldn't say. The City Council backed these steps last month in the interest of helping people, but within the letter of the law, she said.

East Palo Alto's example

One potential solution could be to follow the lead of other cities. San Jose and East Palo Alto have both declared their citywide homelessness as a public emergency.

The declaration was more than symbolic: It allowed the cities to streamline the process for creating new safe parking sites and sidestep the normal policy considerations. In the case of East Palo Alto, declaring an emergency gave city officials a degree of immunity from liability and it also sped up the process for repurposing public land as they worked to launch a safe parking site for 20 RVs.

The urgency action was necessary given the large number of East Palo Alto residents who were suddenly thrust into homelessness, explained Pastor Paul Bains of the nonprofit WeHOPE.

"We're trying to take a negative

situation and turn it into a positive," he said. "These people didn't choose to live in RVs. Many of them were tricked out by landlords saying they were going to remodel their apartments."

Thomas said Mountain View city staff did consider an emergency ordinance, and she acknowledged that it would offer added flexibility and the opportunity for some state funding grants.

"But it's not something at this time that we think we should address," she said. "In our city analysis, we didn't see it as connected to a safe parking program."

Some council members are beginning to lose patience with such a cautious approach. Mayor Lenny Siegel said he was likely penalized by voters in the election over the homeless issue, possibly costing him his chance at a second term. He expressed frustration that his past suggestions — such as the Shoreline parking lots — were not fully vetted by city staff. In some cases, these ideas were not taken up because he didn't have support from a majority on the council.

"I've been saying for a while now that the city needs to do more, but city staff always pushes back and says we're already doing a lot," Siegel said. "We haven't done much. I've tried, but the city went with slower solutions."

Since 2016, city employees spread across various departments have spent nearly 4,400 hours on homeless-related issues, according to report from March. Most of this staff time was spent responding to issues resulting from people living out of their vehicles, such as parking enforcement, illegal waste incidents or other complaints.

A breaking point could be fast approaching. Increasingly vocal residents have made it clear they have lost patience with the large number of inhabited vehicles on city streets. In October, the City Council formally requested that city staff investigate parking limits or possibly a permit system on city streets in an effort to limit inhabited vehicles. City staff is expected to present a menu of options at a meeting early next year.

But even if tighter restrictions were passed, the city still needs to figure out some kind of safe parking, said Councilwoman Lisa Matichak. She has advocated for stricter limits on street parking, but the city needs to provide some alternative for people living out of their vehicles to go, she said.

"We were hoping the (safe parking program) could get up to speed more quickly than it did," she said. "I applaud their efforts, and I encourage them to keep going, but we need to look at other alternatives." ▀

Email Mark Noack at mnoack@mv-voice.com



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.



The City of Mountain View is accepting applications for appointments to the Environmental Planning Commission (4 openings).

Applications are due by 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 20, 2018 to the City Clerk's Office, 500 Castro Street Mountain View, CA 94041.

- Environmental Planning Commission members are volunteers and serve in an advisory capacity to the City Council.
- Interviews with the City Council are scheduled for Thursday, January 3, 2019.

Applications are available in the City Clerk's Office or online at www.mountainview.gov. Contact the City Clerk's Office at 650-903-6304 or city.clerk@mountainview.gov for further information.

Google buys North Bayshore office park for \$1 billion

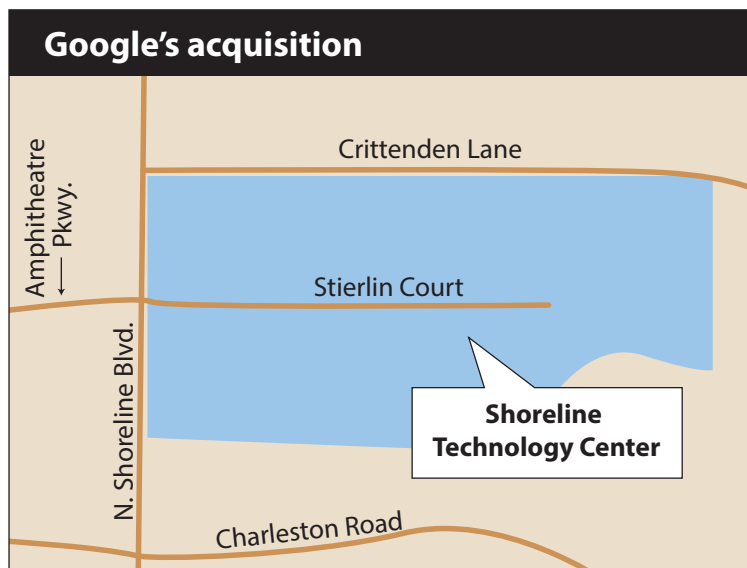
By Mark Noack

Google's blitz of land buying is moving ahead full steam. On Monday, the tech giant confirmed it had purchased the Shoreline Technology Center, an 800,000-square-foot office campus, in one of the company's largest and most expensive North Bayshore acquisitions to date.

Even by the standards of Silicon Valley, the details of this new land deal are jaw-dropping. The 51.8-acre property located on Stierlin Court is reportedly being sold to Google for \$1 billion. That equates to more than \$19 million per acre, far more than any previous land sale on record in the area.

The tech giant confirmed details of the land deal to the *Voice* on Monday, Nov. 26. The sale was first reported by the San Jose Mercury News.

The Shoreline Technology Center consists of large swaths of parking lots and low-density offices, which are no higher than two stories. If redeveloped, the site could be built as high as four stories under Mountain View's precise plan



Google spent \$1 billion to buy this 52-acre parcel where the company has been leasing offices.

for the area.

Google is already occupying much of the Shoreline Technology Center office space under a lease agreement going back more than a decade. The company subleased a portion of the offices to another tenant, Alexza Pharmaceuticals.

Unlike other surrounding streets, the Shoreline Technology Center property is not included in the city of

Mountain View's plans to build up to 9,850 housing units in North Bayshore. Those plans for housing development are focused in three planned neighborhoods located further to the south.

Google officials speaking on background said the company has no plans to redevelop the buildings or relocate their employees.

The company might already

have its hands full with several other large-scale developments nearby. Just a stone's throw away, Google is nearing completion on two showpiece office projects: one at the Charleston East property, and the other located at Moffett Field on land leased from NASA. Earlier this month, plans were also submitted for a new 800,000-square-foot office at 2171 Landings Drive, as well as a new parking garage for 1,800 vehicles.

Irvine-based real estate firm HCP Inc. sold the property to Google. In an October investor report, HCP executives highlighted that they had inked a final agreement to sell the Shoreline Technology Center to an undisclosed buyer. The firm is reportedly making about \$700 million in profits from the sale.

Google officials were cryptic when asked why the company paid so much for the property. A person familiar with the deal would only say that it made sense to move from leasing to owning the land since they were already the majority tenant. ▀

Email Mark Noack at mnoack@mv-voice.com

COMMUNITY BRIEF

► Continued from page 4

the proceeds going to all three of Mountain View's local school districts — the Mountain View-Los Altos High School District and the Mountain View Whisman and Los Altos school districts.

Along with the fundraising efforts, the market aims to give local artists affordable retail space, particularly during the holiday shopping season, providing a sense of community between artisans under one roof during December.

The downtown Mountain View location is an upgrade from last year, when ArtPop was hosted in the recently vacated Spirit Halloween store in the Clarkwood Center strip mall. ArtPop organizer Kathy Bonte said the downtown space was provided by the current leaseholder, Eric Aslao, who is a supporter of the arts.

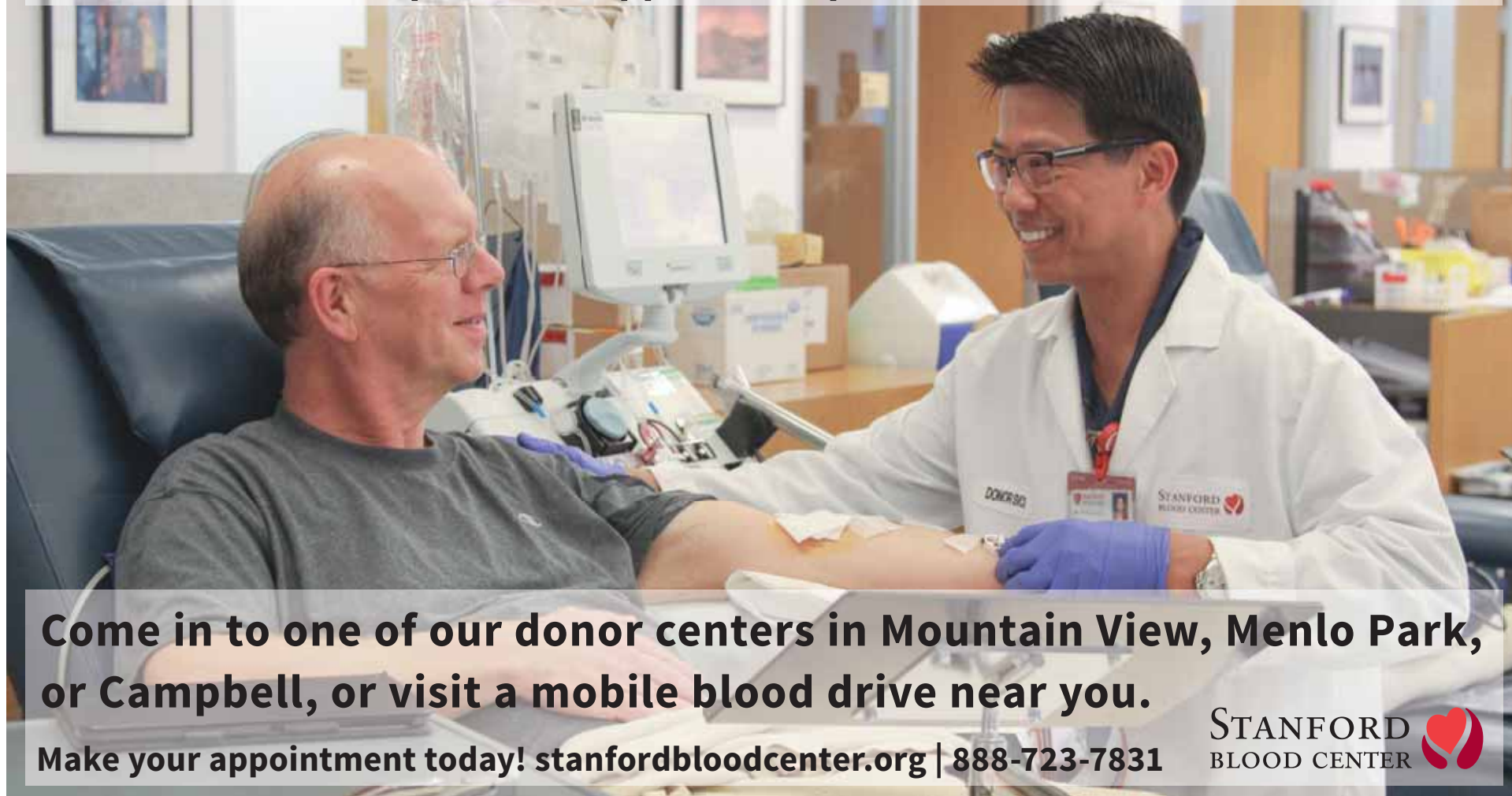
"All the participating artisans and makers truly appreciate (Aslao's) support and generosity in allowing us to use this wonderful space," Bonte said.

The market will be open Thursdays through Sundays through Dec. 16. More information on the market can be found at facebook.com/ArtPopOnCastro.

—Kevin Forestieri

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25 YEARS

▶ Continued from page 1

of community newspapers,” Torgrimson told the *Voice* in 2013. “We were advised against it quite heartily. But we never let that stop us.”

Launched as a monthly, the 12-page “Voice of Mountain View” was sent out to 25,000 addresses just before Christmas. It included a preview of Mountain View’s annual Community Tree Lighting Celebration and, in true Silicon Valley style, the pair produced the paper from the Wakerlys’ basement. Hard-pressed for money to put out the issue, Wakerly convinced Costco to run a two-page ad in the center spread for its soon-to-open store on Charleston Road. The paper got more firmly established with its second issue, which came out in February 1993.

At the time, it seemed impossible for local schools and Mountain View community members to get their stories heard, Torgrimson told the *Voice* for an article about the paper’s 20th anniversary. “We felt that the community deserved a real newspaper,” she said.

After running it on a shoestring, Wakerly and Torgrimson



The first issue of the Voice came out just before Christmas.

transferred ownership of the *Voice* to Embarcadero Publishing, a locally owned company founded by Bill Johnson, who started the Palo Alto Weekly. Now called Embarcadero Media, it also publishes The Almanac and the Pleasanton Weekly, as well as DanvilleSanRamon.com and TheSixFifty.com.

“The only financial windfall that Kate and Carol received in the March 1994 asset transfer was that they would no longer have to put their own money into the paper’s publication. They never did take a penny of

profit out of the venture, since there was none,” said John Wakerly. “Perhaps their biggest reward was a well-founded expectation that the *Voice* could and would continue with the Weekly’s and Bill’s support.”

The pair stayed on during the transition, and Wakerly returned as publisher of the *Voice* in 2000, retiring two years later. She died in 2004 at age 56 following a six-year battle with cancer.

The early issues of the *Voice* were filled with local news, including City Council coverage and a few feature stories, said Tom Gibboney, who served as the publisher from 2002 to 2014 and helped with running the newspaper in its early days. “As editor and publisher of The Almanac, a long-established and similar weekly in Menlo Park, I was well-versed at applying the technology we needed to get a paper to press every week,” Gibboney said. “From that first year, it was a blast helping Kate edit and write for the *Voice*, which caught on in Mountain View,” he said.

Kevin Duggan, Mountain View’s city manager from 1990 to 2011, said he came to respect the *Voice* for not representing any special interests and adding

to the flavor of the city. “The community has a better sense of itself,” he said for a story on the *Voice*’s 20th anniversary.

Rufus Jeffris, the editor from 1995 to 1998, called his time at the paper one of the highlights of his career. He said he’s immensely grateful to Wakerly and Torgrimson for their support and credited their passion for local journalism. “As journalism comes under attack from many fronts, papers like the *Voice* are critical in keeping citizens informed, exposing them to different and new ideas and holding the powerful accountable,” he said.

“The hours were long, the work was hard. But the rewards were immense and extremely satisfying. The community embraced the paper and what it represented. And in only our second year, the *Voice* captured three statewide journalism awards for excellence,” Jeffris said.

Noting that the *Voice* is this year’s winner of General Excellence, the top award given in the statewide California Journalism Awards contest, he said, “it’s immensely gratifying to see the *Voice* continue that record of excellence.”

Over the past 25 years, the

Voice has chronicled the impacts of the incredible changes in the city, from the Navy’s departure from Moffett Field to the influx of tech workers, the struggle to bring light rail downtown and the ongoing pressures of a growing population and massive development projects.

“The launch of the *Voice* predated the start of Google by five years, so we’ve given the community a front row seat to the transformation of Mountain View into the diverse and technology-centered city that it is today,” said Johnson. “It is hard to imagine a more interesting or important place in which to operate a news organization, where the work of local companies is not only changing the community but profoundly impacting the future of journalism.”

In tribute to one its first articles, the *Voice* staff will be at this year’s Community Tree Lighting Celebration on Monday, Dec. 3, handing out treats. Stop by the *Voice*’s table for the chance to win limited edition 25th anniversary swag or just to say hello. The event runs from 5:30-7:30 p.m. at Civic Center Plaza, 500 Castro St. ▀

Email Andrea Gemmet at editor@mv-voice.com

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FOOD FEATURE

Yard to Table

SEEKING KOREAN PRODUCE, MAUM'S CO-CHEFS TURN TO BACKYARD FARMING IN LOS ALTOS HILLS

Story by Elena Kadwany | Photos by Veronica Weber

The chefs were three months from their restaurant opening, and they had a big problem.

Husband-and-wife team Michael and Meichih Kim were expanding what had been a private restaurant for months into an ambitious, tasting-menu only Korean restaurant in the heart of downtown Palo Alto.

The problem? Despite the abundance of fresh produce in the Bay Area, quality Korean produce is incredibly hard to come by. "Almost nationwide you either grow it yourself or know people that grow it," Michael said. They had been pleading with local farmers to custom grow for the 16-seat restaurant, with little luck.

"At that point, three months before the restaurant opened, it didn't look very good for us to get good quality product," Michael said.

One of the farmers the couple

had approached was Tarun Marya, a former chef who had recently left the Bay Area to work on a farm in Maui. When that fell through, he returned and reconnected with the two chefs, agreeing to work for them on the land he had access to: the large backyards of his mother and her neighbor's homes in Los Altos Hills.

A partnership was born, and Maum opened on University Avenue in July with the backyard gardens serving as the restaurant's private farm. The farm and the relationship it engenders enables the kitchen to operate at full creative capacity and to deliver on a menu that is at once modern and nostalgic, marrying the flavors of Korean and Northern California culinary traditions.

The sloping hillside behind Marya's mother's house, dubbed Luna Vez Farm, now grows daikon radish, shin dong



Michael and Meichih Kim, co-chefs at Maum, stand amid rows of vegetables grown in a Los Altos Hills backyard for the Korean restaurant.

ha (a Korean radish), perilla and minari (Korean watercress, spawned in water from a bundle Michael's dad brought from his Southern California backyard). There's also lettuce, Napa cabbage, Hachiya persimmons, a 15-year-old avocado tree, turmeric, blueberries, raspberries, strawberries, bee hives (to pollinate the fruit) and two coops of chickens, housing breeds that are known for producing rich eggs.

Steps away down a cul-de-sac and through a hole in a wire fence into a neighbor's



Tarun Marya holds eggs from hens he keeps at what he's dubbed Luna Vez Farm in his mother's Los Altos Hills backyard.

► See **MAUM**, page 16



Veronica Thao, a farm assistant, picks heirloom tomatoes on Oct. 30.



Michael Kim inspects a persimmon cultivated by Tarun Marya in Los Altos Hills.



Turmeric grows at Luna Vez Farm.



Cabai burong peppers offer a bright burst of red to the backyard farm that serves Maum restaurant in Palo Alto.

MAUM

► *Continued from page 15*

backyard is another half-acre of land lined with long rows of colorful peppers, cherry tomatoes, basil, lemon cucumbers, flowers and other produce.

“The products that we grow here are the basis for food at the restaurant,” Michael said.

The shin dong ha becomes kimchi, diced and sautéed, for Maum’s kkakdugi brisket rice, served in a massive, shallow bowl reminiscent of paella. Head lettuces serve as vessels for galbi (grilled ribs), kimchi, ssamjang dipping sauce and perilla in the restaurant’s ssam course. With the persimmons, “we’re doing what every chef does in the fall,” Michael said: peeling and drying them. Called gotgam in Korean, they serve the dried Hachiya in a post-dessert course.

Ingredients that don’t make it onto the menu are used for Maum’s family meal, feeding the restaurant staff.

It’s the farm-to-table relationship of most chefs’ dreams. Michael visits the farm every two to three weeks and Meichih, about once a month, both to check in and for inspiration. On a recent drive to the farm, they pondered how to use impossibly sweet Penelope peas, shelling



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Tarun Marya carries the last of the season's cherry tomato crop at Luna Vez Farm.

peas that Marya taught them can be harvested in the fall rather than spring. They bring their whole staff for farm days and are constantly in communication with Marya, who drops off produce at the restaurant three times a week.

They talk frequently about “what’s next or how we can progress at the farm,” Michael said. “That’s how we progress at the restaurant, too. Whenever I’m in a bind for inspiration I just come down here (and) walk around.”

Marya, who goes by Runi, was born in Mountain View but spent the majority of the first 18 years of his life in the south of France. He started college in a pre-med program but dropped out and started learning about permaculture and organic farming while working at restaurants.

He went on to pursue a degree

in environmental studies at the University of San Francisco, started a business building edible backyards, and worked on organic farms and as a pastry chef. He also grew vegetable and grain seeds for food production, selling the seeds in recent years at a stand at the Mountain View and Los Altos farmers markets, where he first met the Kims.

Growing Korean crops, though, was mostly a new frontier for Marya. He said he’s drawn on techniques he learned over time — including about Korean natural farming, which focuses on “building a healthy soil biology by using what can be found on the farm or local flora” — and is learning alongside the co-chefs “about new crops and how to integrate them into our food system here.”

They’re all excited about 2019,



Delaware chickens, a heritage breed, provide most of the eggs at Maum.



Rows of seedlings include turmeric, sorrel, dandelion, mustard greens, perilla and burdock.

when they’ll be able to plan farther ahead for specific varieties and ramp the farm up to full production.

The farm allows Maum, which Michael said means “heart and soul,” to be the fullest expression of itself. Michael is a Korean-American Los Angeles transplant who graduated from the

Culinary Institute of America at Greystone in St. Helena and cooked at Craft in Los Angeles, SPQR in San Francisco and was the opening chef for Namu Gaji, a Korean restaurant in San Francisco. Meichih also comes with fine-dining experience, including at the three-Michelin-star Per Se in New York City and the

three-starred Benu and the now-closed RN74 in San Francisco.

Their goal at Maum is to elevate Korean cuisine while honoring the fundamentals. Neither would be possible without the humble ingredients Marya is nurturing just a few miles away. ▣

Email Elena Kadvany at ekadvany@paweekly.com



Michael Kim kneels down to inspect Alpine strawberry plants at Luna Vez, a backyard farm in Los Altos Hills.

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MOVIE OPENINGS

Along for the ride

'GREEN BOOK' FOLLOWS BLACK PIANIST AND HIS WHITE DRIVER THROUGH THE DEEP SOUTH

★★ 1/2 (Century 16 & 20)

Who woulda thunk that Peter Farrelly—half of the “Farrelly Brothers” team behind movies like “Dumb and Dumber” and “There’s Something About Mary”—would make a film that finds itself in the Oscar

conversation? But he has. His new comedy-drama “Green Book,” an amiable film based on a true story, follows the thorny but ultimately rosy friendship between a black pianist and his white driver forged on the road in the Deep South during the 1960s. Though breezily

entertaining, this cinematic vehicle also lurches in and out of the usual racial potholes, making its song of the South—and North—catch in the throat.

Viggo Mortensen stars as Frank Anthony Vallelonga, a.k.a. Tony Lip, a bouncer at the Copa in 1962. A thick slab of meat working a plush nightclub, Tony Lip has earned a rep as a stand-up guy both uptown and in his native Bronx, within white social circles that only admit blacks as a matter of necessity. As such, Tony casually tosses off racial slurs and gestures, as when he throws out a glass his wife has offered to a black home repairman. But his work suddenly dries up, prompting Tony to interview for an unlikely job driving and protecting a black recording artist on an eight-week concert tour well below the Mason-Dixon line.

That artist is Jamaican-American pianist and composer Don Shirley (Oscar winner Mahershala Ali), a man who typically strives to live above it all in his ostentatious apartment above Carnegie Hall. The minute he walks in the film, you can see he is a man of distinction, and although he clearly regards Vallelonga as uncouth (which he is, to put it mildly), Shirley also cannily recognizes the man’s value as someone with an “innate ability to handle trouble.” And there will be trouble, because of Shirley’s conspicuous otherness of race, refinement and sexuality, each taken as a threat by someone.

And so the stage is set for a tidy fable of prejudice confronted



COURTESY OF UNIVERSAL PICTURES

Viggo Mortensen and Mahershala Ali star in “Green Book.”

and overcome. In our “MAGA” times, “Green Book” serves as a reminder of our supposedly great but actually fraught past. Sure, dig those clean-cut fashions and sleek cars, but recall, as the film does, that blacks valued the advice of “The Negro Motorist’s Green Book” (particularly useful in the South) for help in “traveling while black” and finding accommodating hotels and restaurants. At a climactic moment, “Green Book” also recalls how Nat King Cole took a beating from the Klan on a Birmingham, Alabama, stage in 1956. Shirley insisted on his Southern tours anyway, out of stubbornness and, the film suggests, righteous civic duty. “Genius is not enough,” remarks one of his admiring bandmates. “It takes courage to change people’s hearts.”

Apart from these serious considerations, though, “Green Book” largely runs on mismatched buddy comedy (also resonant in a society still hung up on elitist versus common man distinctions), with Ali playing the Felix to Mortensen’s Oscar. Absurdly claiming “I’m more black than you are,” Tony

teaches Don to enjoy delicious Kentucky Fried Chicken and popular black recording artists, while Don plays Cyrano in upping Tony’s game writing love letters to his wife.

In corny fashion, the two broaden each other’s horizons, but “Green Book” also queasily brushes against white-savior tropes, and the script (partly attributed to Vallelonga’s son) privileges the viewpoint of Tony by making him the protagonist and the lonely, alcoholic and closeted Don his emotionally dependent foil (a couple of Shirley’s survivors have denounced the film on this basis). Ignore that, and “Green Book” easily amuses and warms hearts, gaining crucial buoyancy from its terrific leading performances. But it’s hard not to feel “Green Book” sells Shirley’s story short, and for a film so concerned with racial justice, that’s a conspicuous failing. *Rated PG-13 for thematic content, language including racial epithets, smoking, some violence and suggestive material. Two hours, 10 minutes.*

— Peter Canavese

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A Star is Born (R) ★★ 1/2 Century 20: Fri. - Sun.

Beautiful Boy (R) ★★★
Palo Alto Square: Fri. & Sat.

Bohemian Rhapsody (PG-13)
Century 16: Fri. - Sun. Century 20: Fri. - Sun.

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 16: Fri. - Sun. Century 20: Fri. - Sun.

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

Free Solo (PG-13) Guild Theatre: Fri. - Sun.

Green Book (PG-13) Century 16: Fri. - Sun.
Century 20: Fri. - Sun.

Instant Family (PG-13) ★ Century 16: Fri. - Sun.
Century 20: Fri. - Sun.

The Nutcracker and the Four Realms (PG)
Century 16: Fri. - Sun. Century 20: Fri. - Sun.

The Old Man & the Gun (PG-13)
Palo Alto Square: Fri. & Sat.

The Possession of Hannah Grace (R)
Century 16: Fri. - Sun. Century 20: Fri. - Sun.

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

Robin Hood (2018) (PG-13) Century 16: Fri. - Sun.
Century 20: Fri. - Sun.

Sons of the Desert (1933) (Not Rated)
Stanford Theatre: Fri. - Sun.

Way Out West (1937) (Not Rated)
Stanford Theatre: Fri. - Sun.

Widows (R) Century 16: Fri. - Sun.
Century 20: Fri. - Sun.

*ShowPlace Icon movie times were not available by the Voice's press deadline.

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.

Goings On

MOUNTAIN VIEW VOICE

HIGHLIGHT

SMUIN PRESENTS 'THE CHRISTMAS BALLET'

Smuin kicks off the holidays with the return of "The Christmas Ballet," the Bay Area tradition featuring two acts with classical ballet and contemporary numbers. Dec. 5-9, times vary. \$25-\$86. Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro St., Mountain View. smuinballet.org

THEATER

'A Conversation with Edith Head' Award-winning actress Susan Claassen stars in the Bay Area premiere of "A Conversation With Edith Head." The show features behind-the-scenes stories about Hollywood stars that provide an intimate portrait of Hollywood's legendary costume designer. Dec. 6-16, times vary. \$15-\$35. The Pear Theatre, 1110 La Avenida St., Mountain View. thepear.org

'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

'Into the Woods' Los Altos Stage Company will show a production of "Into the Woods," a musical that combines the stories of several fairy-tale characters to show what happened after the movies ended. Through Dec. 23, times vary. \$20-\$41. Bus Barn Theater, 97 Hillview Ave., Los Altos. losaltosstage.org/into-the-woods

TheatreWorks Silicon Valley Presents 'The Santaland Diaries' TheatreWorks Silicon Valley presents the holiday-themed "The Santaland Diaries," returning to the 180-seat Lohman Theatre. Written by David Sedaris, directed by Jeffrey Lo and starring Max Tachis, this show will have a limited three-week run in Los Altos Hills. Dec. 5-23, times vary. \$45, discounts available for students and subscribers. Lohman Theatre, 12345 S. El Monte Road, Los Altos Hills. theatreworks.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

Sound Anatomy: 'World Fusion' Sound Anatomy mixes traditional sounds with modern grooves and fuses diverse musical cultures. The group features Ruth Parry (CSMA faculty member, guitar), as well as drum, bass and percussion performers. Dec. 2, 2-3:30 p.m. Free. Community School of Music and Arts, 230 San Antonio Circle, Mountain View. arts4all.org/events

Bach Magnificat Soli Deo Gloria presents the Bach Magnificat with Orchestra Gloria, featuring Christmas movements with Allen Simon conducting. Also included: "In terra pax" by Gerald Finzi, A Carol Symphony by James Bassi and Christmas carol favorites. Dec. 2, 3:30-5:30 p.m. \$25-\$30, free for children. Grace Lutheran Church, Palo Alto, 3149 Waverley St., Palo Alto. sdgloria.org/soli-deo-gloria-concerts

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.

Golden State Youth Orchestra The Golden State Youth Orchestra, El Camino Wind Orchestra and Galbraith Honor Strings perform in their first concert of the season. Dec. 2, 6:45 p.m. \$10-\$15. Oshman Family JCC, 3921 Fabian Way, Palo Alto. gsyomusic.org/events

Golden State Youth Orchestra Beginning Ensembles Fall Concert The Golden State Youth Orchestra Chamber Players and Camerata Orchestras perform in their first concert of the season. Dec. 2, 5 p.m. \$10-\$15. Oshman Family JCC, 3921 Fabian Way, Palo Alto. gsyomusic.org/events

'The Joy of Christmas' Assyrian vocalists will perform Christmas choral arrangements and carols in the grand ballroom of the Morgan Estate. There will also be art exhibits, including a depiction of Assyrian villages and royal palace landscapes. Dec. 2, 5-8 p.m. \$250. Historic Morgan Estate, 12335 Stonebrook Court, Los Altos Hills. Search brownpapertickets.com for more info.

Ragazzi Continuo Presents 'An English Christmas' This holiday season, Ragazzi Continuo, the adult a cappella choir composed of graduates of the Ragazzi Boys Chorus, brings Bay Area audiences "An English Christmas." This holiday series takes listeners on a tour through the Anglican canon. Dec. 2, 2 p.m. \$15-\$25. First Presbyterian Church, 1140 Cowper St., Palo Alto. ragazzicontinuo.org/2018-holiday-season

Wintersongs with Kitka Wintersongs is Kitka's winter holiday program showcasing seasonal music from a wide variety of Eastern European ethnic and spiritual traditions. Dec. 2, 4-6 p.m. \$15-\$140. St. Bede's Episcopal Church, 2650 Sand Hill Road, Menlo Park. 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.

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, including industries, buildings, bridges, trestles and tunnels. Dec. 1, 1-5 p.m. Free, donations appreciated. South end of



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 Menlo Park Caltrain station, 1090 Merrill St., Menlo Park. wbmrra.ning.com

MUSEUMS & EXHIBITS

Kahlil Joseph: 'BLKNWS' Kahlil Joseph, a visiting artist in the new Presidential Residences on the Future of the Arts program, is presenting his work "BLKNWS," a two-channel video projection that is displayed at the Cantor now, at the Cantor Arts Center. The two-channel broadcast blurs the lines between art, journalism, entrepreneurship and cultural critique. Through June 16, times vary. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 328 Lomita Drive at Museum Way, Stanford. museum.stanford.edu/exhibitions

'Painting Nature in the American Gilded Age' The Cantor Arts Center's newest exhibition will consider how nature was depicted by American artists from the 1880s to 1910, an era of unprecedented industrialization and urban development. Through landscapes, portraits and still lifes, the exhibition will delve into the importance of nature for artists and the public. Through Aug. 25, times vary. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 328 Lomita Drive at Museum Way, Stanford. museum.stanford.edu/exhibitions

'Vintage Toys: It's Child's Play!' The museum will be showing a variety of antique toys that belonged to children in the past. This exhibition will cover the origins of playtime, toy factories, toy trains, builder toys and more. This exhibit aims to evoke childhood memories over the decades. Through Feb. 17, times vary. Free. Museum of American Heritage, 351 Homer Ave., Palo Alto.

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

Juana Briones Juana Briones was a 19th century woman who overcame personal, economic and political struggles

to become a successful entrepreneur, healer, advocate and landowner. The Los Altos History Museum brings her story to awareness in its bilingual exhibit "Inspired by Juana: La Doña de la Frontera." Through March 31, Thursdays-Sundays, noon-4 p.m. Free. Los Altos History Museum, 51 S. San Antonio Road, Los Altos.

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

BayLUG's 15th Annual Holiday Show BayLUG's 15th Annual Holiday Show will be showcasing holiday scenes in a miniature LEGO city. This event is family friendly. Dec. 7-Jan. 13, Fridays-Sundays, 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m. \$3. Museum of American Heritage, 351 Homer Ave., Palo Alto.

DANCE

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

TALKS & LECTURES

'Historic Bay Area Visionaries' Local author Robin Chapman discusses her new book "Historic Bay Area Visionaries." Robin Chapman is a longtime journalist who is a Los Altos native. She writes for a number of local publications and serves on the board of the Los Altos History Museum. Dec. 4, 7-8 p.m. Free. Los Altos Library, 13 S. San Antonio Road, Los Altos.

SPORTS

Palo Alto Senior Table Tennis: Free and Fun Exercise The Palo Alto Senior Table Tennis Club invites seniors 55 and older to bring a racket and pair of tennis shoes to play table tennis. Every Tuesday, 10 a.m.-2 p.m. Free,

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Cell (408) 888-7748
jgonzalez@interorealestate.com
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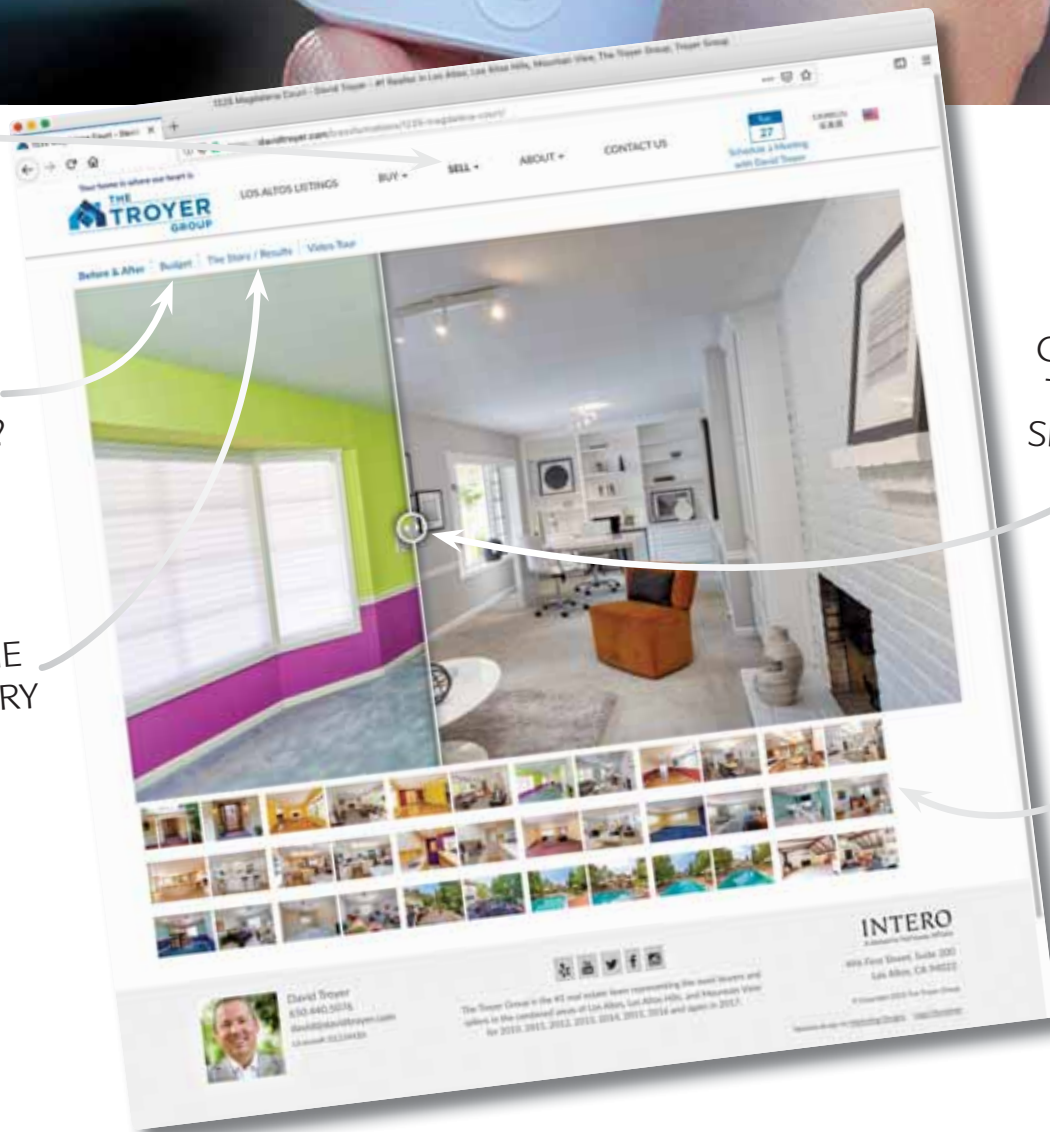
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