

Mountain View VOICE

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MOVIES | 20



MAGALI GAUTHIER

Protesters both for and against cannabis retail shops being allowed to open in Mountain View filled the City Council Chambers at a March 5 meeting. The council ended up tightening its rules for pot shops.

Year in review: City pulls a U-turn

MOUNTAIN VIEW CHARTS NEW COURSE BUT FINDS FAMILIAR TRAVAILS

By Mark Noack

It depends on your outlook. For some, 2019 will be remembered as the year that politics in Mountain View finally sobered up after years of clumsy policies and

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

wishy-washy rhetoric, and dealt with the serious realities of its challenges.

But those on the other side

see the new city leadership as uncompassionate, uninspired and inclined to turn the city into a carbon copy of its neighbors.

From either perspective, 2019

► See **CITY 2019**, page 12

Facing closure due to chemical contamination, Tied House calls it quits

By Elena Kadwany

Mountain View's long-standing brewpub, Tied House, abruptly closed over the weekend after owner Louis Jemison received "disappointing" news about a lengthy, required closure due to contamination from a past chemical spill.

Jemison said he plans to retire and will not reopen the brewpub, which has operated at 954 Villa

St. since 1988.

Decades ago, the building housed a dry cleaning business, which used two potentially dangerous chemical agents, tetrachloroethylene (PCE) and trichloroethylene (TCE), according to the California Department of Toxic Substances Control. The building tested positive for the chemicals, which they believed was limited to an area in the brewery's alleyway and was not at a level that

would be dangerous to the public, Jemison said. An investigation and plans for remediation started in October, with Tied House expected to remain open during the process. But on Dec. 20, it was discovered that two additional areas — where the restaurant's main sewer line runs — also need to be excavated, Jemison said he was told by his landlord, M & J

► See **TIED HOUSE**, page 8

Mountain View's biggest crime stories of 2019

DEADLY RAMPAGE AT RANCHO SAN ANTONIO, AUTO BURGLARIES CLIMB, TRAIL ATTACK SUSPECT CAUGHT, CHILD MOLESTERS TAKE PLEA DEALS

By Kevin Forestieri

Major criminal cases involving assault, rape and murder charges rattled Mountain View and neighboring cities in 2019, some of which involved the targeting of strangers. It was also a year where, like other Bay Area cities, property crime and thefts from vehicles spiked to unprecedented levels.

But the year also brought closure to some of the top cases in Mountain View. A man accused of having sex with a 12-year-old girl pleaded no contest to molestation charges; a tutor volunteering at the Sanyu Learning Center took a guilty plea on molesting two boys; and Mountain View police underwent a herculean effort to nab prolific auto burglars believed to have stolen from 11 vehicles in Mountain View and neighboring cities over the span of two months.

Still, Mountain View's only murder case in the last four years has yet to be resolved. Debate over the mental competency of the man accused of killing a disabled man downtown in 2017 hangs in the balance, with no resolution anticipated until next summer.

Auto burglaries worsen

The city of Mountain View reeled from a rapid rise in reported thefts from vehicles, with data from the police department showing thieves are increasingly targeting unattended cars in busy parking lots in hopes of nabbing valuable belongings inside.

The latest data shows that there have been 876 reported auto burglaries in Mountain View for

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

2019, already a more than 40% increase over the 622 cases last year.

In incidents where there is security footage, the thefts are often quick smash-and-grab operations: Suspects show up, break a window and grab whatever they can before fleeing the area.

Parking lots at the In-N-Out Burger on N. Rengstorff Avenue and the Century Cinema 16 on Shoreline Boulevard, both situated next to Highway 101 for a quick getaway, have been frequently targeted in years past, and 2019 was no different. The big divergence is the scourge of thefts from vehicles parked in the downtown area, which increased substantially over prior years. One business owner in downtown Mountain View told the *Voice* that his car was broken into four times in the same downtown parking lot in the span of four months.

The steep rise in thefts began three years ago. In 2016, there was an average of about one auto burglary case each day — 342 cases in total — which grew by a staggering 62% to 555 cases in 2017. Other cities, including Palo Alto and Sunnyvale, are also reporting a recent increase in car break-ins.

The Mountain View Police Department, for its part, has been responding to the trend with increased patrols in targeted areas, including the downtown. Though notoriously difficult to investigate, the

► See **CRIME 2019**, page 13

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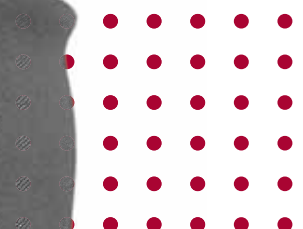
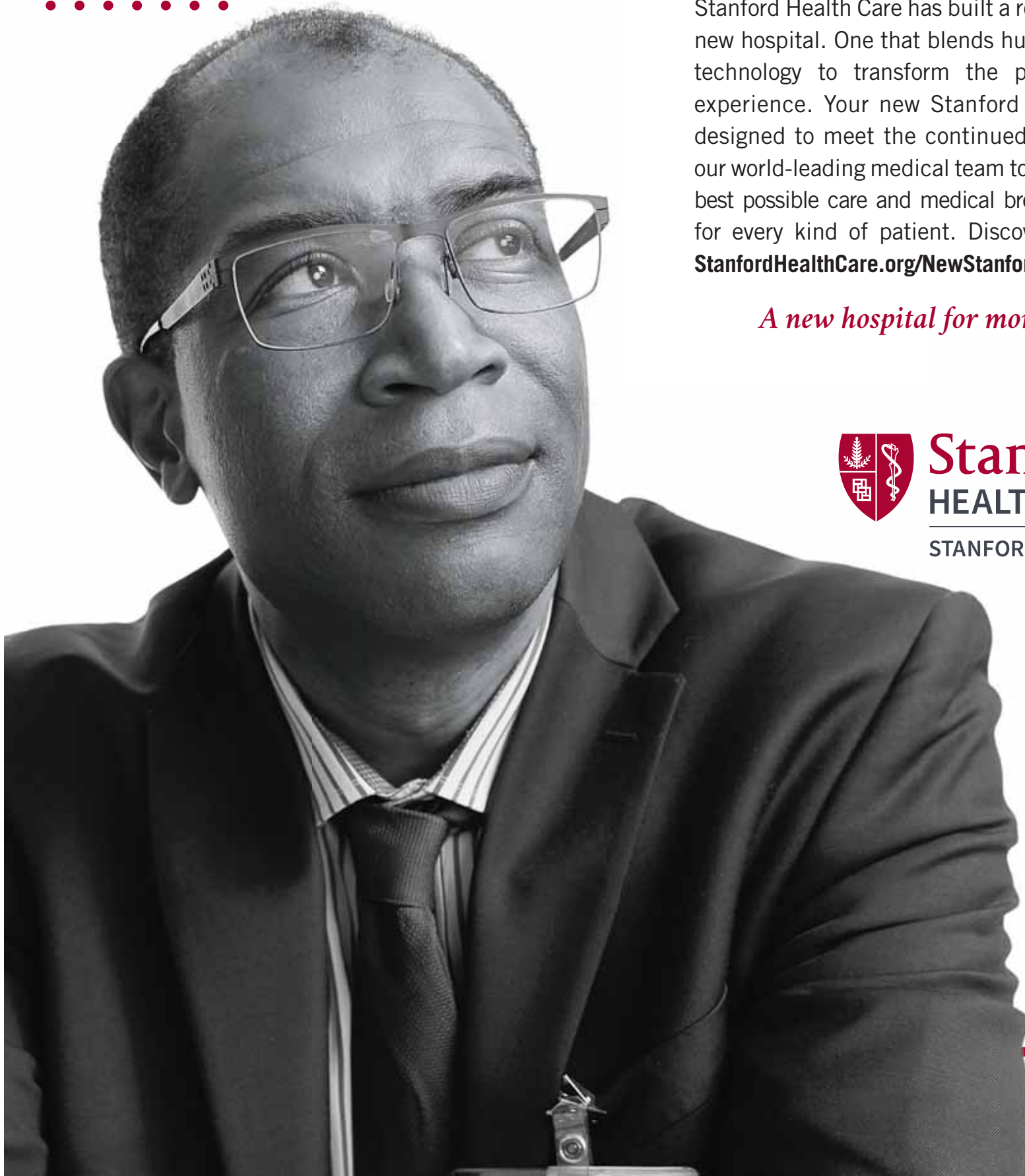
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COURTESY OF ESTATE OF PABLO PICASSO/
ARTISTS RIGHTS SOCIETY

Examples of Pablo Picasso's work, on view through Feb. 16 at Pace Gallery, include "Femme la Main sur une Cle" (Woman with Hand on a Key).

PICASSO IN PALO ALTO

Pace Palo Alto is not a large gallery space, but it has been expertly and imaginatively transformed with each exhibition. For the current show, "Seeing Picasso: Maker of the Modern," the gallery has become very museum-like, with a light barrier drapery in the front window, security guards and an optional audio guide. The reason for such formality is Pablo Picasso — perhaps the most famous modern artist and a name familiar to most, either because of his art or his turbulent private life.

"Seeing Picasso" (on view until Feb. 16) is a mini-retrospective, with paintings, drawings, ceramics and sculptures from the entire arc of the artist's long and prolific career. It's an opportunity to view seldom-seen works from private collections, as well as examples of his work that would ordinarily require a trip to New York City.

"Marc Glimcher, president and CEO of Pace Gallery, has worked on this show for 18 months," explained Elizabeth Sullivan, Pace Palo Alto president. "He really wanted to bring Picasso to Palo Alto and we are thrilled that the lenders also wanted to do a show here."

Information about the artist is imparted in the entry gallery by means of an illustrated timeline that details all of the major events during the life of Picasso (1881-1973). It is a remarkable chronology of a man who came from humble beginnings in Malaga, Spain, and was, from the outset, a child prodigy. As a young man, he settled in Paris, endured two world wars, poverty and the derision of critics. He eventually

became a leader in several of the most important avant-garde art movements that informed modern art as we know it today.

The second and third galleries are installed in chronological order, allowing the viewer to fully grasp the well-known periods that delineate Picasso's work. His early work, characterized by his training in the classical approach to representation, is exemplified by "Lola with a Doll" (1896) and "The Dead Casagamas" (1901). Both are true-to-life portraits, undertaken in a realistic style.

Several charcoal drawings of women reflect the artist's transition from realism to abstraction. By 1910, he had begun to fracture the human form, as can be seen in "Standing Woman." This would be the beginning of his "analytical cubism" phase, with monochromatic canvasses full of overlapping forms. "Bust of a Man" (1912) is a study in geometry and how the artist strove to draw the figure from multiple angles.

It has been noted that Picasso's style changed dramatically with each of his love affairs. There are extraordinary examples of Picasso paying homage to wives and lovers here, beginning with a sweet portrait of Marie-Therese Walter. She is painted in an almost childlike manner, with pastel colors and the hint of a smile. In contrast, "Woman with Hand on a Key" (1938) depicts photographer Dora Maar in strong shades of green and purple, her facial features disjointed. "Seated Woman" (1949) is a portrait of Francoise Gilot, the mother of two of Picasso's children and the only woman to have ever left him. Her face is sketchily drawn, while her body is a bulbous blue shape. The overlapping forms suggest the outlines of an ochre-colored chair, with just enough detail for the mind to fill in the gaps.

There is a lot to take in here, including an audio-visual tour narrated by Stanford University professor Alexander Nemerov, which perhaps warrants multiple visits. Noted Sullivan, "Because there are so many pieces in this small space, we want you to keep coming back."

"Seeing Picasso: Maker of the Modern" runs through Feb. 16 at the Pace Gallery, 229 Hamilton Ave., Palo Alto. Gallery is open Tuesday-Saturday from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. The exhibit is free. Go to pacegallery.com/exhibitions/seeing-picasso/ to learn more.

—Sheryl Nonnenberg

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■ COMMUNITY BRIEFS

UNION WORKERS, COUNTY OFFICIALS FAIL TO REACH AGREEMENT

After entering into voluntary mediation Oct. 31, Santa Clara County and its union workers have ended discussions without resolving ongoing monthslong negotiations for new contracts.

"Jeff Smith, under the direction of the Board of Supervisors, has for months ridiculed and undermined efforts of frontline workers to reach an equitable agreement that puts forth long-term solutions to the staffing crisis impacting our residents' ability to obtain critical services," Janet Diaz, chapter president of Service Employees International Union Local 521, said in a statement Dec. 19.

The union has for months been negotiating with the county for new contracts to include higher wages and promises to fill open positions in understaffed offices and departments throughout the county.

Following the county's last offer to the union on Oct. 15, workers authorized strikes throughout the county's many government buildings and medical offices.

"The Board's stance is not about sustainability — it's about a total lack of respect for the county's lowest paid workers and for the residents who don't get the level of service they need because of the high number of vacancies that result from inadequate pay for the jobs we do," Diaz said.

The union said it will refrain from strikes and continue labor negotiations into the new year.

"We remain willing to continue negotiations to reach a fair agreement on the terms of a collective bargaining agreement. We also will continue to insist that the many outstanding unfair labor practices which the County has committed be remedied," Diaz said. "We will voluntarily commit to refrain from calling a strike until further notice and such notice will not be given prior to Friday January 10."

HOMELESS DEATHS INCREASE IN 2019

Of the more than 9,700 homeless people estimated living in Santa Clara County in 2019, at least 161 died in between Nov. 30 last year

► See **COMMUNITY BRIEFS**, page 14

■ POLICE LOG

AUTO BURGLARY

Springer Rd., 12/16
Hope St. & Villa St., 12/16
Bryant St., 12/16
Bryant St., 12/16
Villa St., 12/16
N. Shoreline Blvd., 12/17
Charleston Rd., 12/17
Charleston Rd., 12/18
Mercy St., 12/18

BATTERY

N. Shoreline Blvd., 12/13
Castro St. & Villa St., 12/19

BATTERY WITH SERIOUS INJURY

Villa St., 12/15

BRANDISHING A WEAPON

Isabella Av., 12/13

COMMERCIAL BURGLARY

Bryant St., 12/15

CORPORAL INJURY TO SPOUSE

San Antonio Rd., 12/10

CRIMINAL THREATS

Park Dr., 12/17

DRIVING UNDER THE INFLUENCE

Ada Av. & Minaret Av., 12/10
W. El Camino Real, 12/14

GRAND THEFT

N. Rengstorff Av., 12/10
San Antonio Rd., 12/12
Castro St., 12/13
Showers Drive., 12/13
Grant Rd., 12/16
Pear Av., 12/16
Walker Dr., 12/19

IDENTITY THEFT

San Antonio Rd., 12/11

RESIDENTIAL BURGLARY

Franklin St., 12/10

ROBBERY

Showers Dr., 12/11

STOLEN VEHICLE

Astro St. & Sonia Way, 12/12
California St., 12/17

VANDALISM

800 block Latham St., 12/17
Moffett Blvd., 12/19

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MAGALI GAUTHIER

Amy Steinmann, a ceramics teacher, explains to students what to do with their slabs of clay at the Community School of Arts and Music on Dec. 19. CSMA is one of seven local nonprofits that benefit from donations to the Voice's Holiday Fund.

CSMA offers a beacon of arts in a tech-centric world

NONPROFIT STAYS TRUE TO ITS EGALITARIAN ROOTS OF 'ARTS FOR ALL'

By Mark Noack

Back in the 1940s, Natalie Werbner was a young girl living in Boston who wanted to take music lessons. Her family had recently immigrated from Russia and didn't have much money, but there was still one option available to her. It was a settlement house, a progressive co-op school that offered arts and music instruction for anyone, rich or poor, immigrant or native-born.

As Werbner later explained it, she never forgot how the school provided her an opportunity



when all the other doors were closed. About 30 years later, that memory served as an inspiration to her when she was living in the Bay Area and helped launch the Mountain View Community School of Music and Arts (CSMA). It started rather modestly with outdoor classes held in the backyard of a rented house, but today the organization has expanded to

teach over 30,000 students per year, making it the largest arts institution of its kind in the area.

"I thought that there should be schools like this all over the country," Werbner said in an interview earlier this year. "It's astounding how much the organization has grown. It's so important to pass the torch along."

CSMA is one of seven nonprofit organizations serving Mountain View residents that benefit from the Voice's annual

► See **CSMA**, page 7

Vehicle dwellers leery of safe parking program

CITY SEES FEW SIGN-UPS; HOMELESS ADVOCATES CITE LIMITED HOURS, RULES

By Mark Noack

Safe parking lots? Check. Entitlements? Check. People who will sign up? That's a no.

After crossing off everything on the list, Mountain View is ready to dramatically expand its safe parking program as an alternative for those camping out on public streets. But they're missing one important thing — people who actually want to use the lots.

As the city prepares to launch space to take in up to 70 vehicles, it is having trouble finding participants willing to resettle there. After weeks of outreach, only 13 people have agreed to sign up for overnight parking, according to officials from the Community Services Agency (CSA).

That number pales in comparison to the hundreds of inhabited vehicles parked along streets across the city. The safe parking expansion comes as city officials are preparing to roll out new parking restrictions that would heavily restrict where large lived-in vehicles like RVs and trailers can park. As part of that plan, these inhabited vehicles are expected to relocate over to the safe parking lots.

One primary reason why there are so few sign-ups is the city's requirements, according to case workers and people living out of their vehicles. In particular, many sources highlighted the city's overnight-only rule that restricts safe parking sites to

operate only from 5 p.m. to 9 a.m. During the day, safe parking residents are required to move their vehicles to somewhere off-site.

For anyone living out of their car, this requirement is a non-starter, said Janet Stevens, an RV resident and member of the Vehicle Residents advocacy group. This would mean each RV resident has to relocate their vehicle twice each day and find street parking during the daytime hours. It's a rule that is counter-productive and burdensome, she said, estimating that it takes at least an hour just to find parking under normal circumstances, not counting the time needed to pack up and get ready.

"For RV people, this is just not a well-crafted plan, and it's just not feasible for many reasons," Stevens said. "It's not as easy as it sounds to move your car twice a day in a moment's notice. For me, it would be impossible."

As Mountain View officials were reviewing rules for safe parking lots, homeless advocates repeatedly warned that the overnight-only restrictions would turn away many people. But city officials say they have little choice in the matter.

City attorneys claim Mountain View could be legally liable for operating the equivalent of a mobile home or RV park if it didn't enforce temporary hours of operation. If city leaders wanted to change this rule, attorneys

► See **SAFE PARKING**, page 7

Local schools grappled with unusual challenges in 2019

DISTRICTS KEPT BUSY WITH CHARTER SCHOOL CONTENTION, HOUSING GROWTH AND RISING COST OF LIVING

By Kevin Forestieri

The headlines throughout 2019 painted a curious picture for Mountain View's local schools. One district weighed whether to house homeless students in a makeshift RV park in one of its middle school parking lots, while another eventually succeeded in buying a large chunk of a commercial shopping center and now owns a gym and a department store.

2019 YEAR IN REVIEW

District officials talked of building compact, tall urban schools in a previously suburban city; delving into the world of workforce housing for staff members struggling to make ends meet; and even found themselves negotiating directly with one of the most powerful companies in the world over the

future of school funding in a rapidly growing city.

Taken altogether, schools in Mountain View found themselves forced into public policy debates and grappling with regional problems that extend far beyond the classroom. The uncharted waters meant school board trustees and top staff had to bridge communication gaps and learn to work with unusual allies. Some of those relationships remain tenuous

and problematic heading into 2020.

But 2019 also proved to be a year of resolution. The promise of teacher housing is now closer to reality than before, a new school was opened and a comprehensive redesign of public school attendance boundaries changed the educational landscape of the city. Mountain View also saw the swift rise and fall of an effort to launch a new charter school, Bullis Mountain View,

which built momentum late last year only to fall apart in the spring.

Growing pains

For the past five years, Mountain View's city politics have been dominated by the topic of housing affordability, with the prevailing view that more housing — from small apartments

► See **SCHOOLS 2019**, page 11



Mountain View Voice

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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 150 Voice readers and the Wakerly, Packard and Hewlett foundations contributed a total of \$72,000. 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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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.

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.

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.

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CSMA

► Continued from page 5

Holiday Fund. Donations are divided equally among the non-profits and are administered by the Silicon Valley Community Foundation at no cost, so 100% of contributions go to the recipients.

The music and arts school has come a long way over the last 50 years, but it has never strayed from its mission to teach the creative arts to those who otherwise wouldn't have that opportunity. While CSMA normally charges anywhere from \$200 to \$350 for classes, the faculty strongly promotes financial aid programs. Over the last year, the school granted \$545,000 in scholarships and other aid, which CSMA administrators say is an unprecedented amount.

On a Thursday afternoon visit, the school's hub at the Finn Center off of San Antonio Road was a scene of activity as students zipped around for their after-school lessons. The corridors at the center were filled with the echoes of youngsters at drum lessons and choral recitals. For her ceramics class, arts teacher Amy Steinmann was teaching a group of elementary-school age students how to make holiday mugs with penguins and polar bears.

Each year the school offers more than 500 arts and music classes, most of which are geared toward adolescents. Over the years, CSMA has expanded its scope, teaching off-campus classes at tech companies and providing arts and music education to K-8 students in Santa Clara and San Mateo county public schools, including



MAGALI GAUTHIER

James carves penguins into clay during a ceramics class at the Community School of Music and Arts in Mountain View.

the Mountain View Whisman district.

CSMA is also making efforts to broaden the age range of its students. The directors point out they have more senior citizens participating than ever before. In fact, the school featured its first ever senior chorus this year, which included about 20 members, and also introduced its first music classes for babies as young as 3 months.

Looking out the window of the school's boardroom, CSMA executive director Vickie Scott Grove pointed to the nearby towers of new apartments that were sprouting up all around the Finn Center. Parents and their children have a rekindled interest in arts instruction, she said.

"With all this growth, there's been quite an increase in demand for our programs," Grove said. "Compare this to five years ago when it seemed like everyone only wanted to learn about math. Now it seems like the importance of the arts is coming back."

CSMA's facility is currently overwhelmed with more demand that it can handle. Starting next year, the school is planning a \$5 million expansion that would replace a shuttered tire shop next door with a 3,200-square-foot annex.

Perhaps the best kept secret at CSMA is its free concert series, which regularly attracts a lineup of highly acclaimed performers. Earlier this month, the school hosted three-time Grammy winner John Daversa for a free performance of his latest jazz album. Next year, the school plans to host Taylor Eigsti, who has been nominated for multiple Grammy awards and who was previously a student at CSMA. Eigsti's event will showcase his new "crowdsourced jazz composition" that he is creating with suggestions from Bay Area students. Last year, CSMA offered more than 30 free concerts and events. ▀

Email Mark Noack at mnoack@mv-voice.com

SAFE PARKING

► Continued from page 5

suggested that Mountain View should seek state legislation that would grant an exemption. Similar daytime restrictions are enforced by most other cities that operate safe parking lots, including East Palo Alto and San Jose.

There are other reasons why safe parking sites are seeing low sign-ups. Under city rules, anyone residing in a safe parking lot must have a working vehicle that doesn't leak oil, sewage or other hazardous materials. Vehicles must also have current registration and insurance. In many cases, lived-in vehicles fall short of one of these stipulations, CSA officials say.

CSA does provide financial help to people living in vehicles who need repairs or DMV registration. As of this year, the organization reports more than 16 vehicles have been repaired

with its aid.

Another problem is, in many cases, the people who reside in vehicles don't actually own them. City officials say many residents are renting their vehicles, which means they often lack information on insurance and registration.

In any case, CSA officials say the safe parking sign-ups should be expected to come in gradually. More should come as the program ramps up, said Nicole Fargo Nosich, CSA associate director.

"It does take some time to get people prepared to get on the lots," she said. "Like most new initiatives, it can take some time for the word to get out, and others may need to hear feedback from other participants before they decide to enroll."

City officials say they are just about ready to open three new safe parking sites that will dramatically expand their capacity to take in vehicles. These locations

include a city-owned parking lot near Shoreline Amphitheatre at the corner of Crittenden Lane. Under city guidelines, the lot is expected to hold up to 30 RVs or trailers, significantly more than city officials originally expected.

As many as 30 more vehicles could soon be parked at a former VTA parking lot at the now-closed Evelyn light rail station.

It remains unclear exactly when the new safe parking lots will open. ▀

Email Mark Noack at mnoack@mv-voice.com

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LASD finalizes \$155M land deal for new Mountain View school

12-ACRE ACQUISITION CLEARS THE WAY FOR A CAMPUS AT SAN ANTONIO SHOPPING CENTER

By Kevin Forestieri

It's official: The Los Altos School District is now the owner of a large chunk of the San Antonio shopping center, buying it for \$155 million with intent to build a school campus for Mountain View students.

The district finalized the deal with the prior property owner, Federal Realty, on Dec. 11, acquiring 11.7 acres of property near the corner of California Street and Showers Drive from the real estate giant. The transaction puts the school district in an unusual position of becoming the landlord to the JoAnn fabrics store, Kohl's, 24 Hour Fitness and several other smaller tenants on the site.

The purchase caps off an eight-year effort by the school district to

buy land for a new school. Despite the lengthy planning process spanning four school board elections, the district's mission has remained remarkably consistent — make space for students from the rapid residential growth in Mountain View.

"I think the boards had the foresight to look toward the future and take into account housing," Assistant Superintendent Randy Kenyon told the *Voice*. "Looking at the long-term, this makes a lot of sense. The boards should be congratulated."

The mechanics behind the district's deal are remarkably complicated, harnessing a unique way to finance the high cost of land in a way that doesn't decimate the school district's construction budget. In addition to a \$150 million

bond measure passed by voters in 2014, the district is getting \$20 million from the city of Mountain View in exchange for 2 acres of the newly bought land, which will be developed into a park. The city is also chipping in another \$23 million for joint-use open space adjacent to the classroom facilities.

Because a school campus won't fully develop the land to its maximum-allowed density, the district is "selling" other developers the property's remaining density rights to use elsewhere in Mountain View. The so-called transfer of development rights (TDRs) is expected to generate \$79.3 million and is a rare, if not unprecedented, method in the state for raising funds for school construction.

The city's combined \$43 million, the Los Altos district's bond anticipation notes — essentially borrowing against future funds — and \$65 million in Measure N funds were cobbled together to create the \$155 million needed to buy the land, Kenyon said.

Federal Realty released a statement on Thursday, Dec. 19, hailing the sale as a "testament" to the value of its real estate portfolio in Silicon Valley, noting that it controls 140 acres in the region, totaling 2.4 million square feet of commercial space. Unlike the district's announcements, Federal Realty is describing the deal as a sale "under threat of condemnation."

The company originally bought 35 acres of the shopping center in 2015, which includes the district's land and the Walmart site, for \$62.2 million, or about \$1.8 million per acre, according to the statement. The sale price to Los Altos School District amounts to \$13.3 million per acre, more than

seven times what Federal Realty paid four years ago.

Kenyon said the agreement brokered with Federal Realty allows the commercial tenants on the school's portion of the shopping center to stay for three years, during which time the school district will be collecting about \$2.5 million in annual rents. Though that income is entirely unrestricted, Kenyon said he is recommending to the board that the rent money go straight into the district's capital fund.

As for managing the day-to-day operations of fabric stores and gyms, Kenyon said the district isn't getting involved.

"We'll be their landlord essentially, but we're using Federal (Realty) as a property manager," he said. "They're going to still be involved, they will be doing things like taking care of the property and collecting rents."

What kind of school to put on the land has been the subject of fierce debate in recent months and remains a major question hanging over the expensive endeavor to build a campus in Mountain View. Los Altos School District's boundaries extend well outside of the city of Los Altos, including areas of Mountain View in and around the shopping center north of El Camino Real.

For its part, the Mountain View City Council has made clear it wants the school to serve students living in the surrounding neighborhood. Los Altos School District community members are more split, with some advocating that the district move Bullis Charter School to the future Mountain View campus. Bullis is currently housed in portable classrooms across two campuses,

and consolidating the charter school on a single, permanent site has been a priority for more than a decade.

Representatives from the charter school have raised concerns that its more than 1,000 students couldn't reasonably fit on the Mountain View site, nor would the school be located in a place that's convenient for families traveling from throughout the Los Altos district.

A third option, proposed by the district and the charter school in April, would be to relocate Egan Junior High School students to the new Mountain View site starting in 2024, relinquishing the current Egan campus to Bullis Charter School. The idea has proved deeply divisive and lambasted as a mistake by district parents and residents, who feel the proposal was tantamount to losing a neighborhood school to appease Bullis. School board members are tentatively planning to make a decision on the future school site's use by the end of the school year.

In the coming months, Kenyon said the district will be working with the city of Mountain View on a master plan for the site, including where the 2 acres of city-owned parkland will be located and how to orient the school and joint-use facilities. The only real hard deadline the school district has committed to is that sports fields, blacktop space and other recreational amenities will be available for city use by 2024, Kenyon said.

But planning for the property can only go so far, he said, when the school district still hasn't decided what school will be there. ▀

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TIED HOUSE

► Continued from page 1

Land and Equipment Leasing Company. Work had to begin immediately and could take up to nine months to complete.

"We had hoped this would not be the case," Jemison wrote in an email. "But hope gave out on last Friday."

Jemison opened Tied House with Andreas Heller in 1988, inspired by a visit to a microbrewery near Heller's hometown in Germany. It's considered to be Silicon Valley's first microbrewery.

More recently, ownership planned to revitalize the brewpub after city officials rejected a bid by Tied House and the next-door Michelin-starred Chez TJ to build a four-story office building with underground parking and a new restaurant space on their

combined parcels. The plan was also a solution to a directive from the state to clean up the chemicals, Jemison said.

The proposal sparked strong opposition, particularly among residents who railed against the cost of office growth for Mountain View's neighborhoods. The development firm Minkoff Group still could pursue revised plans to redevelop the sites.

Last October, Jemison told the *Voice* that Tied House wasn't going anywhere: "We're going to be here way past my lifetime," he said.

But shifting sands in the craft brewery scene and local economy have changed things. The microbrewery industry has exploded in the decades since Tied House open. Quality beer is more widely available, Jemison noted, while economic pressures

for local restaurants have only mounted.

"Full-service, mid-range pricing is tough to do in Mountain View (or anywhere in the Bay Area) due to the high rents of space, the high rents for employees' living space, the lack of daytime parking, the advent over the past decade and half of food service being available at the large employer campuses ... and so on," he said.

Tied House staff was reportedly given one day's notice of the closure, according to customers who were at the brewpub over the weekend and posted about it on Nextdoor.

Jemison said that "this was not or should not have been a surprise to the Tied House management and crew, only disappointing." ▀

Email Elena Kadvanj at ekadvanj@pawebkly.com

New owners hope to make Linden Tree a community hub

By Jonathan Guillen

When Chris Saccheri found out the beloved Linden Tree Bookstore in Los Altos that had served generations of families for nearly 40 years was in danger of closing down, he knew he had to take action. The owners had put the longtime bookstore on the market twice over the past year, but no buyers had stepped up.

"I didn't want to see this great place where I took my kids to close for good," said the Palo Alto resident. "With no prior book experience, I sent an email to my friend and asked, 'Hey! Want to run a bookstore with me?'"

That friend was Florina Grosskurth, whom he'd previously worked with at LinkedIn. Her answer: yes.

The pair purchased the store at 265 State St. in September and jumped headfirst into the book-selling business.

Neither of the friends had any experience running a bookstore, but both of their circumstances couldn't have been more fitting for the opportunity. After they left LinkedIn, Saccheri became a full-time dad to his three



MAGALI GAUTHIER

Florina Grosskurth and Chris Saccheri are the new owners of Linden Tree Books in Los Altos.

children. Grosskurth, who has two children, went on to run people operations at Wealthfront and started her own consulting business. But she was looking for something that better used her skills in operations and social media, while also having her children around.

Continuing an independent children's bookstore's legacy fit the bill.

With book-loving children of their own, Saccheri and Grosskurth purchased the store with the goal of preserving it as

a community hotspot.

"I think there's still room for bookstores. People are still passionate about reading, and children's books especially lend themselves to be read in a physical form," Saccheri said.

What sets Linden Tree apart from other bookstores is that 80 to 90% of the store's inventory consists of children's titles, with young adult and adult books making up the remainder, Saccheri said.

"We know children's books really well and know what kind

of books to recommend," Saccheri said. "If you were to ask what a 5-year-old into Minecraft would like, we have just the book for them."

Los Altos resident and longtime customer Sue Larraway has frequented Linden Tree ever since she moved to the area in the 1980s. One of the things she likes about the store is its friendly atmosphere and variety of titles.

"I came here with my children when they were younger, and I love that they have a wide selection to choose from," Larraway said. "Now I have nieces and nephews, and I enjoy coming back here for books."

But in the digital age of Kindles and tablets, it takes more than just a good book selection to attract people to the store, Saccheri said. To keep the bookstore relevant, Saccheri said they must do more than just keep their doors open; Linden Tree needs to be a hub for the community.

"The previous owners already did a fantastic job hosting storytimes for kids, author events and in-store fundraisers," Saccheri said. "We want to build on that and become a place for kids to

hang out and learn."

Saccheri said they have plans to develop workshops for children to share their own stories for others to read. This is the next logical step in children's development and serves a double function to promote learning as well as keep people interested in the activities and events going on inside Linden Tree.

We're interested in kids telling their own stories in all the different ways possible, through writing short stories or poems, even drawing or painting," Saccheri said.

Looking forward, Linden Tree aims to increase the number of workshops and author events as well as host children's birthday parties. Additionally, Saccheri revealed plans to bring Linden Tree into schools and campuses through book fairs and other events to promote youth literacy.

"I'm glad the store will remain open because we really need bookstores," said Lisa Orton, a Los Altos resident and mother of two. "I've been coming for years and appreciate the focus on human interactions and getting young people excited about reading." ■



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VTA's All New Service

Starting December 28, 2019



VTA Light Rail Changes

Light Rail will now have three distinct lines, which will be color-coded, and the new Orange Line will connect Downtown Mountain View to the Milpitas Transit Center. During weekday peak hours, service will be every 15 minutes and weekend peak hours will be every 20 minutes.

Orange Line – Alum Rock to Mountain View

- Transfer at Baypointe for the Blue Line
- Transfer at Champion, Lick Mill, Great America or Old Ironsides for the Green Line

Blue Line – Santa Teresa to Baypointe

Green Line – Winchester to Old Ironsides

Other Changes to Light Rail

- The light rail segment from Ohlone/Chynoweth to Oakridge will be discontinued and will now be served by Route 64a.
- I-880/Milpitas station renamed to Alder Station
- Montague Station renamed to Milpitas Station
- New Route 60 will serve SJC, Valley Fair/Santana Row, Downtown Campbell and Milpitas Transit Center.
- Only passengers boarding from SJC will board Route 60 for free.

The Frequent Bus Network

will operate every 15 minutes or better on weekdays between 6:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. and every 15 to 30 minutes on weekends.

Rapid 500	San Jose Diridon Station to Downtown San Jose
Rapid 522	Palo Alto Transit Center to Eastridge Transit Center
Rapid 523	Lockheed Martin Transit Ctr to Berryessa Transit Ctr
Route 22	Palo Alto Transit Center to Eastridge Transit Center
Route 23	De Anza College to Alum Rock Transit Center
Route 25	De Anza College to Alum Rock Transit Center
Route 26	West Valley College to Eastridge Transit Center
Route 57	Old Ironsides Station to West Valley College
Route 60	Milpitas Transit Center to Winchester Transit Center
Route 61	Good Samaritan Hospital to Sierra & Piedmont (via King/Mabury)
Route 64	Almaden & Crown to McKee & White
Route 66	Kaiser San Jose to Milpitas/Dixon Landing Road
Route 68	Gilroy Transit Center to San Jose Diridon Station
Route 70	Eastridge Transit Center to Milpitas Transit Center
Route 72	Senter & Monterey to Downtown San Jose
Route 73	Monterey & Branham to Downtown San Jose
Route 77	Eastridge Transit Center to Milpitas Transit Center



Improved Bus Routes

Route 20	Sunnyvale Caltrain Station to Milpitas Transit Center; 15-minute frequency during commute periods and 30-minute frequency in midday.
Route 21	Stanford Shopping Center to Santa Clara Caltrain station; a merger of Routes 32 and 35 into a single route.
Route 51	Moffett Field to West Valley College; hourly service on weekdays.
Route 56	Lockheed Martin Transit Center to Tamien Station; 30-minute service on weekdays and weekends.
Route 59	Old Ironsides Station to Valley Fair Transit Center; 30-minute frequency on weekdays and hourly on weekends.

Bus Routes that have been discontinued or changed: Bus Routes that have been discontinued or changed: Routes 17, 34, 45, 58, 88; Limited Routes 304, 321, 328 and 330; Express Bus 120, 140, and 180 will be discontinued. Express Bus 181 will continue to operate until BART service opens. Contact VTA for other options.

SCHOOLS 2019

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to rowhouses — and suppression of office growth could prevent skyrocketing rents and displacement of low- and middle-income families.

As a result, the city has 6,638 housing units that are either under construction or in the pipeline as of November, and large swaths of the city have been rezoned to allow up to 15,000 homes on top of that. It was only recently that school officials — from both the Mountain View Whisman and Mountain View-Los Altos High school districts — crunched the numbers and rang alarm bells, saying that they had neither the money nor the land to accommodate thousands of additional students.

Time and again throughout 2019, the City Council grappled with how to address the problem. Demanding concessions from developers can only go so far, as school fees for new facilities could sink the financial feasibility of the housing council members so desperately sought. The existing policy on the books, which is to have school districts and developers work out an agreement on their own as a condition of project approval, hasn't worked either.

The challenge came to a head in November, when Mountain View Whisman Superintendent Ayinde Rudolph candidly told the council that locking school officials in a room with Google and other developers to come up with a funding agreement has been an “unhealthy approach,” and that negotiations with the tech giant have been mired by posturing and a lack of clarity on what constitutes a fair deal.

The Mountain View Whisman school board, for its part, has raised concerns that the offers by Google up until now have been less than ideal. Two properties proposed for school sites include a small 2.5-acre parcel that will likely be neighbors with 15-story buildings towering overhead. But even that was perceived as an improvement: The first proposed school site was located on the fringes of North Bayshore next to the baylands on top of “artificial fill,” raising serious concerns about earthquake safety.

The bright spot is that more classroom space just opened up at a new school. In August, the school district opened the long-awaited Jose Antonio Vargas Elementary School on North Whisman Road, which had been in the works for four years after a lengthy campaign to reopen a school in the neighborhood. Vargas ran into some hiccups early on — it couldn't connect to the electrical grid due to an easement dispute and had to run on a generator



MAGALI GAUTHIER

A homeless Mountain View Whisman student worked on his science homework in the family's motor home on March 8. School district officials briefly considered allowing overnight parking for homeless students and their families at a middle school campus.

for months — but it stands to be a valuable community asset near areas expecting huge population growth from new housing development.

Rise and fall of Bullis Mountain View

From the outset of 2019, the idea that Mountain View would be home to a new charter school felt like a given. A new effort acting as an extension of Bullis Charter School, dubbed Bullis Mountain View (BMV), sent off a charter petition to the Mountain View Whisman School District that was impossible to stop.

State laws — which have been modestly revised since then — made clear that BMV had a right to open a charter school if it met all the statutory requirements, which it did, and couldn't be impeded or blocked on the basis of public protest alone. The charter was approved last December, but only with extraordinary reluctance and a sense of frustration on the part of Mountain View Whisman trustees and school staff.

In a fiery speech at the meeting, Rudolph condemned BMV for ramming through the approval process without community buy-in, and argued it would lead to teacher layoffs and a loss of instructional programs.

The critical decision that would determine the fate of the charter school was not fiery rhetoric, however, but a decision by the board of trustees to approve the charter with a series of conditions. The approval vote mandated that BMV have an enrollment preference for low-income kids; use the same student assessments as the district; and exceed the district's test scores “for all pupil subgroups by not less than 5%.”

BMV officials argued that the demands were untenable at best

and illegal at worst, and communication between the charter school and the school district went from consistent correspondence to infrequent legal letters. The school district, citing a lack of progress in meeting the board's conditions of approval, started laying the groundwork in April to revoke the charter. BMV representatives, for their part, said the conditional approval was tantamount to a denial of the charter school, and that it would not participate in an “ill-conceived ‘revocation’ exercise.”

The effort was officially snuffed out on June 13, when the board voted 4-0 to revoke the charter.

Major milestones in teacher housing

Though the intensity of the housing crisis is most apparent when it displaces low-income families or boosts the number of homeless residents living on the streets, city and school district officials alike have warned that there's a quiet contingent of middle-income families who are barely getting by.

Teachers, in particular, have garnered public attention as employees who serve the vital purpose of educating the next generation, yet cannot afford to live remotely close to where they work. Many are described as the “missing middle,” residents who make too much to qualify for subsidized housing but too little to make ends meet. Many teachers report that they are prepared to migrate out of the Bay Area or quit the profession entirely, and cost of living is a primary factor.

But 2019 marked the beginning of two significant efforts to put a dent in the problem. Mountain View Whisman made headlines throughout the Bay Area for a landmark deal in

which it would lease and operate 144 units of below-market-rate housing for teachers and staff. The deal involves a three-way partnership with the district, the city of Mountain View and the developer FortBay, where the district would pitch in \$56 million in exchange for control over a portion of the project's 716-apartment complex at 777 W. Middlefield Road.

The origins of the district's ambitious housing plans can be traced back to 2017, when the district considered where it could place a teacher housing facility without going broke. A consultant report showed that the best option would be to place three-story townhouses on district-owned land at Cooper Park.

The idea was extremely unpopular with Waverly Park neighborhood residents living in the area, and green “Save Cooper Park” signs became a permanent fixture in front yards throughout the area. District officials and school board members backed off the idea of developing the land, working with the city to find alternatives. As a condition of the 144-unit teacher housing project on Middlefield, the district signed an agreement to the city guaranteeing Cooper Park would not be developed for purposes unrelated to education.

Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian spent 2019 forging an agreement between local school districts to create teacher housing in Palo Alto, which can be used by teachers in the Mountain View Whisman, Los Altos and Mountain View-Los Altos High school districts. The proposed project, which will be located on county-owned land next to the North County courthouse, will have between 90 and 120 units that will be exclusively available to teachers and school staff.

LASD decision hangs in the balance

The Los Altos School District wrapped up a year and a half of complex real estate negotiations when it purchased 11.7 acres of land for a new school site for \$155 million this month.

The land, located in the San Antonio shopping center, is currently home to several commercial tenants including JoAnn fabrics, Kohl's, and a 24 Hour Fitness. Along with the eye-popping price tag, the district is now the landlord of these businesses and will collect about \$2.5 million each year in rent before giving tenants the boot to prepare for construction.

Despite finalizing the deal, district officials concede that the hard work is still ahead of them in 2020. The school board has yet to decide what kind of school to put on the future Mountain View campus, and past proposals have been met with severe blowback from the community. A proposal by the board in April to relocate Egan Junior High School to the yet-to-be-built school at the corner of Showers Drive and California Street prompted swift backlash from the community, leading board members to table the idea.

The decision will have a profound implications on the relationship between the district and Bullis Charter School. The charter school's leadership has long fought for a single, consolidated campus in a centrally located spot in the district, but has long opposed being moved to the Mountain View site. The charter school's board of directors swiftly endorsed the plan to move Egan to the San Antonio shopping center site, which would grant the charter school nearly exclusive use of the current Egan school facilities.

During the fall, the district hosted an aggressive public outreach campaign to solicit feedback on what to do with the new school site, including workshops that attracted hundreds. The goal, according to trustees leading the effort, was to put all options on the table and provide the community with as much information as possible to make an informed vote. At one of the workshops, 62% of those polled said they opposed the idea of moving Egan to Mountain View.

The plan is for the district's consultant, MIG, to pull together a report on all the community feedback and present it to the school board on Jan. 27. The hope is that the board can narrow the list of options and agree on what to do with the newly bought real estate by the end of the 2019-20 school year. ■

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CITY 2019

► Continued from page 1

was a year in which Mountain View pulled a U-turn, reversing a string of policies and priorities that might have seemed lovely a few years ago, but now appeared fraught with risks. On rent control, homelessness, retail cannabis and other issues, Mountain View officials came to question, if not overturn, many decisions made by their predecessors.

Homelessness

Perhaps no other issue has been as divisive this year as homelessness. Emboldened by a 2018 election in which two incumbents lost their seats, a newly reformed City Council perceived a mandate from voters to do something about the surging number of homeless people living on the street. With many of the city's streets transformed into ad-hoc campgrounds for people living out of their cars or RVs, many residents blamed the city's inaction for drawing homeless people to Mountain View.

Over the course of the year, council members tried to clamp down by enacting citywide parking restrictions while working to open several new overnight safe parking sites. What resulted was a series of heated meetings that brought out dozens of homeless people who described the city's actions as draconian, saying they had no options for securing housing.

The city went forward with enacting tougher parking rules, but it created a difficult balancing act. Under threat of a civil rights lawsuit, city attorneys expunged any mention of homelessness in the parking restrictions, and instead the crackdown was recast as a traffic safety measure. Rather than



SAMMY DALLAL

RVs and trailers line Crisanto Avenue in Mountain View on Oct. 22. The City Council voted to ban oversized vehicles such as RVs from most city streets, prompting a citizen referendum to overturn it.

banning inhabited vehicles, the city reframed its ordinance to encompass all large vehicles parking on narrow streets.

The carrot to that stick — designated safe parking lots where people can legally stay — has not materialized yet. The city's plan to launch 70 safe parking spaces has remained in a holding pattern for nearly a month, and it has suffered from limited participation.

Meanwhile, the city's parking restrictions have prompted a political backlash as opponents gathered signatures to overturn it through a referendum. As it stands now, the city could be forced in early 2020 to bring the matter to voters for a decision.

Rent control

In contrast, things appeared surprisingly calm when it came to rent control, which has

typically been the city's most stormy issue.

For most of 2019, the city's Community Stabilization and Fair Rent Act (CSFRA) entered an eerie equilibrium. Rental Housing Committee meetings were shorter and more subdued. A new set of appointees to the committee seemed less combative, more willing to work together. Additionally, the city's CSFRA program was operating on a leaner budget, cutting its costs by more than a third, which meant lower fees for apartment owners.

But this period of calm may have been just the eye of the hurricane, because there was still plenty of discontent beneath the surface. City officials acknowledged that many landlords are simply declining to pay the city's annual apartment fees, which fund the rent control program.

For many politicians and property owners, chipping away at rent control is still the No. 1 priority. A ballot measure put forward by the California Apartment Association, a lobbying group for landlords, would essentially overturn rent control if it passes. That measure, "The Mountain View Homeowner, Renter, and Taxpayer Protection Initiative," was originally submitted to the city in 2018, but it missed a deadline to get on the ballot that November. That measure is now slated to come to voters in November.

City Council members decided to bring their own proposed changes to voters. In an effort led by Councilwoman Margaret Abe-Koga, elected leaders spent much of the year drafting a wish list of rent control tweaks that they packaged as a

ballot measure. In general, their changes would inject flexibility, giving the council more authority over rent control and allowing landlords to pass through more costs to tenants through rent increases. It is scheduled to come before voters in March.

While 2019 saw efforts advance to undo rent control in Mountain View, the opposite trend was playing out across the rest of California. At the state Capitol, legislators approved California's first rent control law as a direct response to the demand for solutions amid the state's housing crisis.

Statewide issues

Aside from rent control, many other statewide issues came home for Mountain View residents.

Early in the year, the possibility of recreational cannabis shops sucked the air out of the room for a series of combative City Council meetings. In public hearings, a large and coordinated opposition group pressured city leaders not to grant any foothold for recreational pot shops to get established in town.

This backlash came as Mountain View was set to be one of the only Peninsula cities that would allow retail cannabis shops. Among her first actions in office, Councilwoman Ellen Kamei asked to revisit the process in order to further restrict where cannabis shops could be located.

What resulted was another delay in the city's efforts to create local policies for a state law approved back in 2016. While 10 business owners had

already signed leases and submitted extensive paperwork to get permits to open cannabis shops in Mountain View, their applications were either rejected or invalidated because city officials rewrote their policies mid-process.

As of this fall, city officials decided to open a new round of applications for up to three cannabis delivery businesses to open in Mountain View. As of this month, city officials say one business has applied.

Mountain View also tightened its restrictions on short-term rentals, such as Airbnb. The rules were a long time coming, and companies like Airbnb had faced minimal taxes or scrutiny in Mountain View for more than a decade. In that time, the number of short-term rentals ballooned to more than 850 listings, including some apartments that had been transformed into de facto hotels.

Under the new restrictions, most property owners are prohibited from renting out homes or apartments on short-term rental sites for more than 60 days per year. The new rules went into effect in September.

Business

On the business side, 2019 was a tough year with the loss of some beloved local stores. In particular, the local grocery store Milk Pail Market dropped a bombshell by announcing it would swiftly close down to make way for a new office tower.

For many years, the small market seemed to be Mountain View's version of the David and Goliath story, as owner Steve Rasmussen refused to sell his property to developers. But while it remained a popular cause, the Milk Pail was steadily declining amid tighter revenues and competition. Echoing the troubles of other shop and restaurant owners, Rasmussen said he couldn't keep a stable workforce amid the high cost of living in the area.

Another popular local business that shuttered ended up being revived. In 2018, Orchard Supply Hardware announced that it would close all 99 of its retail locations, including the Mountain View store on Charleston Road. The hardware retailer originated in the South Bay and expanded throughout California, but it had been struggling for years amid tight competition.

The good news came in August when Ace Hardware announced it would open at the Mountain View OSH and rehire many of the employees. ■

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MAGALI GAUTHIER

Customers head to The Milk Pail Market on March 19. After holding out against developers for years, owner Steve Rasmussen sold his small property at San Antonio shopping center and the Milk Pail closed its doors over the summer.

CRIME 2019

► Continued from page 1

department was able to make multiple auto burglary arrests in 2019. In one case, a monthslong investigation ended in the arrest of a trio of men allegedly operating an extensive smash-and-grab operation connected to at least 11 burglaries throughout Santa Clara County.

Stevens Creek Trail attack

A woman visiting Mountain View from the East Coast on a work-related trip was brutally attacked by a man on Stevens Creek Trail in February. A suspect was quickly identified and arrested, and faces kidnapping and assault charges, with the next court hearing scheduled for February.

Investigators believe the man, identified as 30-year-old Michael Wendy Adonis, may have followed the victim from downtown Mountain View onto Stevens Creek Trail. The woman told police that she felt uneasy about using the trail at night, particularly with the poor lighting, but believed it would be safe.



Michael Wendy Adonis

Adonis allegedly punched the woman in the face repeatedly and tried to muffle her screams with his hands, and she fought back and bit the suspect's finger "down to the bone" during the altercation. Officers encountered Adonis during an unrelated domestic violence incident at a home on Santa Clara Avenue four days later, and identified him as the suspect in the Stevens Creek Trail attack.

One officer took careful note of Adonis' hand injuries, concluding they were consistent with

the injury he allegedly sustained during the trail attack.

Four months after the attack, the Mountain View Police Department released a statement saying that the city installed two new emergency call boxes along the trail — one at Yuba Drive and another at Sleeper Avenue. Also referred to as "blue towers," the call boxes provide a direct line to the department's dispatch center for emergency situations.

Murder charges in Rancho San Antonio attack

The most popular Midpeninsula preserve, Rancho San Antonio, was the site of a vehicular rampage in October that left one person dead and another scrambling for safety.



Mireya Orta

According to a statement provided by a sergeant from the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office, a woman identified as 50-year-old Mireya Orta drove onto park trails and swerved into pedestrians, reportedly acting "erratic" during the incident.

The statement describes how Orta, driving a black Audi, struck a 77-year-old man who was on one of the park trails and "intentionally reversed and drove back and forth over the man's body multiple times." The victim, later identified as Sunnyvale resident Lawrence Lupash, was taken to Stanford Hospital, where he was later pronounced dead.

A second victim described how he was able to narrowly avoid getting hit by the vehicle, and took cover behind an oak tree.

Orta is being charged with murder using a deadly weapon and attempted murder. If convicted, she faces 33 years to life in prison.



MAGALI GAUTHIER

Mountain View police have stepped up enforcement efforts at downtown parking lots as the number of vehicle break-ins soared in 2019.

She remains in jail and has been denied bail. Upcoming court dates show she is scheduled for a hearing on her mental competency to stand trial on Jan. 2.

Plea deals in child molestation cases

A 2018 case involving a volunteer accused of molesting two young boys finally reached resolution this year, after the 27-year-old man pleaded guilty to four counts of molesting children while he volunteered at an after-school Chinese language program at the Sanyu Learning Center.



Yizhuang "John" Liu

Yizhuang "John" Liu pleaded guilty in October to the charges, which stem from an arrest last

February. Two families with boys enrolled at the center reported that their children, ages 10 and 11, said they were inappropriately touched by Liu over the course of several months.

Liu now faces 12 years in prison, with sentencing scheduled for Jan. 10. Though he was out of jail on home detention with GPS monitoring during the court proceedings, prosecutors say the plea waives his right to reduce his sentence with time served during that period.

Residents saw more swift resolution in another molestation case involving a 47-year-old Waverly Park man, who pleaded no contest last month to having sex with a 12-year-old Sunnyvale girl.

According to police, Sean Muilenburg picked up the girl from her house and took her to his home in the Waverly Park neighborhood to have sex. The victim's foster parents quickly discovered she was missing that evening and called police, who tracked down Muilenburg and arrested him the same day.

The girl told police she met Muilenburg on a dating site that ran an advertisement she saw on Facebook, and subsequently agreed over text messages to meet with him in the early hours of May 13.

Muilenburg has since pleaded to one count of lewd or lascivious acts with a child under the age of 14. The second count he originally faced, oral copulation with a minor, will be dismissed as part of the plea deal during sentencing on Jan. 16.



Sean Muilenburg

A murder case moves slowly

In a protracted court process that has drawn out for more than two years, prosecutors say they are tentatively planning to move forward on a trial involving a man accused of brutally attacking a disabled homeless man in downtown Mountain View.

Jan Neal, 45, was arrested by Mountain View police in November 2017 and faces one count of murder after he allegedly beat and killed the victim in the Civic Center Plaza on Castro Street. According to police, Neal hit the victim — 55-year-old Jose Ospina Jaramillo — with a bicycle, a metal chair and a metal table. The victim suffered severe injuries and was taken to a hospital, where he was pronounced dead.

Progress in adjudicating the case and bringing closure to Mountain View's only murder in five years slowed to a halt late last year amid doubts that Neal was mentally competent to stand trial. All of 2019 was spent working with Neal to conduct psychiatric evaluations, which wasn't an easy task — court records indicate he was not present at many of his hearings, in one instance refusing to be transported, and at another, refusing to meet with his psychiatrist.

The latest timeline for the case is for the prosecution and defense to meet in July to decide whether he is competent to stand trial. If he is, a jury trial is anticipated to take five days. ■

Email Kevin Forestieri at kforestieri@mv-voice.com



People walk along a trail at Rancho San Antonio Preserve on July 24. In October, a Sunnyvale resident was hit and killed by a woman who drove her car onto trails at the park, one of the most popular open space preserves on the Midpeninsula.



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Public Notices

995 Fictitious Name Statement

24 HOUR FRIENDLY HOME CARE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT
File No.: FBN660995
The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as:
24 Hour Friendly Home Care, located at 530 Showers Dr., Ste. 7, #422, Mountain View, CA 94040, Santa Clara County. This business is owned by: An Individual. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is(are):
LONGOMOLOTO TUKITO
6 Newell Ct.
Palo Alto, CA 94303
Registrant has not yet begun to transact business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above.
This statement was filed with the County Clerk-Recorder of Santa Clara County on November 27, 2019.
(MVV Dec. 6, 13, 20, 27, 2019)

997 All Other Legals

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF:
JEFFERY L. TYSON
Case No.: 19PR187149
To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the will or estate, or both, of JEFFREY L. TYSON. A Petition for Probate has been filed by: ERIC L. TYSON in the Superior Court of California, County of SANTA CLARA. The Petition for Probate requests that: ERIC L. TYSON be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent. The petition requests authority to administer the estate under the Independent Administration of Estates Act. (This authority will allow the personal representative to take many actions without obtaining court approval. Before taking certain very important actions, however, the personal representative will be required to give notice to interested persons unless they have waived notice or consented to the proposed action.) The independent administration authority will be granted unless an interested person files an objection to the petition and shows good cause why the court should not grant the authority. A HEARING on the petition will be held on January 13, 2020 at 9:01 a.m. in Dept.: 13 of the Superior Court of California, County of Santa Clara, located at 191 N. First St., San Jose, CA, 95113. If you object to the granting of the petition, you should appear at the hearing and state your objections or file written objections with the court before the hearing. Your appearance may be in person or by your attorney.

Call Alicia Santillan at 650-223-6578
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If you are a creditor or a contingent creditor of the decedent, you must file your claim with the court and mail a copy to the personal representative appointed by the court within the later of either (1) four months from the date of first issuance of letters to a general personal representative, as defined in section 58 (b) of the California Probate Code, or (2) 60 days from the date of mailing or personal delivery to you of a notice under section 9052 of the California Probate Code. Other California statutes and legal authority may affect your rights as a creditor. You may want to consult with an attorney knowledgeable in California law. You may examine the file kept by the court. If you are a person interested in the estate, you may file with the court a Request for Special Notice (form DE-154) of the filing of an inventory and appraisal of estate assets or of any petition or account as provided in Probate Code section 1250. A Request for Special Notice form is available from the court clerk. Petitioner:
Eric L. Tyson
1532 Todd St.
Mtn. View, CA 94040
(707) 920-1139
(MVV Dec. 20, 27, 2019; Jan. 3, 2020)

ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME SUPERIOR COURT OF THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA FOR THE COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA
Case No.: 19CV359097
TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS:
Petitioner: BROOKE ANTONIA MOORHEAD filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: BROOKE ANTONIA MOORHEAD to BROOKE ANTONIA RIGGIO. THE COURT ORDERS that all persons interested in this matter appear before this court at the hearing indicated below to show cause, if any, why the petition for change of name should not be granted. Any person objecting to the name changes described above must file a written objection that includes the reasons for the objection at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and must appear at the hearing to show cause why the petition should not be granted. If no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing. NOTICE OF HEARING: April 21, 2020, 8:45 a.m., Dept.: Probate of the Superior Court of California, County of Santa Clara, 191 N. First Street, San Jose, CA 95113. A copy of this ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE shall be published at least once each week for four successive weeks prior to the date set for hearing on the petition in the following newspaper of general circulation, printed in this county: MOUNTAIN VIEW VOICE
Date: November 26, 2019
/s/ Julie A. Emade
JUDGE OF THE SUPERIOR COURT
(MVV Dec. 27, 2019; Jan. 3, 10, 17, 2020)

COMMUNITY BRIEFS

► Continued from page 4

and Dec. 1 this year, the county medical examiner's office said last week.

HomeFirst, a local shelter and homeless advocacy organization, hosted a memorial Dec. 20 where the names of all those lost were read aloud. A bell tolled after each name.

"We have children sleeping in cars overnight not tucked into a warm bed, we have fellow humans taking refuge in parks, on the stoops of businesses downtown, anywhere they can to protect themselves from the elements, the darkness and the loneliness," Andrea Urton, chief executive officer for HomeFirst, said in the organization's San Jose shelter Dec. 20. "We have 250 people staying in this shelter alone, and as you well know, shelter is no home."

Last year, the medical examiner listed 157 individuals who died

in the county, which shows more homeless people died in the recent count than the year before.

"It makes me feel angry. It's not necessary," Urton said. "In a humane society, it shouldn't be happening."

Earlier in the day, housing advocates — several of whom have their own experience being homeless or working with homeless people — held a news conference in memory of the lost lives.

The oldest person on the list of the dead was a 94-year-old man, and the youngest were two infants who died the day they were born. About half of those listed died at age 55 or older.

"There's clearly something that needs to be addressed in our county," Shaunn Cartwright, a San Jose advocate, said Dec. 20. "Everyone knew that baby boomers were going to get old, so I don't know how we didn't plan for that. It wasn't a surprise, it didn't sneak up on anyone, and I just feel

that's something we really need to address because we're not addressing seniors."

Peter Miron-Conk, also a San Jose advocate who helped found Hope Village — a now-defunct encampment run by local homeless people — debuted a plan to gather homeless individuals for Villages of Home, a new campaign calling for private donors and land owners to open their pocketbooks and doors for homeless people in Santa Clara County and Silicon Valley.

"It's going to take years and years and years to build enough homes, but we know that organized encampments can help people with a dignified way to live," Miron-Conk said. "We're going out and we're looking for private money and private land to pressure people to allow us to build large villages of hope."

Urton, at the HomeFirst memorial, also called on the county's elected officials and residents to do more for homeless people.

"More of everything can be done in the county — more affordable housing, more shelter, safe sanctioned encampments, bridge-housing solutions (housing with support services on-site) — all of those things are needed," Urton said, also asking for safe-parking programs for cars and RVs throughout the county.

The city of San Jose will soon debut its own bridge housing program, with a tiny-home village called the Mabury Bridge Housing Community opening in mid-January.

However, "we've got a long way to go to end homelessness," Urton said.

NEARLY 500 GUNS TURNED IN DURING BUYBACK EVENT

Santa Clara County law enforcement traded cash for nearly 500 firearms earlier this month in a gun buyback program hosted by Gilroy and Morgan Hill police.

According to Santa Clara County prosecutors, \$50,000 went toward buying back 493 guns from people in and around the South Bay.

Participants, who did not have to identify themselves during the buyback, handed over 26 assault weapons, 205 handguns, 159 rifles and 103 shotguns during the Dec. 14 gun buyback in Gilroy.

Law enforcement offered \$100 for handguns, rifles and shotguns and \$200 for assault weapons, all of which had to be functional. The buyback was limited to five weapons per person.

The buyback happened months after Gilroy's tragic July 28 mass shooting that left three dead and a dozen others injured during the city's annual Gilroy Garlic Festival.

—Bay City News Service



CITY OF
MOUNTAIN VIEW

2019 ANNUAL FLUSHING PROGRAM

The City of Mountain View continues its annual water system flushing program. Flushing will be complete by approximately March 2020.

The City understands the importance of saving water, but flushing the system is a critical component of maintaining water quality. Water main flushing is a process used to clear water lines of sand and sediment that may have accumulated during the last year. Signs and barricades will be posted in neighborhoods the day before flushing is to take place to alert residents.

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 flushing water mains, please contact the City's Public Services Division at 650-903-6329, or visit our website at www.mountainview.gov.

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Despite demand, rising costs force cutbacks to Meals on Wheels

By Chris Kendrick

Every Monday, Anna Marie Janky loads the back of her Ford Escape with 16 hot meals and a cooler full of milk and begins her door-to-door deliveries through Menlo Park and Redwood City.

Janky, a volunteer who lives in Los Altos, is part of a vast network of drivers — some paid and some volunteer — who last year delivered 220 million meals to homebound seniors across the United States through the non-profit Meals on Wheels. More than 750,000 of those meals went to residents of Santa Clara and San Mateo counties.

Funded by the federal Older Americans Act and other sources, the Meals on Wheels program is meant to bolster nutrition and also to combat isolation among mobility-impaired seniors who have trouble leaving their homes.

Nationally, the number of Meals on Wheels deliveries has declined by 21 million since 2005 due to rising costs, according to Meals on Wheels America, an umbrella group that tracks 5,000 independently run local programs.

“Food, transportation and other costs have increased while funding remains stagnant,” said Jenny Young, vice-president of communications for the national group. “Also, nationally, eight out of 10 low-income, food insecure seniors are not receiving the home-delivered or congregate meals they likely need,” Young said.

Locally, the situation is mixed. Santa Clara County says it has the means to provide Meals on Wheels to all eligible applicants.

But Janky’s program in San Mateo County has a growing waitlist.

“We now have almost 280 on the waitlist,” said Rebecca Matteson Nelson, director of development for the nonprofit Peninsula Volunteers, Inc., which operates Meals on Wheels for all



PHOTOS BY MAGALI GAUTHIER

Anna Marie Janky, a volunteer for the nonprofit Meals on Wheels, checks insulated food bags in the kitchen at the Menlo Park senior services agency Little House before heading out to deliver meals to seniors living in San Mateo County.

of San Mateo County except for Pacifica and the coastside. The group last year delivered 150,000 meals to 1,100 clients.

“The primary issue is the funding gap to meet the ever-growing need,” Nelson said. “When you are hungry, nothing else matters.”

In Santa Clara County, Meals on Wheels Director Henri Villalovoz said recent demand for the service has held steady and even slightly dropped.

“We do not have a wait list because we enroll each eligible applicant that applies,” Villalovoz said. That program last year delivered 600,531 meals to about 920 clients.

Janky is one of 100 volunteer drivers for the Peninsula Volunteers’ San Mateo County program (the program also employs 12 paid drivers).

Janky said in addition to food delivery, the group’s service model provides daily, face-to-face check-ins with recipients.

“It’s easy to tell quickly whether (a recipient) is doing okay, especially if they come to the door,” Janky said.

Because programs are

independently run, the Meals on Wheels service looks substantially different in Santa Clara County.

Rather than daily visits, Santa Clara County recipients get once-a-week deliveries of seven frozen dinners and seven breakfasts, plus bread, milk, juices and vegetables, Villalovoz said.

All food is prepared and delivered by paid employees of the national food vendor Bateman Community Living, with whom Santa Clara County contracts to provide the service for more than 900 people countywide.

On a recent Monday morning after loading her car with meals — cooked daily at Menlo Park senior services agency Little House — Janky studied a printout with driving directions and instructions for each stop on her route where she’d deliver that day’s hot meal of chicken, squash and beets, along with whole wheat bread, butter and an orange.

At one home in a trailer park, the instructions warned her, “Don’t let the dog out!” At another, the printout advised Janky to “see if door is unlocked. If so, open slightly and announce yourself loudly. Place meal in refrigerator and leave.”

In Menlo Park, she knocked on the door of 90-year-old Pearlean Brazil and could tell at a glance Brazil was doing fine.

The fresh meals “mean a lot for a person living alone like me,” said Brazil, seated in her tidy living room. “When my husband was alive, I used to do a lot of cooking.”

But Brazil’s husband, a career employee of the Menlo Park VA, died in 2016. And since she no longer drives, Brazil must rely on others to help her get groceries

stomach,” she said.

Tingley said she relies on help from neighbors to get groceries or get to her monthly medical appointments. She uses her cane to venture out of her trailer a few times a day to take Nala for walks. “I’ve lived with pain in my knee since 2011, even after surgery,” Tingley said. “It locks up sometimes so I have to be careful.”

Though many pay nothing for the meal service, Meals on Wheels recipients in both Santa Clara and San Mateo counties are asked to contribute, if possible.

“People don’t have to pay, but everybody’s given a statement every month,” Janky said. “Some people can’t afford to pay anything but some people can pay part of the cost.”

For more information about Meals on Wheels in San Mateo County, go to penvol.org. To volunteer as a driver, contact volunteer coordinator Ann Eisenberg at aeisenberg@penvol.org or 650-272-5108.

For more information about Meals on Wheels in Santa Clara County, go to mysourcewise.com and click on “services” or call 408-350-3246. ■



Pearlean Brazil hands her just-delivered hot meal to a friend to bring into the kitchen of her Menlo Park home.

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FOOD FEATURE



PHOTO BY ISABEL BAER

Modern Indian restaurant Ettan will open in downtown Palo Alto in early 2020.

YEAR *in* REVIEW



VERONICA WEBER

Chefs Meichih and Michael Kim of Palo Alto's Maum earned their first Michelin star.



JENNY RODRIGUEZ

Rose International Market returned to Mountain View after a four-year hiatus.



VERONICA WEBER

A 'severe' labor shortage shuttered the Prolific Oven after 39 years, said Regina Chan, daughter of the bakery's owners.

OLD FAVORITES CLOSED, A FEW GOT REVIVED, FINE DINING TOOK FLIGHT AND DELIVERY SERVICES GOT BIGGER

By Elena Kadvany

This was both a dynamic and a trying year for the Peninsula dining scene. Palo Alto's Maum won its first Michelin star. Bacchus Management Group, perhaps the area's best-known, added glitzy Selby's to its family. International eateries opened or announced plans to expand here, from Teleferic Barcelona to Singapore's Killiney Kopitiam.

Restaurant owners spoke out about struggling to keep their businesses afloat amid a tight labor market, high turnover

and the increasing cost of doing business in the Bay Area. These pressures will continue to play out in 2020, with many in the industry worried about the future of the locally owned, middle-range neighborhood restaurant.

Read on for a roundup of the most notable restaurant news of the year and the openings we're most looking forward to in 2020.

TEARFUL GOODBYES We said goodbye this year to a handful of longtime eateries: **The Prolific Oven** (39 years) and **Round**

Table Pizza (at least 50 years) in Palo Alto, **Applewood Pizza** in Menlo Park (36 years), **Martin's West** in Redwood City (10 years) and **Cho's Mandarin Dim Sum** in Los Altos (39 years, including at the original Palo Alto location), and Mountain View's **Tied House** (31 years), which closed abruptly over the weekend to remediate a chemical spill linked to a prior tenant's dry cleaning business.

While there's no singular reason for the closures, the owner of The Prolific Oven had some pertinent words for what customers can do to prevent

family-run independent food businesses from becoming an endangered species: "It's in the power of the people where they choose to spend their money," said Regina Chan, whose parents Henry and Sophia Chan bought the bakery in 1996. "I hope that I'm wrong and that small businesses and family businesses can continue to thrive in the Bay Area, but it's going to be up to the consumers to really show that."

► See **YEAR IN REVIEW**, page 18

YEAR IN REVIEW

► Continued from page 17

HAPPIEST REVIVALS A happy counter-narrative to all the closures was the revival of much-loved restaurants this year. **Mike's Cafe** gave Palo Alto's Midtown neighborhood its favorite restaurant back after a lengthy renovation. New owners renovated and rejuvenated the 167-year-old **Alpine Inn**, giving the Portola Valley community a gathering place and watering hole (now, plus wines on tap and wood-fired pizza) for generations to come. **Su Hong** Palo Alto closed, but a former waiter reopened it under a new name, keeping on the same chef and changing little on the menu. **Rose International Market** returned to Mountain View after a four-year development-induced hiatus. And in a holiday miracle for sandwich lovers everywhere, **Woodside Deli** reopened in Redwood City last week, with the owners of Colombo's Delicatessen in Pacifica, who are related to the original owners of the local deli, at the helm.

MOST EXPENSIVE BURGER Selby's wanted to make a name for itself by serving "the coldest martini on the West Coast," but perhaps should have considered going with "the most expensive burger on the Peninsula." The swanky restaurant, located on the border of Redwood City and Atherton, drew attention for its \$50 Black Label cheeseburger: a patty of dry-aged hanger steak, short rib

and chuck, topped with ... Époisses, a soft cow's milk cheese from Burgundy, and chopped black truffles.

A MICHELIN STAR FOR MAUM This year saw the chefs at **Maum**, Palo Alto's high-end Korean restaurant, take home their first Michelin star, less than a year after opening. Chef Michael Kim said the accolade has been a "lifelong professional goal" for him and his wife and co-chef, Meichih, who draw on their Korean and Taiwanese roots at Maum, which means "heart and soul" in Korean. Fine dining continues to grow on the Midpeninsula, which is now home to six Michelin-starred restaurants, including Maum (Baume, Protege, The Village Pub, Chez TJ, Madera).

THE YEAR OF DELIVERY? In a sign of the times, DoorDash opened its first-ever shared delivery kitchen in Redwood City in October. Under one roof, several food businesses — Nation's Giant Hamburgers, Rooster & Rice, Humphrey Slocombe, The Halal Guys and Chick-fil-A — can deliver throughout the Peninsula without having a brick-and-mortar restaurant here. The bright red, 6,000-square-foot building is emblematic of shifts and tensions in the dining industry, spurred by the growth of third-party delivery apps like DoorDash, Caviar, UberEats and others.

NATURAL WINE BOOM The Peninsula got its first dedicated natural wine bar this year with **Salvaje**. The downtown Palo Alto bar (369 Lytton Ave.) defines natural wines as those made organically on



Selby's, a swanky new Redwood City spot, turned heads with a \$50 burger, topped with truffles and Époisses cheese.



PHOTOS BY SAMMY DALLAL

New owners reinvigorated the 167-year-old Alpine Inn in Portola Valley.

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biodynamic farms with minimal intervention and little to no sulfates or other additives. (Salvaje appropriately means “wild” in Spanish.) The small, cozy Spanish-style building Salvaje occupies feels like having a drink in your friend’s living room, and the intimate setting is ideal for peppering the helpful staff and owners with questions if you’re unfamiliar with natural wines.

MOST ANTICIPATED OPENINGS OF 2020 Early 2020 will see the local debut of two ambitious, modern Indian restaurants with connections to San Francisco: **Ettan** (518 Bryant St., Palo Alto) and **Rooh** (473 University Ave., Palo Alto). The former will be led by Srijith Gopinathan, a native of southern India and executive

chef at the Michelin-starred Campton Place Restaurant in San Francisco. The latter is a new outpost of a popular San Francisco restaurant of the same name, but with a unique focus on open-fire cooking.

In Mountain View, beer drinkers and pretzel lovers are still not-so-patiently waiting for the much-delayed arrival of **Ludwig’s German Table** (383 Castro St.), which will likely materialize next year. Owner Ben Bate spoke out this year about the costly setbacks he’s faced in the city permitting process. ▣

Email Elena Kadvany at ekadvany@paweeekly.com. Sign up for her Peninsula Foodist email newsletter at mv-voice.com/express/foodist.

Most viewed Peninsula Foodist stories

1. After 39 years of cakes and pastries, Palo Alto institution Prolific Oven to close
2. Hillsdale says hello to the modern mall food court with Shake Shack, The Refuge and Instagrammable dim sum
3. Peek inside the fine-dining Selby’s, opening in Redwood City this summer
4. Barcelona tapas restaurant coming to Palo Alto
5. Round Table Pizza bites the dust in downtown Palo Alto
6. Local deli owners to revive Woodside Deli in Redwood City



MICHELLE LE

The Tied House abruptly closed last weekend, facing a lengthy shutdown due to contamination left by a prior tenant.



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■ MOVIE OPENINGS

A merry 'Little' Christmas

'LITTLE WOMEN' REMAINS EVERGREEN
IN GRETA GERWIG ADAPTATION

★★★1/2 (Century 16 & 20, Icon)

Since 1868, Louisa May Alcott's "Little Women" has resonated with readers. Perhaps, above all, the appeal lies in the story's inherent self-empowerment, in its coming-of-age story — times four — of the March sisters, but also in its unavoidable feminism and its autobiographical origins. There's little more empowering than telling one's own story, and through her avatar Jo March and the love and strife that surround her, Alcott locates an authenticity that has sustained this essential American story for over 150 years and umpteen adaptations.

"Little Women" has been adapted over the decades for the stage (including as musicals and operas), radio, television and film. This Christmas, we get the eighth feature-film adaptation of "Little Women," with three-time Oscar nominee Saoirse Ronan following in the footsteps of Katharine Hepburn and Winona Ryder as Jo. Fret not. Writer-director Greta Gerwig ("Lady Bird") is thinking what you're thinking — what can this "Little Women" offer that the others — including a modern-day adaptation last year — haven't already?



COURTESY OF COLUMBIA PICTURES

Emma Watson, Saoirse Ronan, Florence Pugh and Eliza Scanlen star in "Little Women."

She has answers.

Aside from her own comic and dramatic sensibilities and a stellar cast, Gerwig's "Little Women" adopts a bold narrative approach to retelling Alcott's two-volume story.

Alcott's first part deals with the girls of the March family, while part two rejoins them years later as young women making their way into adult society. Invariably, adaptations retain this chronological order and its interest in what will happen to the girls as time, pardon the pun, marches on: To paraphrase Wordsworth, the child is mother of the woman. Gerwig leans in to the familiarity of "Little Women," choosing to make the adult story the present and the childhood a past visited in flashbacks. It's a choice that seems jarring and ill-advised at first, but one that increasingly pays emotional dividends as the film proceeds, rhyming adult fates with their corresponding childhood dreams and desires and joys and fears.

Gerwig delights in the portrait of the artist as a young woman, starting the film with an ironic Alcott quotation ("I've had lots of trouble, so I write jolly tales") followed by Jo making her entrée into publishing by submitting her work to the judgment of

a man, editor Mr. Dashwood (Tracy Letts). Through the flashbacks, we see Jo developing her artistry through amateur theatrics and the accumulation of life experience in the company of her sisters Meg (Emma Watson), Amy (Eliza Scanlen) and Beth (Florence Pugh). The girls grow up in Concord, Massachusetts, under the guidance of their beloved "Marmee" (Laura Dern), a de facto single mother in the temporary absence of Father March (Bob Odenkirk), away as a chaplain to Civil War troops. The girls tolerate their grumpy but well-off great aunt (a hilarious Meryl Streep) and warm to their neighbors, kind Mr. Laurence (Chris Cooper) and his grandson Theodore "Laurie" Laurence (Timothée Chalamet).

In a way, Laurie becomes one of the girls, ingratiating himself and inevitably becoming a romantic prospect. It's part of the story's genius that landing a man isn't the be all and end all of the story, despite its vintage. Certainly marriage is a key consideration for these little women, but at least for Jo, it is a secondary one to vocation ("I love my liberty too well to be in any hurry to give it up," she attests), and the March girls were raised too well to settle for

a suitable arrangement in place of a satisfying romance. Still, the drama surrounding Laurie's romantic triangle with two of the March girls gives the story its most potent emotional passages, with the ever-resonant Chalamet wearing his heart on his sleeve first as gawky youth and then as a sullen and somewhat resigned young man.

While on her path, Jo worries, "Who will be interested in a story of domestic struggles and joys? It doesn't have any real importance, does it?" Of course, she needn't have been concerned. "Little Women" still speaks loudly, clearly and truthfully for women's equality, the growth of character and the pride of artistry with characters that remain as vital and relatable as when they were conceived.

Rated PG for thematic elements and brief smoking. Two hours, 14 minutes.

— Peter Canavese

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■ MOVIE REVIEWS

'STAR WARS: THE RISE OF SKYWALKER' ★★★1/2

Few, if any, films in cinematic history face the scrutiny of a "Star Wars" film, and one can feel the added burden weighing on "Star Wars: The Rise of Skywalker." After launching the current trilogy with 2015's "The Force Awakens" director J.J. Abrams must bring satisfying closure to this trilogy's younger generation of characters. While the film includes lightsaber battles, blaster shootouts, space dogfights, whooping critters and

fretfully chirping robots, die-hard fans have the best shot of actually enjoying it. This franchise-capper struggles to raise a pulse to make its audience feel or care about the specifics of its complicated plot beyond pre-existing goodwill for "Star Wars" itself and the saga's first female protagonist. *Rated PG-13 for sci-fi violence and action. Two hours, 21 minutes.* — P.C.

'JUMANJI: THE NEXT LEVEL' ★★★

In the newly released "Jumanji: The Next Level," Spencer, Martha, Fridge and Bethany return to the Jumanji after Spencer picks up the broken pieces of the game and gets pulled back into its world. Reasoning that he's likely to die

on his own, his three friends decide to follow him back into the game. The glitchy game also takes two newcomers: Spencer's granddad, Eddie (Danny DeVito), and his frenemy Otis (Danny Glover), erstwhile buddies estranged after the sale of their joint restaurant venture. The sequel holds some mix-and-match surprises in store as we run into new (Awkwafina) and returning (Nick Jonas) guest stars. "The Next Level" plays fast and loose; it also makes an effort to prompt viewers to reflect not only on the freedom of fantasy, but on the essential relationship of mind and body. *Rated PG-13 for adventure action, suggestive content and some language. Two hours, 3 minutes.* — P.C.

CHARLIE MUSSELWHITE

Blues legend Charlie Musselwhite puts on a holiday performance, with Valerie Troutt opening the show. Dec. 29, 7:30-10:30 p.m. \$25. Oshman Family JCC, 3921 Fabian Way, Palo Alto. eventbrite.com

THEATER

'Pride and Prejudice' TheatreWorks Silicon Valley brings literature's most infamous battle of the sexes to life. Through Jan. 4; times vary. \$34-\$108. Lucie Stern Theatre, 1305 Middlefield Road, Palo Alto. theatreworks.org

CONCERTS

Free Organ Recital Weekly noon-time organ recitals on the two Flentrop organs at All Saints Episcopal Church. Each recital will include at least one work by Johann Sebastian Bach. Tuesdays through May 26, 12:15-12:45 p.m. Free. All Saints Episcopal Church, 555 Waverley St., Palo Alto. asaints.org

FESTIVALS & FAIRS

Christmas Tree Lane Fulton Street lights up this Christmas season, marking the 79th annual Christmas Tree Lane event. Dec. 27-31, 5-11 p.m. Free. Christmas Tree Lane, 1705 Fulton St., Palo Alto. christmastreelane.org

MUSEUMS & EXHIBITS

A Gift of Art from Marilyn F. Symmes Marilyn F. Symmes' gift to the Cantor Arts Center is an eclectic selection of prints and drawings highlighting different ways of thinking about artworks as both images and objects. Through May 18; times vary; closed Tuesdays. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 328 Lomita Drive, Stanford. museum.stanford.edu

Baylug Lego Holiday Show Bay Area Lego User Group and the Bay Area Lego Train Club co-host the annual holiday show

featuring train layouts, Bay Area landmarks, castles, miniature cities, sculptures, portraits and more, all made out of Legos. Through Jan. 5, 11 a.m.-3:30 p.m. \$3. The Museum of American Heritage, 351 Homer Ave., Palo Alto. moah.org

'Cointraptions' "Cointraptions: Classic Coin-Operated Machines" explores what life was like before the era of credit cards with classic coin-operated machines, including gambling devices, a mutoscope, vending machines and more. Through Feb. 16, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.; Friday-Sunday. Free. The Museum of American Heritage, 351 Homer Ave., Palo Alto. moah.org

Edward Weston and Ansel Adams This exhibit features landscapes, still lifes, nudes and portraits created by Edward Weston in Mexico and Ansel Adams in the American southwest. Through Jan. 6, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed Tuesdays. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 328 Lomita Drive, Stanford. museum.stanford.edu/

'Jordan Casteel: Returning the Gaze' Jordan Casteel's large-scale portraits of Harlem community members are intimate portrayals of often overlooked members of society. The exhibition features paintings made in the last five years. Through Feb. 2, 11 a.m.-5 p.m.; closed Tuesdays. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 328 Lomita Drive, Stanford. museum.stanford.edu

'Left of Center' "Left of Center" exhibition seeks to show how modes of art-making that originated on the West Coast decisively changed the topography of American modernism. Through Sept. 20; times vary; closed Tuesdays. Free. Anderson

Collection, 314 Lomita Drive, Stanford. events.stanford.edu

'The Melancholy Museum' Mark Dion, known for his work on the history of museums and their collections, delves into the original Stanford family collection to create a cabinet of curiosities for the 21st century. Ongoing. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 328 Lomita Drive, Stanford. museum.stanford.edu

'Our Sacred Coast' Artist Ian Wing's "Our Sacred Coast" is an exhibition of landscapes, including plein air and studio pieces, depicting select locations across the California coastline. Through Jan. 20; times vary. Community School of Music and Arts, 230 San Antonio Circle, Mountain View. arts4all.org

'Process and Pattern' Memory, history and making collide in the work of contemporary artists McArthur Binion, Charles Gaines, Julie Mehretu and Analia Saban. Through Feb. 17, 1 p.m.-5 p.m.; closed Tuesdays. Free. Anderson Collection, 314 Lomita Drive, Stanford. events.stanford.edu

Richard Diebenkorn See an intimate and interactive installation of Bay Area artist Richard Diebenkorn's paintings and sketchbooks that shed light on the artist's process, including his shift from figurative to more abstract work. Ongoing; times vary; closed Tuesdays. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 328 Lomita Drive, Stanford. museum.stanford.edu

'Surf Sequence' "Surf Sequence" explores Ansel Adams' relationship with water in different forms with a series

of spontaneously captured surf images. Through May 18; times vary. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 328 Lomita Drive, Stanford. events.stanford.edu

'West x Southwest' The Capital Group Foundation's gift of 1,000 photographs includes works by American photographers Ansel Adams, Edward Curtis, John Gutmann, Helen Levitt, Wright Morris, Gordon Parks and Edward Weston. Through Jan. 5, 12:30 p.m. Free. Stanford University, 450 Jane Stanford Way, Stanford. events.stanford.edu

GALLERIES

'Collusion' "Collusion" is a joint exhibition by Inna Chorneykina and Marina Goldberg, featuring oil and watercolor paintings of colorful landscape, cityscape and still life scenes. Through Dec. 31, 10:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.; closed Sundays. Free. Portola Art Gallery, 75 Arbor Road, Menlo Park. portolaartgallery.com

Holidays at The Main Gallery The Holidays at The Main Gallery exhibit features

17 local artists working with various media. Through Dec. 30, 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Free. The Main Gallery, 1018 Main St., Redwood City. sanfrancisco.eventful.com

OUTDOOR RECREATION

Winter Waterfowl Embark on a birding expedition with docents Kate Gudmundson, Laura Levin, Mary Brunkhorst and Dennis Smith to look for waterfowl and other birds visiting the San Francisco Bay as they migrate along the Pacific Flyway. Jan. 1, 10:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. Free. Stevens Creek Shoreline Nature Area, Shoreline Boulevard, Mountain View. openspace.org

HEALTH & WELLNESS

Windhover Tour Open for public tours every Saturday, the Windhover building is a meditative space built with the intention of promoting mental and spiritual well-being. Ongoing; Saturdays, 11:00 a.m.-noon. Free. Cantor Arts Center, 370 Santa Teresa St., Stanford. museum.stanford.edu



Do you need more information on rent stabilization in Mountain View?

The City of Mountain View hosts clinics every first and third Friday of the month to explain the Community Stabilization and Fair Rent Act and review the petition process.

Upcoming Petition Clinic (see new address!)

Friday, Jan. 17, 2020

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

298 Escuela Ave.

Mountain View, CA 94040

Questions?

Walk-in Office Hours

Thursdays 12:00 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.
City Hall, 1st Floor
Public Works Front Conference Room

Phone: (650) 282-2514

Email: csfra@housing.org
Mountainview.gov/rentstabilization

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Happy Holidays

The holidays are a time to show appreciation to those who are important to you. Here at DeLeon Realty, our thoughts turn to our amazing clients. You are a big part of our success, and have helped to make us the #1 real estate team in the nation*.

With sincere gratitude, we wish you and your loved ones a joyous holiday season, and a healthy, prosperous New Year. Cheers to a great 2020!



*As ranked by REAL Trends 2019 Team Volume list. Published in the *Wall Street Journal* in June 2019.

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