



Community
Gala fundraiser, a
mystery masquerade
Page 9



On the Move
New Outback floats
above a sea of boxy
SUVs
Page 17



**Business &
Real Estate**
Don't be fooled, the
fraudsters are out there
Page 18



Los Altos Town Crier

Community news for Los Altos, Los Altos Hills and Mountain View since 1947

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WEDNESDAY • July 1, 2026

Los Altos City Council votes to place parking plaza citizens' initiative on November ballot

By Clarke Condé
Town Crier Staff Writer

Left with the choice to either adopt directly into law the “Los Altos Downtown Parking Plaza Ordinance” or put the citizen initiative on the ballot on Nov. 3, Los Altos City Council chose the latter during the June 23 council meeting.

Chambers were packed and the meeting long as council members first received a staff-prepared report on the potential impact of the initiative known by its place in California’s election code as “9212.” The initiative requires voter approval before nearly any

change can be made to city-owned parking lots.

Several residents questioned the report’s conclusions during the public comment period, including Jon Baer, president of Friends of Los Altos.

“To summarize the report: The sky is falling or could fall,” said Baer. “There are lots of ‘coulds,’ not ‘woulds.’ And while I understand you need to be concerned about the ‘coulds,’ let’s understand that they are not ‘woulds.’”

Baer further added what backers of the initiative have contended was the impetus for their efforts, “You folks are

See PLAZA, Page 7



Barbara Loebner shares her perspective with the Los Altos City Council during the June 23 meeting largely focused on the Los Altos Downtown Parking Plaza Ordinance.

Break-in, vandalism and fires investigated at Gardner Bullis

By Julia Baum
Town Crier Staff Writer

Someone broke into Gardner Bullis Elementary School early June 15, vandalized campus buildings and set multiple fires – including one that burned a eucalyptus tree on the hillside above the school – prompting a joint investigation by the Santa Clara County Sheriff’s Office and Santa Clara County Fire Department.

The Sheriff’s Office said the incident occurred between 3 a.m. and 5:22 a.m., when “unknown suspect(s) entered

a classroom ... by breaking a glass door.” Authorities said the suspects vandalized multiple areas of campus, leaving broken glass across exterior walkways and damaging walls and floors before setting fire to walls, trash cans and the hillside tree.

No students or staff were injured because the incidents happened outside regular school hours, Principal Kate Schermerhorn said in an email to families and in follow-up statements to the Town Crier.

Schermerhorn said district maintenance workers helped prevent a more serious in-

cident after spotting smoke while cleaning the campus following the initial vandalism response. She also confirmed that one classroom was broken into and sustained damage.

“While cleaning the school after the initial vandalism inspection, our maintenance team noticed smoke on the upper field, leapt into action, and contained the fire themselves until the fire department arrived,” Schermerhorn said.

According to the Santa Clara County Fire Department, firefighters responded

at approximately 9:30 a.m. to a report of a vegetation fire in the field behind Gardner Bullis School. Engine 75 arrived to find an approximately 10-foot-by-20-foot grass fire in the school’s upper lot with no structures threatened and a slow rate of spread. Two school employees were already attempting to extinguish the blaze with fire extinguishers.

Firefighters from Engines 75 and 76 extinguished the remaining fire, cut a hand line around the perimeter and completed mop-up operations to ensure the fire was fully out.

The Fire Department determined the blaze was intentionally set with an open flame and classified the cause as incendiary, or arson. The incident remains under investigation by the Santa Clara County Fire Department in partnership with the Los Altos School District and the Santa Clara County Sheriff’s Office.

District maintenance and facilities crews have begun repairs and cleanup, with the goal of restoring the affected areas before students return

See FIRE, Page 4

ALSO INSIDE – July 1, 2026

Business & Real Estate .. 18	Obituaries 23	Sports..... 13
Comment 8	Letters to the Editor 8	Stepping Out..... 14
Community..... 9	Public Notices 22	On the Move..... 15
Datebook..... 23	Schools 12	



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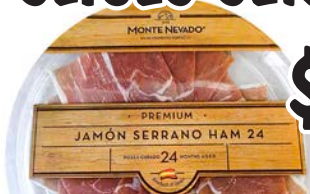


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Around Town

How are you feeling about America's 250th?



CLARKE CONDÉ/TOWN CRIER

The interactive components in the new exhibit “The Spirit of ’76: Reflecting on America’s 250th” at the Los Altos History Museum offer the opportunity for Los Altos and visitors from around the world to reflect on how they feel about America as we approach the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence and with it, the founding of the United States of America. Visitors are invited to contribute to the exhibit in writing, through photographs or by simply placing a sticker on the board to express their current feelings. This free exhibit runs through Nov. 8. *For more information, see losaltoshistory.org.*



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News

West Nile Virus may pose serious risks

By Ava Acharya
Town Crier Staff Writer

Summer weather means more summer fun, but it also means more summer bugs as mosquitoes become more active.

Local mosquitoes may be more than pests, as West Nile Virus has been found in Santa Clara County mosquitoes and birds.

West Nile is the most common mosquito-borne disease in the United States. Only 20% of people who come into contact with West Nile get sick, but the virus has caused 400 deaths in California since 2003, according to the California Department of Public Health.

“Although most people will not know whether they’ve been infected, a small percentage really do suffer life-altering effects, or can even die from infection,” said Mark Novak, a biologist for the Vector Borne Disease Section of the CDPH.

When people do experience symptoms as a result of West Nile infection, they experience

a flu-like illness, Novak said. Half of the people who show symptoms, so 10% of those infected, may experience serious illness.

One percent of the people who are seriously affected by West Nile may suffer from lasting neurological illness, which can become fatal. Novak added that the likelihood of serious illness increases for people over the age of 55.

“Anyone who lives in an area where the virus circulates is at risk of an infection,” Novak said. “All contiguous U.S. states have had reported cases of West Nile human illness.”

Novak said that the best way to avoid West Nile is to avoid mosquitoes, because mosquitoes are virtually the only way to get West Nile Virus in the U.S.

Novak explained that West Nile is spread through blood. Mosquitos will bite animals, notably birds, that are infected with West Nile. Then, these infected mosquitoes will spread the virus to other animals.

Infected birds are significant



CLARKE CONDÉ/TOWN CRIER

in tracking West Nile because they can spread the disease to mosquitoes.

Horses can also contract West Nile. Novak recommends keeping horses up to date with their vaccines, as this can prevent infection.

However, not all animals become spreaders after being infected. For instance, a human who contracts West Nile will not pass on the virus if a different mosquito feeds on that person.

Novak said that anyone who sees a dead bird should report it to the California West Nile Virus website (westnile.ca.gov) or the dead bird hotline at 877-WNV-BIRD.

Reporting dead birds helps support California’s statewide West Nile surveillance and control system, which, Novak said, is one of the best in the country.

“It’s a robust system that provides Californians with protection from not just the annoyance of mosquitoes and their bites, but also from any serious diseases that they can carry,” he said.

Beyond relying on the statewide system, Novak said that there are certain steps that people can take in order to protect themselves.

Novak said that it is best to avoid being outside during dusk and dawn, which are the times when mosquitoes are most active.

He also recommended wearing loose-fitting clothing and using mosquito repellent with EPA-approved active ingredients, such as permethrin, DEET or citronella oil.

Novak said that people should dispose of any standing water, where mosquitoes may reproduce, and ensure that all windows and doors have protective screens in order to keep themselves safe.

State of California cautions residents to avoid illegal fireworks

Town Crier Report

Ahead of Independence Day, the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection reminds residents that there is “zero tolerance” for illegal fireworks.

Officials urged residents to practice caution, as fireworks can cause serious physical harm and handling explosives is best left to trained professionals.

“Every year, we see firsthand the life changing burn injuries caused by fireworks,” said Dr. Soman Sen, Assistant Chief of Burns at Shriners Children’s

Northern California. “We always urge families to keep children away from any type of fireworks and ensure that only responsible adults are using legal fireworks – even then, exercising caution to prevent harm.”

Possession or use of illegal fireworks could result in up to one year in jail, or a fine of up to \$50,000. This includes fireworks purchased online, purchased out of state and purchased from unlicensed sellers.

Some California cities allow for the sale and use of consumer fireworks, but these can only be purchased through permitted

booths and must be certified “safe and sane” by the state of California.

The CAL FIRE website includes a list of all of these communities. Gilroy is the only city in Santa Clara County that allows consumer fireworks. Consumer fireworks are illegal in Los Altos, Los Altos Hills and Mountain View.

“Each year we continue to see how illegal fireworks – especially those bought online or shipped into California – pose a major risk to our communities,” said Chief Daniel Berlant, California State Fire Marshal.

FIRE

From Page 1

in the fall, Schermerhorn said. The district has also installed additional security cameras and is reviewing other security measures to deter future incidents and protect school property. Officials estimate the damage at \$15,000 to \$20,000, though the total could increase as additional repairs are identified.

School officials are asking anyone with information about the incident to contact investigators. Schermerhorn said that information submitted to the district will be shared with law enforcement. She said district security cameras captured activity related to the incident, and the footage was turned over to law enforcement the same day.

Photographs of the damage circulated among school families, prompting concern from some parents. One par-

ent described the vandalism as “really shocking” and said they were relieved the fire was discovered before it spread into the dry vegetation surrounding the campus.

School officials have released few details while the investigation remains active. Schermerhorn said the district is limited in what it can share due to the ongoing investigation. She added that the district is deferring questions about the cause of the fire, potential suspects, and related law enforcement matters to the investigating agencies.

Anyone with information about the incident is encouraged to contact the Santa Clara County Sheriff’s Office. The Santa Clara County Fire Department has determined the vegetation fire was intentionally set and is offering a \$10,000 reward for information leading to an arrest and conviction. Tips can be submitted by calling (888) 341-4401.

Read TC, both print and online

Did you know that some features on losaltosonline.com do not appear in the print edition and some items in print do not appear online? That’s why you need to read both. Don’t miss out on all the news about your community.

Mountain View council unanimously approves TOT ballot measure



CLARKE CONDÉ/TOWN CRIER

Mayor Emily Ann Ramos looks on as Robert Cox from the Kiwanis Club of Mountain View speaks about the club's history during the June 23 meeting of the Mountain View City Council. At the meeting, the mayor recognized the club's 100 years of service to the community with a proclamation.

By Giovanni Albanese Jr.
Town Crier Staff Writer

Looking to spike revenue into the city, the Mountain View City Council in its June 23 meeting voted to add a “transient occupancy tax” ballot measure to the November general election.

The City Council was unanimous in passing the measure, sending it to the Nov. 3, 2026, general election. If passed, it would bump Mountain View up from a transient occupancy tax of 10%, among the lowest rates in Silicon Valley and the Bay Area, to about 15%, which is comparable to neighboring cities. The increased tax rate is expected to generate up to \$5.2 million in annual revenue.

The tax is assessed on hotel and motel per-room occupancies, and is self-reported quarterly by businesses within the city limits. Occupancy by government employees on official business that exceeds a month is exempt from the tax. There are 19 hotels in Mountain View,

ranging in size from 17 to 255 rooms, with a total of nearly 1,800 rooms citywide.

A city report notes that the last time the tax increased was 35 years ago in 1991, when the rate went from 8% to 10%. The city expects that historically if the tax rate increased between 2% and 5% it would have generated about \$1.6 million to \$5.5 million in additional annual revenue.

A Revenue Measure Ad Hoc Sub-Committee met five times between October last year and June of this year before coming back to the council with the recommendation for the transient occupancy tax hike. The funding would be used for priority community projects and services.

Additionally, at the meeting, the council announced it took a stance against the construction of an Immigration and Customs Enforcement detention center in Gilroy. In a closed session prior to the regular meeting, five councilmembers voted in favor of joining a legal brief alongside other Bay Area governments

supporting a request for a court order to halt construction of a U.S. Immigration Custom Enforcement detention center in unincorporated Gilroy. There were no dissenters and just two abstentions.

The council unanimously appointed Jannie Quinn as interim city attorney effective July 6 until a full-time city attorney is hired. The city is expected to hire a full-time city attorney by the fall. The new appointee will take over for City Attorney Jennifer Logue, who was recently appointed to state superior court.

The regular meeting had 34 consent calendar items in its agenda for June 23, which is not unheard of heading into a summer break, Councilmember Pat Scowalter pointed out. Among them was an item specifically to prohibit the use of city property for federal civil immigration enforcement activities.

The council also announced it has received the largest grant for affordable housing and sustainable transportation, totaling \$50 million.

Los Altos Hills reappoints two planning commissioners

Town Crier Staff Report

The Los Altos Hills City Council has unanimously reappointed Alisa Bredo and Rajiv Patel to the Planning Commission, prioritizing experience on the advisory body that helps plan growth and development.

Bredo has served one term on the Planning Commission and previously was on the Pathways Committee. Patel has served two terms on the Planning Commission.

Several speakers at the June 18 council meeting spoke in favor of reappointing Bredo and Patel as the town deals with state hous-

ing mandates and new housing bills, citing the pair's institutional knowledge and experience.

The council also considered Dana Stalder and Katherine Frey for the two open positions, with neither having served on the Planning Commission before. Bredo and Patel will begin their four-year terms July 1.

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Yosemite River Alliance: Los Altos Hills water rate increases a rising concern

By Giovanni Albanese Jr.
Town Crier Staff Writer

With the Purissima Hills Water District Board set to hold a public hearing next month on proposed rate increases impacting Los Altos Hills customers, a water conservation organization is clapping back with concerns about the future drought projections that inevitably lead to ballooning rates.

Purissima Hills Water District's Board of Directors last month approved a five-year capital improvement plan (CIP). Those plans can be found at tinyurl.com/PHWDB-5-year. As part of the plan, the district, which buys its water wholesale from the San Francisco Public Utilities Commission, announced rate increases of approximately 9% annually through 2031 for its customers within Los Altos Hills.

The rates will include a fixed cost, plus one of two monthly consumption options being mulled over by the board: a three-tier residential structure and a uniform residential structure, both of which contain an additional \$6.23 pass-through rate to account for variable wholesale costs.

Yosemite River Alliance Policy Director Peter Drekmeier conceded that rates will continue to rise, but there are measures that could be taken to avoid them from going up as much as they might. This all stems from drought planning.

"SFPUC manufactured something called a design drought," Drekmeier said. "SFPUC is saying in their plan that in the first year following a drought, it would have severe rationing of 32% followed by 43% rationing in years two through five."

Drekmeier noted that the SFPUC draws water from eight reservoirs, including the Hetch Hetchy in the Sierras. When it's full up, the SFPUC has enough water to last six years.

"At the end of the design drought plan, they'll still have two and a half years of water supply," Drekmeier said. "They could ration less."

Drekmeier says that other towns like Mountain View and Los Altos, which get their water from different sources, including Cal Water and Valley Water, are also seeing rate increases, but not nearly as steep because the drought planning is more conservative.

See WATER, Page 7

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News

Mountain View free shuttles back in service after weeklong shutdown

By Giovanni Albanese Jr.
Town Crier Staff Writer

Service at Mountain View's mass transit organization is back in service after it had been shut down for more than a week, the Mountain View Transportation Management Association (MVTMA) announced Thursday.

"Our operator has obtained the required certification to reinstate services," MVTMA Executive Director Roni Hatstrup said.

Hatstrup said that the MVgo shuttle resumed its service June 25 at 3 p.m., and the Mountain View Community Shuttle began servicing the

community June 26 at 7 a.m.

"While this temporary service interruption was both unexpected and disappointing, our priority has always been restoring service safely and responsibly," Hatstrup said. "We appreciate the patience and understanding of our riders, partners and member organizations, and we remain committed to providing reliable transportation options that support mobility and helps reduce traffic congestion throughout our community."

The Mountain View Community Shuttle and MVgo free shuttle services, run by the MVTMA, had been shut down temporarily since June 18 due to the shuttle operator

WeDriveU's California Public Utilities Commission license expiring. The shutdown affected thousands of commuters who use the service on a daily basis.

While the operator was going through the reinstatement process with the California Highway Patrol, the MVTMA offered shuttle riders complimentary Uber vouchers, paid for by the contracted operator.

The free transit of MVCS and MVgo has weekday daily riderships of roughly 1,000 and 350, respectively, and 230 daily riders on the weekends, according to Hatstrup.

For more information, see mvcommunityshuttle.com and MVgo.org.

PLAZA

From Page 1

committing three of our acres to a performing arts center, a park, which we really don't need in downtown, and a parking garage."

Vice Mayor Larry Lang questioned Baer about his statement. "When did the City Council, in your opinion, make a commitment to do those things?" The back and forth between the two continued, Lang asking if Baer would agree

that they (the projects) were "could" things and hypothetical, Baer suggesting that all of the things discussed (both projects and initiative impacts) were hypothetical and could happen. Both agreed, but there was still little sense that common ground had been established.

Lang later pointed to what was a top concern of his. "It's not like, 'maybe we'll be sued.' We have a very strong organization that has indicated that they are going to sue us the

moment it passes, if it passes." Lang indicated that it would cost the city millions in legal fees. He further suggested that all of this could have been avoided had the wording on the initiative focused on requiring voter approval before the city created parks and performing arts centers and not been so broad as to include housing, which would place the city at odds with other provisions of law. Shaking his head, Lang added, "YIMBY Law wouldn't have sued us then."

WATER

From Page 6

He says that the designed drought plan by the SFPUC factors in the worst six-year drought and the worst two-year drought on record in history to come up with the rationing plan. Valley Water, conversely, just plans out a five-year drought forecast.

"Why is the SFPUC planning for a drought 19 times less likely than what everyone else is doing?" Drekmeier wondered. "They are locked into this position. They look at what to do and freeze these numbers."

Being part of a conservation group, Drekmeier stresses the need for them to come up with a plan to help protect and restore the envi-

ronment while also reducing rates.

"The rate crisis is so severe. We can't change past mistakes, but can avoid future mistakes that will have a bigger impact on water rate," Drekmeier said. "Amending the design drought plan would benefit the environmental and economical impact."

Regardless, the Purissima Hills Water District conducts its studies every five years to determine the rates and how it will use the funds to address maintenance and other improvement projects.

In the previous five years, in response to the 2022 study, the district used funds to complete eight capital projects totaling just over \$16.5 million and over 25,000 lin-

ear feet of water main, according to district general manager Tammy Rudock.

"The PHWD system is owned by its customers and their ratepayer revenues were used to reinvest in the system," Rudock said.

While the board has approved the budget and the five-year CIP, it issued a notice to customers last month announcing the Aug. 12 hearing at 6 p.m. at 26375 W. Fremont Road in Los Altos Hills or virtually via purissimawater.org/meetings. Any legal objections to the rate change must be filed by July 6. A majority would need to object to prevent the increase from taking effect, beginning Oct. 1 this year and subsequent adjustments annually on July 1 through 2030.

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Comment

Letters to the Editor

Where are the flags?

Last 4th of July, I was shocked to see only one business had a flag out on Main Street on the 4th of July. Are there any plans to show gratitude on our 250th anniversary for the freedom we enjoy in our country? It's not a President Trump celebration, but one for our country, regardless of political party.

Alan Kukas

Los Altos

Editor's note: The Town Crier's flag flies over Main Street every day.

One for a charming village more like Carmel

I heard one of the councilmembers refer the desire to keep Los Altos looking like a village as "toxic nostalgia." They have said we should have tall modern buildings downtown or we'll be left behind. I for one, like to have our downtown look like a village. As for "toxic nostalgia," just ask all the people who love Carmel how they feel about that charming village.

Cathy Kordsmeier

Los Altos

Peek into the past: 1976



PHOTO BY MURRY KALISH

Los Altos loves to hold a parade. Colorful floats tracing the nation's 200-year history, bands, antique vehicles and the Wells Fargo stagecoach marched/rolled down Main Street to celebrate the nation's bicentennial in 1976. An antique plane flyover signaled the start of the parade.

It's not just a park

By Robert Henely

Los Altos resident

This summer, you may run into a friendly young person with a clipboard at a Los Altos park or farmers market, asking where you'd like to see a new downtown park and what should go in it. Be careful with the question. It quietly assumes an answer the city has never actually

put to residents: whether this should be built at all.

What is being marketed as "a park" is, by the city's own records, something far larger – a wholesale reimagining of downtown.

Here is what "the park" actually includes. The city's lead design consultant, Watry Design, is a firm whose specialty is parking structures. The plan pairs a small park with a replacement

parking solution, a performing arts theater – the Los Altos Stage Company has reserved half of Parking Plaza 2 for a future venue – and subsidized housing on Plazas 7 and 8, which the council declared surplus land in 2024. To make it all fit, several of our downtown public parking plazas would disappear. This isn't hidden; it's in the staff reports and council resolutions. But it is not what the word "park" conveys, and it is not what the summer outreach is asking about.

Then there is the cost. On February 11, 2025, the council awarded Watry Design a contract of \$2,288,500 for community engagement and design services on what the city calls the "Downtown Park with Parking," under a resolution authorizing up to \$2,517,350. That money comes from the Park Impact Fee fund – developer fees restricted to parks – which held about \$18.9 million at the time. That is roughly two and a half million dollars for design and outreach alone, before construction, before the theater, before

the housing. The eventual bill to the public will run far higher.

And here is the part residents should sit with: the sequence. The council committed that money to designers in February 2025. The clipboards asking us what we want came out in the summer of 2026, more than a year after the money was spent. Even a sitting council member, then-Vice

Those are honest positions. My objection is narrower and, I think, harder to dismiss: a project of this scope and cost should be described to residents honestly and in full, and the engagement should include the question the city keeps leaving off the board – not where the park should go, but whether this downtown redevelopment should happen at all.

A number of residents have organized to ask exactly that, through a ballot initiative requiring a public vote before our downtown parking plazas are remade. Whatever you think of the project, that is the right instinct: decisions of this magnitude, paid for with public money, belong to the public.

So when the clipboard finds you this summer, by all means share your views. But ask the question back. Ask what the whole project is. Ask what it costs. And ask why, after \$2.3 million and a year of design work, you are only now being asked.

Editor's clarification: The performing arts center is not part of the city project.

Other Voices

Mayor Neysa Fligor, voted against the contract because she felt the city was committing millions before it had the information it needed. When spending precedes the public conversation by a year, it is fair to ask whether the conversation is consultation or ratification.

Let me be clear about what I am not saying. I am not impugning the students doing the outreach; they have been courteous and are doing the job they were assigned. And reasonable neighbors can favor a park, or a theater or more housing.



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Community

TheatreWorks' annual fundraiser generates \$620,000

By Neel Gupta
Town Crier Editorial Intern

Exceeding its goal, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley raised a record high of \$620,000 at this year's spring gala.

Organizers said they hoped to generate \$600,000 at the annual event, held May 17 at Palo Alto Hills Golf & Country Club. All proceeds will go toward general operations.

Titled "Suspects & Sequins: A Mystery Masquerade," this year's event invited guests to be part of a whodunit-themed night. The gala comprised a variety of festivities, performances and a live auction.

"When I walked in, the space was completely transformed," said Aaron Nicholson, TheatreWorks' director of development. "After all, everyone loves a party, and the festivities were aimed to let everyone enjoy themselves while building community."

The festivities included the Dessert Dash, in which tables collectively bid on themed desserts from local bakeries. The highest bid wins first choice of dessert, the next-highest bid goes second and so on.

"The dessert dash gets better every year," Nicholson said. "All the goods are very extravagant and skilfully crafted."

TheatreWorks also honored Irene Sankoff and David Hein (Spotlight Award for Artistic Excellence) and Jim and Becky Morgan (Spotlight Award for Excellence in Philanthropy).

"We were honored to have Irene Sankoff and David Hein at the event, who are now national superstars for their work in *Come From Away*," Nicholson said. "We also felt it was

See THEATRE, Page 10



KATIE RAVAS/DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

TheatreWorks "Come From Away" actors Chris Reber and Dawn L. Troupe, TheatreWorks Founder/Artistic Director Emeritus Robert Kelley, TheatreWorks Resident Musical Director William Liberatore, TheatreWorks Director of Production Karen Szpaller, and "Come From Away" composers Irene Sankoff and David Hein at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's fundraiser "Suspects & Sequins: A Mystery Masquerade" on May 17, 2026 at Palo Alto Hills Golf & Country Club.

KATIE RAVAS/DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

Actors Brian Herndon and Maureen McVerry performed at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley's fundraiser "Suspects & Sequins: A Mystery Masquerade" on May 17, 2026 at Palo Alto Hills Golf & Country Club.

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Community

DAR and History Museum announce winners of poster contest

By Ann Hepenstal
DAR

The Los Altos Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) presented prizes to the winners of the poster contest, “A Moment that Helped Shape America,” at Los Altos History Museum’s recent preview night for their new exhibit. DAR sponsored this contest for area schoolchildren as part of the exhibit “The Spirit of ’76: Reflecting on America’s 250th,” which opened on June 18 and includes all the winning posters.

Students in grades 3 through 12 were invited to create an original poster based on the theme “A Moment that Helped Shape America,” highlighting an important event or person since the signing of the Declaration of Independence in 1776. Four local artists served as judges for the poster contest:

Badri Valian: Los Altos resident and winner of the DAR chapter’s 2022 Women in the Arts Recognition Award.

Maddy McBirney: Los Altos artist and winner of DAR’s 2026 Women in the Arts Recognition Award.

Mira Sharma: artist, Los Altos resident and member of Los Altos History Museum’s Board of Directors.

Melanie Kaye: artist, Mountain View resident and winner of the DAR chapter’s 2026 Women in American History Award.

They judged the posters on artistic expression; creativity, uniqueness, originality; interpretation of theme; use of language; and neatness.

The first-place winners in



COURTESY OF ANN HEPENSTAL

Leia Nasserian points to her entry, which received special recognition for poster design.

each grade division received a certificate and \$100 cash prize from DAR, and their posters are included in the museum exhibit. (Grade level is for the 2025-2026 school year.)

First Prize Grade 3-5: Caroline Chen, Grade 5, “The First Moon Landing.”

First Prize Grade 6-8: Zivah Kaul, Grade 6, “Her Voice, Her Vote.”

First Prize Grade 9-12: Allysa Wong, Grade 10, “Sunflower.”

The judges awarded special recognition certificates to several additional posters, which

are also on display:

Award of Distinction: Vivia Mehandra, Grade 5, “Katherine Johnson – An American Hero.”

Special Recognition for Artistic Merit: Andrew Schoonover, Grade 3, “A Date Which Will Live in Infamy.”

Special Recognition for Visual Communications: Ancia Hogg, Grade 5, “The Original Viral Moment.”

Special Recognition for Poster Design: Leia Nasserian, Grade 3, “Let Freedom Ring.”

For more information, see LosAltosHistory.org/Spiritof76.

Celebrate America’s 250th birthday with a public, nationwide, simultaneous reading of the

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To review the full study and learn more, visit:

<https://www.purissimawater.org/pages/rate-change.php>



THEATRE

From Page 9

important to recognize the Morgans, who have done so much for the community, both locally and nationally.”

In all, the night was an opportunity to not only celebrate the success of the local theater company but also to foster community and support for the arts.

“Theater is the connective tissue of community,” Nicholson said. “It’s crucial to continue supporting local theater, especially a company like TheatreWorks that produces everything from soup to nuts.”



KATIE RAVAS/DREW ALTIZER PHOTOGRAPHY

Dedicated philanthropists/civic leaders Jim & Becky Morgan with former California State Senator Joe Simitian and TheatreWorks Founder/Artistic Director Emeritus Robert Kelley at TheatreWorks Silicon Valley’s fundraiser “Suspects & Sequins: A Mystery Masquerade” on May 17, 2026 at Palo Alto Hills Golf & Country Club.

Community

Propagating begonias takes root at Garden Club of Los Altos workshop



PHOTO COURTESY OF JUDY HOGAN

Rita Nordby shows how to propagate begonias at the June Meeting of the Garden Club of Los Altos.

By Judy Hogan
Garden Club of Los Altos

The June 23 meeting of The Garden Club of Los Altos featured a program on propagating begonias by Rita Nordby, a member of the San Francisco Begonia Society, followed by a hands-on workshop for all attending

the meeting. The workshop included teaching leaf cutting for rhizomatous begonias and node divisions of cane begonias. Also helping facilitate the workshop were fellow SF Begonia Society members Tereza Flaxman and Donna Calhoun.

The clear plastic boxes used in the workshop (like to-go boxes or pastry boxes) held

moist Perlite – just add more water around the edges of the Perlite when the condensation clears from the inside cover. In three weeks, there should be roots developing and in three months, the new plants should be 3-4 inches tall and ready to pot.

For more information, see thegardencluboflosaltos.org.

Check out these local Independence Day events

Town Crier Report

This July 4th, the United States celebrates 250 years of independence. And there are plenty of community events open to anyone looking to celebrate.

Glorious 4th Independence Day Celebration – The city of Los Altos is hosting its annual 4th of July celebration in Shoup Park. The event on July 4 runs from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. and attendance is free. Celebrate American independence with live music, games, activities and more.

4th of July Fireworks Spectacular – The city of Mountain View, in collaboration with Live Nation, is hosting a fireworks display at Shoreline Amphitheatre on July 4 at 7 p.m. The show, titled “Summer of 1969: The Soundtrack of a Generation,” will feature a performance from the San Francisco Symphony.

Ticket prices range from \$30-\$80, but Mountain View

locals are eligible for discounted ticket prices if they are able to provide proof of residence. For more information, see mountainview.gov or shorelineamphitheatre.com.

Los Altos Hills 4th of July Parade – Los Altos Hills’ annual 4th of July parade starts at town hall (26379 Fremont Road) at 9:30 a.m. The parade will march roughly half a mile down Fremont Road, ending at Gardner Bullis Elementary School.

The Spirit of ’76: Reflecting on America’s 250th – The Los Altos History Museum is hosting an interactive exhibit that encourages visitors to “reflect on foundational texts and their relevance today, while exploring local histories of civic engagement and community building,” according to the museum’s website.

The exhibit opened June 18 and will be open until Nov. 8. The museum is open to the public Thursday through Sunday from noon to 4 p.m.

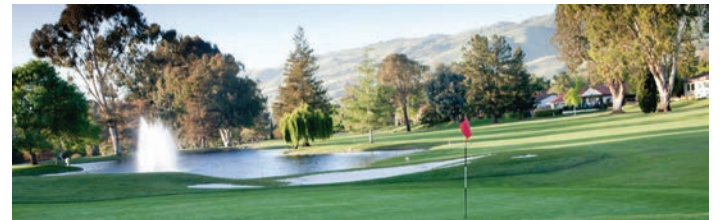
Sharing the Spirit of America – On July 8, Los Altos and Los Altos Hills will join cities across the United States for a simultaneous reading of the Declaration of Independence. This event commemorates the first time that the Declaration of Independence was read aloud to the American public on July 8, 1776.

Los Altos Mayor Sally Meadows, Los Altos Hills Mayor Rajiv Bhateja and other local community leaders will all read sections. The reading will begin at 2:45 p.m. in Veterans Community Plaza.

Wings of Freedom: Soaring Bald Eagles – Wildlife photographer Joan Sparks will share a presentation on bald eagles July 2 at 7 p.m. in the Los Altos Library. The library’s website encourages attendees to “experience these majestic birds in flight, observe their diverse behaviors, and discover the unique traits of this remarkable raptor!”

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Schools

Questions remain over MVLA superintendent's contract



CLARKE CONDÉ/TOWN CRIBER

MVLA administration offices

By Julia Baum
Town Crier Staff Writer

The Mountain View-Los Altos High School District Board of Trustees is handling the annual review of Superintendent Eric Volta's employment agreement differently from a year ago, saying at its June 15 meeting that no public vote was necessary because the agreement is "self-renewing."

The announcement followed multiple closed-session discussions in recent weeks. District officials agree Volta remains under contract through June 2028, but have not explained how their interpretation of the agreement aligns with its provisions governing evaluations, contract extensions and compensation.

In an email, Board President Thida Cornes told the Town Crier, "After reviewing the terms of the agreement with legal counsel, the board has determined that a separate action addressing the contract duration is unnecessary as the contract is self-renewing."

Volta's employment agreement, first approved in 2024, includes provisions linking contract extensions and compensation to annual performance evaluations.

Volta said in an email that no formal action on his annual evaluation has been completed, that the board took no action during closed session and that his contract remains in effect through June 2028 based on last year's approved extension.

He also said the board had received legal advice that a public vote is not required following a positive evaluation under the contract's terms, adding that the process "is not complete yet."

The approach differed from 2025, when trustees voted 4-0 to extend Volta's contract and approve a 2.8% salary increase. This year's agenda included possible action on an extension and a proposed salary increase, but no public vote occurred.

The agreement states that a positive evaluation results in a one-year contract extension that is subject to public ratification. Section 15.1 states that if the board's written end-of-year evaluation explicitly finds the superintendent's performance positive, the duration of the agreement "shall be extended

by one (1) additional academic year." Section 15.2 states that if the superintendent agrees to the extension, it "shall be ratified by the Board at the next regularly scheduled Board meeting following the date of the evaluation, during open session."

California law permits governing boards to evaluate superintendents in closed session, but certain actions must be publicly reported afterward. Whether any reporting was required here depends on what, if anything, the board decided during closed session, something district officials have not publicly explained.

Separately, it remains unclear whether the board has completed Volta's annual written evaluation. Under the agreement, a positive written evaluation is tied to provisions governing both contract extensions and compensation. Cornes declined to say whether a positive evaluation had been issued this year.

For now, the district maintains that no board action was required on the contract-extension item because the agreement is "self-renewing," while Volta says the evaluation process has not yet been completed. The district has not said whether a future vote on compensation or contract terms is expected.

The Town Crier subsequently requested contact with district legal counsel or another district representative familiar with the legal interpretation of the superintendent's contract. The district did not respond to that request.

Foothill's MESA opens STEM doors for first-generation students

By Julia Baum
Town Crier Staff Writer

When Juan Lara first arrived at Foothill College, he wasn't sure whether a future in STEM was realistic.

After struggling with health issues in high school and facing the challenges common to many first-generation college students, Lara said he often felt discouraged navigating higher education on his own. This fall, however, he will transfer to UC Berkeley with a full scholarship package to study biochemistry – a milestone he credits in part to Foothill College's Mathematics, Engineering, Science, Achievement (MESA) program.

"MESA helped me become more outgoing," Lara said. "I was able to develop my networking skills overall, just advocating for myself in ways that I couldn't before."

MESA is a state-funded initiative supporting low-income and first-generation students in STEM as they prepare to transfer to four-year universities. Foothill's program, now in its fourth year, serves more than 100 students and helps about 30 transfer annually to universities across California and beyond.

According to program director Sophia Kim, MESA was created to address barriers that often prevent students from reaching their potential.

"There's this unlocked potential that they have in themselves," Kim said. "Once we help them, we help open the doors to all these opportunities."

The program provides academic counseling, transfer planning, career advising, scholarship support and mentorship. Students also have access to a dedicated campus space to study, connect with peers and learn about opportunities they might otherwise miss.

For Paulina Cabral, a fourth-year student preparing to transfer into data science, that community proved transformative. After initially pursuing a different major, she switched to mathematics and later discovered data

science, even though it delayed her graduation timeline.

Cabral said she was "a bit nervous" when she first joined MESA, but was "greeted with a community of many students like myself."

Through the program, she connected with mentors in data science, received scholarship support and participated in research projects, including one focused on breast cancer detection technology.

"MESA has been the greatest support for me; I'm glad I didn't hesitate to join it," Cabral said.

Carlos Hernandez's path was equally unconventional. After completing high school in Mexico and working two jobs for several years, he returned to college as an adult student. He said MESA helped him see possibilities he had never considered.

Originally, Hernandez planned to attend a state school with a higher acceptance rate, but after seeing other MESA peers get into schools like Berkeley, he realized it was within his reach and set transferring there as his goal.

He said the support system around him – especially counseling and having people "in his corner" – helped him build confidence and persistence.

Kim said those stories reflect the program's mission: helping students recognize opportunities that already exist and giving them the tools to pursue them.

Located in the heart of Silicon Valley, Foothill's MESA program benefits from proximity to Stanford University, research institutions and technology companies. But Kim believes its greatest strength is its community.

"I think that definitely lends to their feeling like this is possible for me, because other people have done it, who look like me too," she said.

For students unsure whether they belong in STEM, MESA participants offer a simple message: Take the first step, ask for help and don't give up. As Hernandez put it, "There are resources out there for us and we need to be okay with asking for help."

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Sports

New pickleball court site picked in Mountain View

By Curtis Driscoll
Town Crier Staff Writer

One of the fastest-growing sports in America will soon have more courts in Mountain View after the City Council agreed to lease land to build a new pickleball facility near the Sunnyvale Municipal Golf Course.

Located at 485 and 495 Clyde Ave., the courts would be near Middlefield Road and State Route 237 in the eastern part of Mountain View. The property is large enough to fit a pickleball facility with up to 12 courts, including parking and restrooms, according to a city staff report. The land is owned by Google, with the city and the tech company agreeing to a seven-year lease starting at the end of 2026, and an option to sell the property to the city during the lease term. The rent estimate for the first year of the lease is \$131,000. Design and construction will take approximately 18 months after the lease starts. The current 3.7-acre site of the two properties is also set to be a future park.

“Pickleball has been something this community has been tossing around for three or four years, about where we should do it, so we’ve come upon this facility that has been identified,” Councilmember Pat Showalter said at the meeting.

The City Council finalized the agreement at its June 23 meeting.



CURTIS DRISCOLL/TOWN CRIER

485 and 495 Clyde Ave. in Mountain View will be the site of a new pickleball facility following a lease agreement between the city and Google. The property is large enough to fit a facility with 12 courts, including parking and restrooms, according to the city.

St. Francis hires girls flag football coach

By Curtis Driscoll
Town Crier Staff Writer

The St. Francis girls flag football program has a new head coach in Nancy Nguyen, who will take over for former coach Sean Smith.

In the inaugural Central Coast Section playoffs for flag football last fall, St. Francis emerged as the CCS Division I champion, cementing itself as a program on the rise. St. Francis took down Santa Clara and Aragon to reach the final as the No. 3 seed, beating Branham 13-6 in the final. The Lancers finished last season 11-11-1 and third in the West Bay Athletic League Foothill Division behind powerhouses Menlo School and Sacred Heart Prep.

Nguyen replaces Smith, who stepped down as head coach in January. Smith held a career record of 24-18-1 and was in charge of the program for two seasons, helping build the team in the program’s infancy. Organized, competitive games for girls flag football at the high school level have only been around for three years in the area, as momentum grows to add the sport.

Flag football is one of the fastest-growing sports in the United States, as more people become aware of the risk of increased head impact injuries and



MIA SCOTT/TOWN CRIER EDITORIAL INTERN

St. Francis playing during the 2025 season.

concussions with tackle football. A Centers for Disease Control and Prevention study published in “Sports Health” found that youth tackle football athletes ages 6 to 14 sustained 15 times more head impact injuries than flag football athletes during a practice or game, suggesting that flag football programs may be a safer alternative for youth football athletes, according to the CDC. Head impacts increase the risk of concussion.

Practice for flag football begins in August, with the first game of the season for St. Francis set for an Aug. 31 home opener against Hillsdale.

To pitch an idea for the Sports section or to comment on its content, email section editor Curtis Driscoll at curtisd@latc.com.

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Stepping Out

Local events to step out to this week & next

Town Crier Report

- **Glorious 4th Independence Day Celebration**, 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. July 4, Shoup Park, 400 University Ave., Los Altos. This annual tradition features music by Ye Olde Towne Band, as well as games, activities and food for purchase. Free.
- **Celebrate the 250th Birthday of America with Music**, 4 p.m. July 5, ParkStage, behind the Mountain View Center for the Performing Arts, 500 Castro

St. The Terrible Adult Chamber Orchestra (TACO) will perform 10 American works, each introduced with brief commentary on their historical context. Free. Listeners are encouraged to bring their own folding chairs or blankets for lawn seating. For more information, see tinyurl.com/TACO-celebrate250.

- **Carnatic Violin Concert**, 4 p.m. July 11, Mitchell Park Multipurpose Bowl, 600 E. Meadow Drive, Palo Alto. Part of the Mitchell Park's Music in the

Park series, this outdoor concert features Shiva Ramamurthi on violin and Vignesh Venkataraman on mridangam. Free. For more information, see tinyurl.com/CarnaticViolin-July11.

- **Dance at Albertos**, 736 W. Dana St., Mountain View. Tango Sundays, Bachata Mondays and Wednesdays, and Salsa Tuesdays, Thursdays, Fridays and Saturdays. Most nights begin with a lesson, followed by social dancing. \$15. For more information, see albertos.com.

Viewpoint's new show features natural serenity



AVA ACHARYA/TOWN CRIER

Local artist Georgette Gomez with her painting of a beach and coastal bluff.

By Ava Acharya

Town Crier Staff Writer

Intertwined within Italian landscapes and written across the faces of her students, Georgette Gomez finds humanity.

For Gomez, personality is beyond what is said and done, but what is felt. It is the emotions that radiate off a person or thing and infect all who experience it.

Through her paintings, Gomez aims to neutralize the intensity of modern life, easing viewers through their journey “Walking Towards Serenity.”

Gomez’s upcoming exhibition, titled “Walking Towards Serenity,” opens July 1 at Viewpoints Gallery, located at 315 State St. in downtown Los Altos. The exhibit will remain open throughout July, closing Aug. 2.

“My primary inspiration is life and people,” Gomez said. “I started to see that all that is within the individual is also contained in still life or in landscape.”

Gomez teaches at Hartnell College in Salinas. She described the ways in which she saw her students struggle with mental health and personal fulfillment, especially during a politically tumultuous era in the United States.

These were burdens that Gomez saw within herself. She felt heavy.

“It has felt overwhelming in the United States these past several years,” Gomez said. “The tensions, the disagreements, the challenges amongst people. I felt it very powerfully, so what came

to me was the Serenity Prayer.”

“God, grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change, the courage to change the things I can, and the wisdom to know the difference.”

While visiting Italy with her students, Gomez was struck with serenity among the countryside landscapes. But not because it was void of human experience and emotion. Rather, because the setting embodied the positive human emotions she craved.

“Here I am on the Etruscan hillside of Corciano, overlooking this beautiful hillside, and on top sits a former monastery of St. Augustine,” Gomez said. “It was so full of peace. I would just gaze over the hillside at sunset. It just really captured my heart.”

Gomez said that the exhibition title reflects on the meditative, spiritual quality that both painting and nature can hold. This central idea relates to her overall goals with art.

“That’s all I want to do, to lighten somebody’s burden or bring joy to their life, or help them to get unstuck, help them to find a place where they can walk toward serenity,” Gomez said.

Gomez’s paintings ultimately aim to capture the personality of the environment around her.

“I can read a lot of emotion, whether it’s in a landscape, in an environment, or in a still life, or even in a person, and so I’m inspired by all those genres, and trying to capture the human element that is represented in all three genres,” Gomez said.

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On the Move

Hyundai Tucson's PHEV excels at gas/electric combo

By Mike Hagerty

Auto Review

I've mentioned before that with only two reviews per month – 24 per year – some good cars have fallen through the cracks in my seven years here at the Town Crier and losaltosonline.com.

The Hyundai Tucson is one of the most popular cars in the U.S., and the last time one was featured in this column was March of 2005, by my predecessors, the late Gary Anderson and his wife Genie.

More than 21 years. Let's fix that glaring oversight right now.

The Tucson is a compact SUV that seats five people. Among its direct competitors in a very crowded field are the Subaru Forester ("On the Move," September 2025) and the Honda CR-V ("On the Move," August 2023).

The Tucson checks all the boxes in a competitive segment. It isn't lacking in any essential area, and it offers a bonus. It is one of only a few

compact SUVs that offer a plug-in hybrid electric vehicle (PHEV) model – another is its corporate cousin, the mechanically similar Kia Sportage ("On the Move," June 2026).

Basically, a PHEV is a gasoline/electric hybrid, which maximizes fuel efficiency. But it adds a small battery and a charging port and allows you to travel a given number of miles per charge on pure electric power. In the Hyundai Tucson PHEV, that number is 32 miles.

So if your commute is 15 miles each way, and you recharge at home every night, you could go months without using a drop of gasoline or putting a particle of tailpipe pollution into the air. The battery is small, so recharges, even on 110-volt household current, are relatively quick.

Should you need to drive farther, the gasoline/electric hybrid kicks in seamlessly,



MIKE HAGERTY/SPECIAL TO THE TOWN CRIER

The Hyundai Tucson's plug-in hybrid electric vehicle gets 32 of pure electric power.

and, according to the EPA, returns 35 miles per gallon combined city/highway. But if you have charged the car and use those 32 miles of pure electric range first, that results in an EPA estimate of 77 MPGe (miles per gallon equivalent). So it pays to always charge.

On a long trip? Just pull into a gas station and fill 'er up.

Cargo capacity in the 2026 Hyundai Tucson PHEV is ample – 38.7 cubic feet behind the second-row seat and 74.5 cubic feet with the back seat folded down.

The Tucson is one of the few compact SUVs with almost the same rear-seat legroom as front-row legroom – 41.4 inches up front, 41/3 in the back. That is serious stretch-out space.

See TUCSON, Page 16

Sensor failure causes car to limp home – evolving layers of a problem

By Matt Pataky

One of our newer customers called in and stated that his BMW M3 had gone into limp mode. He told us that a few days before, his dynamic stability light (DSC) turned on while driving. He then pulled over, turned the car off and started it again. After restarting the car the DSC light was off. Two days later, he was accelerating onto the freeway and the car lost power and went into limp mode, yet this time it did not recover. During the second failure, the service engine light (CEL) also turned on and did not turn off. The CEL stores codes in the digital motor electronics (DME) computer.

As soon as we received the car, we connected it to the Intelligent Service Technical Application (ISTA). We ran the short test and pulled three codes. We pulled 0027E4

DME: Vacuum sensor, Brake booster, plausibility, 0027E6
DME: No electricity fuel pump activation and 002B13
DME: Speed recording.

The primary code we have to address first is the 0027E4 DME: Vacuum sensor, Brake booster, plausibility. Before I go on, I want to explain the power brake system we have to diagnose.

Matt the Mechanic

Most power brake boosters on the market gain their assist from a vacuum source. For the past 60 years that vacuum source primarily came from the engine intake manifold. The problem with that is that the air that is removed from the intake affects the air-fuel mixture. Another mainstream vacuum source is from a mechanical pump that is driven

off the engine. Again, the problem with that is it robbed horsepower and does not play well with valve-controlled throttles. The answer to all of these problems is to have a separate electronic vacuum pump.

We then ran the test plan for the vacuum sensor fault. To run this test, we have to activate the brake vacuum pump through the factory scan tool (ISTA). We found that the pump was activating, yet making a lot more noise than normal. We also saw low readings from the vacuum pump. At the same time, we checked the connector and wire harness to the vacuum pump sensor. Note: We could only test the vacuum sensor through the ISTA as it is buried under the brake booster. At that time, we could not see a problem with the vacuum sensor. We then recommended replacing the brake vacuum pump first and retesting.

We then replaced the brake vacuum pump, cleared codes and test drove the car again. After replacing the pump, we connected to ISTA again and ran the test plan. The pump turned on, but was now very quiet. Then we test drove the car. After about 10 miles the check engine light turned on again. We then connected the car to ISTA again and pulled codes. The 0027E4 DME: Vacuum sensor, Brake booster, plausibility code was back. We inspected the connector to the vacuum sensor one more time but still could not find a problem.

This vacuum sensor is permanently attached to the brake vacuum line that goes from the brake booster to the brake master cylinder. So unfortunately we could not easily remove it. We got the authorization to remove the brake booster and check the brake vacuum line and vacuum sensor. With the

brake line out of the car, we checked the vacuum sensor on the bench. The sensor had high resistance. We then got the authorization to replace the brake line with a sensor. Once the new line and sensor were installed, we then had to purge the air from the brake's hydraulic system. Then we cleared the codes and test drove. The problem was gone.

In the end, we figured out that the sensor most likely failed first and was telling the brake control module that there was not enough vacuum. In turn, the brake control module kept running the brake vacuum pump on until it killed itself. Again, we can see the many layers of a problem and how they evolve. Thanks for reading.

Matt Pataky owns Sunnyvale Foreign Car Service, 15 Pioneer Way, Mountain View. For more information, see sunnyvaleforeigncar.com.

On the Move

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TUCSON

From Page 15

Our test vehicle is the top-of-the-line Limited AWD. Base price \$48,300-\$49,000 including destination. The list of standard equipment, too long to print in its entirety, includes 19-inch alloy wheels, a panoramic sunroof, leather-trimmed seats (heated and ventilated up front, heated in the back), a heated leather-wrapped steering wheel, a hands-free power liftgate, dual-zone automatic temperature control, a Bose premium audio system with wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto and a comprehensive suite of active safety features.

The only extra-cost option on our car was a \$240 set of carpeted floor mats, so the as-tested price comes to \$50,140.

Regular readers know I'm a big fan of PHEVs. They cost more than non-plug-in hybrids or gasoline variants (and Hyundai offers those versions of the Tucson, too), but the EPA says you'll save \$2,250 in fuel costs over five years compared to the average new vehicle with the 2026 Hyundai Tucson PHEV. It's a great bridge for the buyer who'd like to go pure EV, but isn't quite ready yet.

Mike Hagerty, past vice president of membership for Western Automotive Journalists (waj.org), has been writing about cars since 1997. Read more of his reviews at Mike-HagertyCars.com.



PHOTOS BY MIKE HAGERTY/SPECIAL TO THE TOWN CRIER

Above: The Hyundai Tucson's plug-in hybrid electric vehicle's interior includes leather-trimmed seats (heated and ventilated up front, heated in the back), a heated leather-wrapped steering wheel, a hands-free power liftgate, dual-zone automatic temperature control, a Bose premium audio system with wireless Apple CarPlay and Android Auto and a comprehensive suite of active safety features.

Below: The Tucson PHEV's cargo capacity is ample – 38.7 cubic feet behind the second-row seat and 74.5 cubic feet with the back seat folded down.



If you would like to comment on the "On the Move" section, email clarkec@latc.com.



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On the Move

2026 Subaru Outback Limited is boxy, rugged, capable

By Mike Hagerty

The last time I wrote about the Subaru Outback (“On the Move,” February 2025), there were six station wagon models for sale in the United States.

Now there are four. BMW has added the M5 Touring, but Audi has discontinued one of its two wagons, Volvo has stopped sending us the V60 (“On the Move,” November 2024), and Subaru has made it clear that the all-new 2026 Outback is an SUV now.

There was such an uproar over this development among the Subaru faithful that the company had to clarify that while love may be what makes a Subaru a Subaru, the Environmental Protection Agency decides what makes an SUV an SUV – using a formula very few pretend to understand (Motor Trend, one of America’s premiere car magazines since 1949, tried and ended up giving its story the headline “Why the EPA’s Vehicle-Size Classes Make No Sense”).

It’s worth noting that the EPA has considered the Outback an SUV for at least a decade.

If you looked at previous Subaru Outbacks and said “station wagon” (as have most people), your answer will be

Auto Review

different this time. The 2026 Outback has gone all-in on the boxy, rugged look that is a hot seller in today’s marketplace. There’s a lengthy press release about that, but all you really need to know is that the words “conveys,” “emphasize,” “highlights” and “communicates” are doing some heavy lifting.

That means mechanical changes are minimal and that a 2026 Subaru Outback is as capable off-road as it was before, and the off-road Wilderness trim remains part of the lineup. Our test vehicle is the top-of-the-line Limited XT, which still looks plenty rugged.

The engine under the hood, a 2.4-liter BOXER four-cylinder, produces the same 260 horsepower and 277 pound-feet of torque as before. All-wheel drive is standard. Fuel economy has taken a slight hit – 22 mpg city is now 21 and 31 mpg highway is now 29 (likely due to the Outback’s less-slippery shape creating more wind resistance).

The upside to that is that the flatter roofline and steeper rear glass have increased both passenger and cargo capacity. There’s an additional inch of headroom in both rows for

2026. Last year’s 32.6 cubic feet of cargo space behind the rear seat is now 34.6 and the old one’s 75.6 cubic feet with the second row folded is now 80.5.

Up front, the instrument panel has been re-done with a more conventional and intuitive touchscreen than the previous generation’s oversized vertical display.

The base price of the 2026 Subaru Outback Limited XT is \$44,365 – \$45,815 including destination. The list of standard equipment is too lengthy to repeat in detail here, but high points include 19-inch wheels, a Harman Kardon audio system with wireless Apple Car Play and Android Auto, heated front seats, heated side-mirrors and a windshield wiper de-icer, dual-zone automatic climate control and a comprehensive suite of active safety features including adaptive cruise control, blind spot and rear cross traffic warning, reverse automatic braking, driver attention monitoring and the EyeSight driver assist system that will, under the correct conditions, allow limited hands-free driving, pre-collision braking and emergency lane-keeping assistance.

Our test vehicle, in fact, had no extra cost options, meaning the as-tested price was \$45,815.



PHOTOS BY MIKE HAGERTY/SPECIAL TO THE TOWN CRIER

Top: The 2026 Subaru Outback (the Limited XT shown here) has gone for a rugged look. Below: The cargo space behind the rear seat is now 34.6 cubic feet.



The Subaru Outback has always been a very good vehicle. The new one is every bit as good – but if you liked driv-

ing something a bit different in a sea of similarly-sized boxy SUVs, time and trends have moved on.

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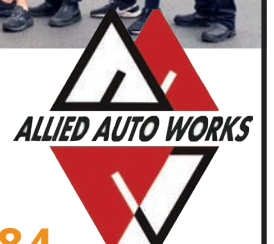
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Business & Real Estate

Financial fraud scams targetting local residents

By Anika Kapasi
Town Crier Editorial Intern

Local law enforcement officials have received an array of financial fraud reports this year, ranging from mail theft and check washing to impersonation and theft by false pretenses.

As of May 31, the Los Altos Police Department has logged 29 theft by false pretense reports, six credit card/ATM fraud cases, six cases of identity theft and seven impersonation reports, according to its transparency dashboard.

As of June 9, the Mountain View Police Department received 143 reports involving financial crimes in 2026, including theft by false pretenses, credit card fraud and wire fraud, according to MVPD analyst Elizabeth Mendez. It also received 38 reports of identity theft and 38 reports of forgery.

For Los Altos Hills, residents reported nine cases of identity theft, forgery/fraud and theft by false pretense incidents, as well as five mail or check-relat-

ed incidents as of May 30, according to Melanie McGuire, management analyst for the Santa Clara County Office of the Sheriff.

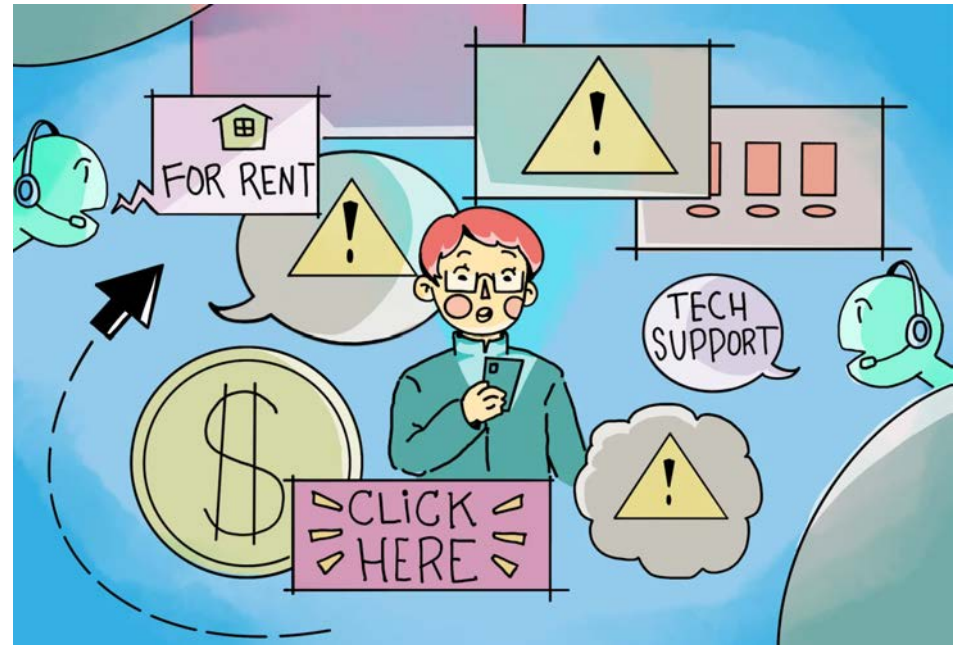
“We’ve noticed now that a lot of the crimes have now been going electronically,” said Sgt. Jarvis Bui of the Sheriff’s Office, which contracts with Los Altos Hills.

In recent months, Bui said financial crimes have been computer or phone-based, often involving theft by false pretenses, cases where victims are deceived into providing information, money or access to personal accounts.

Residents who often fall victim to these particular scams are 50 and older, Bui added.

Bui noted, however, that financial fraud often goes underreported since a resident’s first point of contact after seeing a fraudulent withdrawal on their account is to their bank, not law enforcement, and residents will often handle it themselves.

Bui said scammers often use tech-



RACHEL ARONSON/EDITORIAL INTERN

nology to make the victim believe they are talking to someone in a company’s IT department or a government worker from the IRS or another agency. He added fraudsters also use malware via pop-ups to comprise victims’ accounts.

“People in general are trustworthy, so they’ll just, without doing any research, call that number that pops up on their screen,” Bui said.

Once the suspect contacts the victim, they gain remote access to their electronic devices to access their personal accounts without the victim knowing.

With the technological nature of the crime, suspects might not even live in the area, state or country, according to Bui. Since the perpetrators can mask their phone numbers and IP addresses, it is difficult to track them.

Based on the cases worked this year by the Sheriff’s Office and the nature of these crimes, Bui said there is a “very low” success rate of finding the suspects.

Once money is moved through cryptocurrency, bank transfers or overseas accounts, it becomes much harder to trace and identify the suspect and recover the money, according to Jonathan Beardsley, deputy district attorney at the Santa Clara County District Attorney’s Office.

“Being able to use a VPN, being able to create an email address using Google Phone Voice – where the phone number is a randomized phone number – being able to figure out who the person is is oftentimes very difficult, if possible at all,” said Beardsley, who prosecutes elder fraud (65 years and older) and real estate fraud. How people can commit fraud is “almost unlimited,” he added.

Beardsley said the district attorney’s office has worked on fraud cases where caregivers of elderly adults steal or embezzle money from them, and romance scams where the suspect befriends and develops a relationship with the victim

online to convince them to send money.

These types of scams become more sophisticated when the victim realizes they have been defrauded and someone calls them pretending to be law enforcement to scam them out of additional funds, Beardsley said.

The deputy DA also described prosecuting fraud involving theft by false pretense, as Bui said. Beardsley added that government impersonation scams, such as someone claiming they are from the IRS and the victim has unpaid taxes, are common.

As a prosecutor for real estate fraud, Beardsley said his office has seen cases where suspects forge deeds to claim ownership of homes or lots, pretend to own a property and sell it to an unsuspecting buyer or exploit an older homeowner by convincing them to transfer property or take out a mortgage.

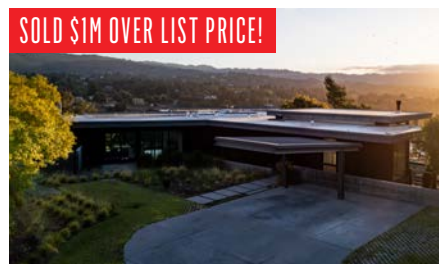
He said his office is seeing “quite a few” empty lots and rental scams. When a resident looks to rent a house on an online platform like Zillow or Facebook Marketplace, someone who doesn’t own the house posts it for rent.

“(Victims) look at pictures, they believe that they’re communicating with the actual owner or property manager, and they send the deposit, first month’s rent – they’re not actually renting anything,” Beardsley said.

He said with financial scams, restitution is difficult – a stance Los Altos Police Sgt. Aimee Major also took regarding the low recovery rate for money stolen via fraud.

Major said her department has recently seen a lot of check fraud, including check washing and forgery. She attributed the trend to being in a community with many older residents who pay their tax bills by check; suspects sometimes steal such mail and wash the checks.

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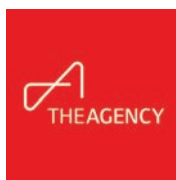


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2491 Betlo Avenue, Maxwell Family Trust to D. & D. Chen for \$2,200,000

819 Warner Court, I. Mckay to F. & A. Ignatescu for \$2,400,000

749 Rainbow Drive, V. Thompson to Jorayev & Danilch Family Trust for \$2,700,000

215 Lauella Court, A. & D. Nielson to Bols Trust for \$3,100,000

3397 Ivan Way, Jordan Family Trust to P. & P. Aich for \$3,200,000

537 Mountain View Avenue, Smart Living Trust to A. & L. Romandine for \$3,298,000

1244 Rose Avenue, Yun & Shuai Family Trust to Z. & X. Sun for \$3,900,000

170 Levin Avenue, Chou Living Trust to E. & S. Magowan for \$5,425,000

– Transaction information is obtained from public county records and provided by Cal RE-source.

SCAMS

From Page 18

“The money is not recovered very successfully,” Major said. “By the time we get to a suspect, they’ve usually withdrawn that into cash and that money is gone.”

Beside check fraud, Major said residents report impersonation, account takeover cases and identity theft. While Major said elderly people are often victims of account takeovers, identity theft has no boundaries.

“Victimization – there’s not an age requirement. We see that happening at all levels,” Major said.

MVPD has not found evidence that older adults are specifically being targeted through substantially different methods than other age groups, Mendez wrote in an email to the Town Crier.

“While scammers may adapt their outreach based on the communication methods individuals are most likely to use, the department does not correlate data on victims’ ages in

relation to how initial contact was made,” Mendez wrote. “As a result, we cannot determine whether specific scam tactics are more prevalent among certain age groups.”

However, Mendez added the city has seen a “noticeable increase” in recent years in scams that use cryptocurrency to move funds from victims to suspects. Many of those cases are classified as investment scams, romance scams or public and law enforcement impersonation scams.

All three local law-enforcement agencies engage in community outreach and public education efforts that include presentations on fraud prevention, scams and identity theft.

“... if someone’s wanting a specific request for us to come out and talk to them about certain things or how to keep themselves safe, we put on these different events to try to educate people and let them know what to look out for if they believe that someone is trying to scam them or to prevent a scam or fraud from happening,” Major said.



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LOS ALTOS HILLS

\$6,988,000 | 4 Bd | 4.5 Bth
28100StoryHill.com



27500 LA VIDA REAL
LOS ALTOS HILLS

\$36,999,000 | 5 Bd | 12 Bth
27500LaVida.com



61 OAK HAVEN WAY
WOODSIDE

\$4,788,000 | 4 Bd | 3.5 Bth
61OakHavenWay.com



306 WALSH ROAD
ATHERTON

\$7,488,000 | 5 Bd | 5 Bth
306Walsh.com



10101 RICHWOOD DRIVE
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\$2,988,000 | 3 Bd | 2 Bth
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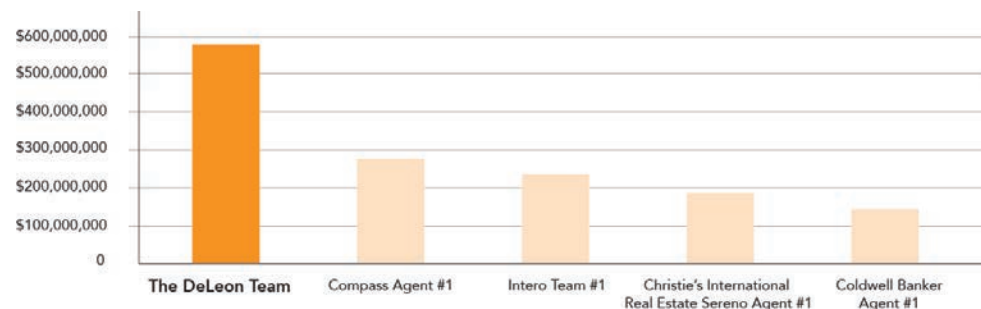
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Sources: Brokermetrics® MLS stats., as of May 6, 2026
Criteria: Single Family Residential, in Los Altos Hills, Los Altos, and Palo Alto from 1/1/25 to 4/30/26

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Public Notices

TOWN OF LOS ALTOS HILLS

NOTICE OF ELECTION AND NOMINATION PERIOD

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that a General Municipal Election will be held in the Town of Los Altos Hills on Tuesday, November 3, 2026, for the following office:

TWO (2) MEMBERS OF THE TOWN COUNCIL Full Term of Four (4) Years

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that nomination papers may be obtained from the City Clerk beginning Monday, July 13, 2026, and must be filed no later than Friday, August 7, 2026, at 5:00 p.m.

NOTICE IS FURTHER GIVEN that if the number of persons nominated for the Office of City Council Member does not exceed the number of offices to be filled, the election for that office may be canceled and the City Council may appoint the qualified nominees to office in accordance with Section 10229 of the California Elections Code.

Arika Miller, CMC
City Clerk / Elections Official
Town of Los Altos Hills
Dated: July 1, 2026
(07-01-26)

163-T

NUVOTIDE RESEARCH FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. FBN727230

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: NUVOTIDE RESEARCH, 1177 Branham Ln #1018, San Jose, CA, 95118, Santa Clara County. The business is owned by: a limited liability company. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is (are): RYMON VENTURES LLC, 1177 Branham Ln #1018, San Jose, CA 95118. Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on: 05/20/2026. /S/ Aremon Habibi / This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Santa Clara County on 05/28/2026. (07-01,08,15,22-26)

162-T

CITY OF LOS ALTOS NOTICE OF FOUND PROPERTY PER CIVIL CODE 2080.3

The following property is currently held by the Los Altos Police Department: FOUND RING (Main St.). This item has been turned in as Found Property in case 26-0137. If you, as the rightful owner, wish to identify and claim the above item, please contact the Los Altos Police Department at (650) 947-2823 within seven days from the date of this publication. Proof of ownership is required.

/s/ M. Thurman, City Clerk
(07-01-26)

161-T

CITY OF LOS ALTOS NOTICE OF FOUND PROPERTY PER CIVIL CODE 2080.3

The following property is currently held by the Los Altos Police Department: FOUND RING (State St.). This item has been turned in as Found Property in case 25-0887. If you, as the rightful owner, wish to identify and claim the above item, please

contact the Los Altos Police Department at (650) 947-2823 within seven days from the date of this publication. Proof of ownership is required.

/s/ M. Thurman, City Clerk
(07-01-26)

160-T

Selah Therapy FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. FBN727955

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: Selah Therapy, 20289 Stevens Creek Blvd, #1127, Cupertino, CA, 95014, Santa Clara County. The business is owned by: a corporation. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is (are): Selah Marriage and Family Therapy, Prof. Corp., 21771 Stevens Creek Blvd Ste 200A, Cupertino, CA 95014. Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on: 06/22/2026. /S/ Ganlin Chen / This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Santa Clara County on 06/22/2026. (07-01,08,15,22-26)

159-T

EMBODIED RECOVERY FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. FBN727951

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: EMBODIED RECOVERY, 910 Campisi Way, 2C, Campbell, CA, 95008, Santa Clara County. The business is owned by: a limited liability company. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is (are): EMBODIED RECOVERY LLC, 910 Campisi Way, 2C, Campbell, CA 95008. Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on: 01/10/2019. /S/ Michael Nolan / This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Santa Clara County on 06/22/2026. (07-01,08,15,22-26)

158-T

MUSIC WITH ERICA FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. FBN727932

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: MUSIC WITH ERICA, 265 Cambridge Avenue Suite 60602, Palo Alto, CA, 94306, Santa Clara County. The business is owned by: an individual. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is (are): Erica Waxer Steinberger, 265 Cambridge Avenue Suite 60602, Palo Alto, CA 94306. Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on: 01/01/2014. /S/ Erica Waxer Steinberger / This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Santa Clara County on 06/22/2026. (07-01,08,15,22-26)

157-T

T.S. No. 107068-CA APN: 150-34-020 NOTICE OF TRUSTEE'S SALE

IMPORTANT NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNER: YOU ARE IN DE-

FAULT UNDER A DEED OF TRUST, DATED 7/12/2017. UNLESS YOU TAKE ACTION TO PROTECT YOUR PROPERTY, IT MAY BE SOLD AT A PUBLIC SALE. IF YOU NEED AN EXPLANATION OF THE NATURE OF THE PROCEEDING AGAINST YOU, YOU SHOULD CONTACT A LAWYER On 7/22/2026 at 10:00 AM. CLEAR RECON CORP, as duly appointed trustee under and pursuant to Deed of Trust recorded 7/13/2017 as Instrument No. 23696830 of Official Records in the office of the County Recorder of Santa Clara County, State of CALIFORNIA executed by: SLAVA MILNER A SINGLE MAN WILL SELL AT PUBLIC AUCTION TO HIGHEST BIDDER FOR CASH, CASHIER'S CHECK DRAWN ON A STATE OR NATIONAL BANK, A CHECK DRAWN BY A STATE OR FEDERAL CREDIT UNION, OR A CHECK DRAWN BY A STATE OR FEDERAL SAVINGS AND LOAN ASSOCIATION, SAVINGS ASSOCIATION, OR SAVINGS BANK SPECIFIED IN SECTION 5102 OF THE FINANCIAL CODE AND AUTHORIZED TO DO BUSINESS IN THIS STATE; AT THE GATED NORTH MARKET STREET ENTRANCE, SUPERIOR COURTHOUSE, 191 N. 1st Street, San Jose, CA 95113 all right, title and interest conveyed to and now held by it under said Deed of Trust in the property situated in said County and State described as: MORE FULLY DESCRIBED ON SAID DEED OF TRUST The street address and other common designation, if any, of the real property described above is purported to be: 436 SIERRA VISTA AVE 6, MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA 94043-2954 The undersigned Trustee disclaims any liability for any incorrectness of the street address and other common designation, if any, shown herein. Said sale will be held, but without covenant or warranty, express or implied, regarding title, possession, condition, or encumbrances, including fees, charges and expenses of the Trustee and of the trusts created by said Deed of Trust, to pay the remaining principal sums of the note(s) secured by said Deed of Trust. The total amount of the unpaid balance of the obligation secured by the property to be sold and reasonable estimated costs, expenses and advances at the time of the initial publication of the Notice of Sale is: \$1,206,176.63 If the Trustee is unable to convey title for any reason, the successful bidder's sole and exclusive remedy shall be the return of monies paid to the Trustee, and the successful bidder shall have no further recourse. The beneficiary under said Deed of Trust heretofore executed and delivered to the undersigned a written Declaration of Default and Demand for Sale, and a written Notice of Default and Election to Sell. The undersigned or its predecessor caused said Notice of Default and Election to Sell to be recorded in the county where the real property is located. NOTICE TO POTENTIAL BIDDERS: If you are considering bidding on this property lien, you should understand that there are risks involved in bidding at a trustee auction. You will be bidding on a lien, not on the property itself. Placing the highest bid at a trustee auction does not automatically entitle you to free and clear ownership of the property. You should also be aware that the lien being auctioned off may be a junior lien. If you are the highest bidder at the auction, you are or may be responsible for paying off all liens senior to the lien being auctioned off, before you can receive clear title to the property. You are encouraged to investigate the existence, priority,

and size of outstanding liens that may exist on this property by contacting the county recorder's office or a title insurance company, either of which may charge you a fee for this information. If you consult either of these resources, you should be aware that the same lender may hold more than one mortgage or deed of trust on the property. NOTICE TO PROPERTY OWNER: The sale date shown on this notice of sale may be postponed one or more times by the mortgagee, beneficiary, trustee, or a court, pursuant to Section 2924g of the California Civil Code. The law requires that information about trustee sale postponements be made available to you and to the public, as a courtesy to those not present at the sale. If you wish to learn whether your sale date has been postponed, and, if applicable, the rescheduled time and date for the sale of this property, you may call (855) 313-3319 or visit this Internet website www.clearreconcorp.com, using the file number assigned to this case 107068-CA. Information about postponements that are very short in duration or that occur close in time to the scheduled sale may not immediately be reflected in the telephone information or on the Internet Web site. The best way to verify postponement information is to attend the scheduled sale. NOTICE TO TENANT: Effective January 1, 2021, you may have a right to purchase this property after the trustee auction pursuant to Section 2924m of the California Civil Code. If you are an "eligible tenant buyer," you can purchase the property if you match the last and highest bid placed at the trustee auction. If you are an "eligible bidder," you may be able to purchase the property if you exceed the last and highest bid placed at the trustee auction. There are three steps to exercising this right of purchase. First, 48 hours after the date of the trustee sale, you can call (855) 313-3319, or visit this internet website www.clearreconcorp.com, using the file number assigned to this case 107068-CA to find the date on which the trustee's sale was held, the amount of the last and highest bid, and the address of the trustee. Second, you must send a written notice of intent to place a bid so that the trustee receives it no more than 15 days after the trustee's sale. Third, you must submit a bid so that the trustee receives it no more than 45 days after the trustee's sale. If you think you may qualify as an "eligible tenant buyer" or "eligible bidder," you should consider contacting an attorney or appropriate real estate professional immediately for advice regarding this potential right to purchase. FOR SALES INFORMATION: (855) 313-3319 CLEAR RECON CORP 3333 Camino Del Rio South, Suite 225 San Diego, California 92108 (07-01,08,15-26)

154-T

STATEMENT OF ABANDONMENT OF USE OF FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME

The following person(s) / registrant(s) has/have abandoned the use of the fictitious business name(s). The information given below is as it appeared on the fictitious business name statement that was filed at the County Clerk's office. (1) ROBIN'S LANDSCAPE PAINTINGS, (2) LANDSCAPES BY ROBIN, 1525 Canna Court, Mountain View, CA 94043 Filed in Santa Clara County on: 11/07/2022 Under File No. FBN690064 Full Name of Registrant(s): Robin Laurie Dosskey, 1525 Canna Court, Mountain View, CA 94043 This business was conducted by: an individual This statement was filed with the County Clerk of Santa Clara County on June 15, 2026. Louis Chiaramonte County Clerk-Recorder Santa Clara County File No. FBN727776 (06-24-26,07-01,08,15-26)

153-T

NOTICE OF PETITION TO ADMINISTER ESTATE OF: PAUL A. KUCKEIN (aka PAUL AUGUST KUCKEIN) CASE NO. 26PR202801

To all heirs, beneficiaries, creditors, contingent creditors, and persons who may otherwise be interested in the WILL or estate, or both of PAUL A. KUCKEIN, PAUL AUGUST KUCKEIN. A PETITION FOR PROBATE has been filed by KURT L. KUCKEIN in the Superior Court of California, County of SANTA CLARA. THE PETITION FOR PROBATE requests that KURT L. KUCKEIN be appointed as personal representative to administer the estate of the decedent. THE PETITION requests the decedent's will and codicils, if any, be admitted to probate. The will and any codicils are available for examination in the file kept by the court. THE PETITION requests authority to administer the estate under

156-T

SARATOGA SGD TOFU HOUSE FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. FBN727881

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: SARATOGA SGD TOFU HOUSE, 491 Saratoga Ave, San Jose, CA, 95129, Santa Clara County. The business is owned by: a corporation. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is (are): SGD TOFU HOUSE INC, 491 Saratoga Ave, San Jose, CA 95129. Registrant began transact-

ing business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on: 01/01/2011. /S/ Cherrina Yoon / This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Santa Clara County on 06/18/2026. (06-24-26,07-01,08,15-26)

155-T

LIGHTER COFFEE FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. FBN727849

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: LIGHTER COFFEE, 491 Saratoga Ave, San Jose, CA, 95129, Santa Clara County. The business is owned by: a corporation. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is (are): SGD TOFU HOUSE INC, 491 Saratoga Ave, San Jose, CA 95129. Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on: N/A. /S/ Cherrina Yoon / This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Santa Clara County on 06/17/2026. (06-24-26,07-01,08,15-26)

154-T

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 in this court as follows: 07/29/2026 at 9:01AM in Dept. 13 located at 191 NORTH 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. 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. Attorney for Petitioner Shirley M. White 4300 Black Ave. #125 Pleasanton, CA 94566 PHONE (510) 796-4779 (06-24-26,07-01,08-26)

152-T

ANAHO BIO CLEAN FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. FBN727248

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: ANAHO BIO CLEAN, POB 360131, Milpitas, CA, 95036, Santa Clara County. The business is owned by: an individual. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is (are): Danny Bachlor, POB 360131, Milpitas, CA 95036. Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on: N/A. /S/ Danny Bachlor / This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Santa Clara County on 05/28/2026. (06-24-26,07-01,08,15-26)

151-T

REFRIGERATOR MOMS FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. FBN727468

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: REFRIG-

ERATOR MOMS, 1762 Technology Dr #128, San Jose, CA, 95110, Santa Clara County. The business is owned by: joint venture. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is (are): Julianna Scott Fein, 1161 El Soljo Avenue, Campbell, CA 95008, Kelley Jensen, 1762 Technology Dr #128, San Jose, CA 95110. Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on: 06/05/2026. /S/ Julianna Scott Fein / This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Santa Clara County on 06/05/2026. (06-24-26,07-01,08,15-26)

150-T

COUNTY OF SANTA CLARA PETITION OF MIN XIE ORDER TO SHOW CAUSE FOR CHANGE OF NAME 26CV495059

TO ALL INTERESTED PERSONS: 1. Petitioner: Min Xie filed a petition with this court for a decree changing names as follows: Present Name: a. Min Xie

Proposed Name: a. Michael Xie

2. 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 08/25/2026 at 8:45 a.m. Room: Probate (b) The address of the court is: 191 North First Street, San Jose, CA 95113.

3. 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: Los Altos Town Crier Date: 06/09/2026

/s/ Charles F. Adams
Judge of the Superior Court
(06-17,24-26,07-01,08-26)

149-T

LOWRIDER FEVER FICTITIOUS BUSINESS NAME STATEMENT FILE NO. FBN727453

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: (1) LOWRIDER FEVER, (2) LOWRIDER HISTORY MUSEUM, 536 N 12th Street, San Jose, CA, 95112, Santa Clara County. The business is owned by: an individual. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is (are): Ricardo Cortez, PO Box 18505, San Jose, CA 95158. Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on: 06/01/2026. /S/ Ricardo Cortez /

Public Notices

This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Santa Clara County on 06/05/2026. (06-17,24-26,07-01,08-26)

148-T

**Miguel Bedolla Garden Service
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO. FBN727079**

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: Miguel Bedolla Garden Service, 1880 Potrero Dr, San Jose, CA, 95124, Santa Clara County. The business is owned by: a corporation. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is (are): Potrero Gardening Co, 1880 Potrero Dr, San Jose, CA 95124. Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on: 05/20/2026. /S/ Ana Bertha Barrera Lopez / This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Santa Clara County on 05/21/2026. (06-10,17,24-26,07-01-26)

147-T

**BLOOMING ESSENCE
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO. FBN726926**

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: BLOOMING ESSENCE, 766 Sonia Way, Mountain View, CA, 94040, Santa Clara County. The business is owned by: an individual. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is (are): Ngocthai Thi Izumi, 766 Sonia Way, Mountain View, CA 94040. Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on: 04/27/2026. /S/ Ngocthai Thi Izumi / This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Santa Clara County on 05/19/2026. (06-10,17,24-26,07-01-26)

146-T

**RL AUTO BODY REPAIR
SERVICES LLC
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO. FBN727280**

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: RL AUTO BODY REPAIR SERVICES LLC, 2075 Alum Rock Ave Suite 3, San Jose, CA, 95116, Santa Clara County. The business is owned by: a limited liability company. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is (are): RL AUTO BODY REPAIR SERVICES LLC, 2075 Alum Rock Ave Suite 3, San Jose, CA 95116. Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on: 05/19/2026. /S/ Marco Mensa Rivera / This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Santa Clara County on 05/29/2026. (06-10,17,24-26,07-01-26)

145-T

**ACUPUNCTURE WELLNESS
CENTER IN LOS ALTOS
FICTITIOUS BUSINESS
NAME STATEMENT
FILE NO. FBN727151**

The following person (persons) is (are) doing business as: ACU-

PUNCTURE WELLNESS CENTER IN LOS ALTOS, 4546 El Camino Real Ste B7, Los Altos, CA, 94022, Santa Clara County. The business is owned by: a corporation. The name and residence address of the registrant(s) is (are): ACUPUNCTURE FOR WELLNESS CENTER INC, 4546 El Camino Real Ste B7, Los Altos, CA 94022. Registrant began transacting business under the fictitious business name(s) listed above on: 05/26/2026. /S/ Zhihua Guan Woo / This statement was filed with the County Clerk Recorder of Santa Clara County on 05/26/2026. (06-10,17,24-26,07-01-26)

144-T

**Do you need
to have a
Legal or
Public
Notice
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Town Crier.
The Town
Crier's
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service can
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Fictitious
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Notice of
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much more.**

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or email
legals@latc.com**

Datebook

Datebook items are run on a space-available basis for entertainment, events, classes and groups run by nonprofits in our circulation area (primarily Los Altos, Los Altos Hills and Mountain View). The deadline is noon Tuesday for the next week's paper. Submit notices via email to avaa@latc.com and include a contact name, phone number and fee to participate (if applicable).

EVENTS

Los Altos Main Library. All events held in the main library, 13 S. San Antonio Road, unless otherwise indicated. All programs are free and open to the public. No registration necessary.

America 250 - Wings of Freedom: Soaring Bald Eagles, Wednesday, July 2, 7 p.m. Celebrate America 250 and join wildlife photographer Joan Sparks for an inspiring presentation featuring her exciting photographs of bald eagles - captured both locally and in Alaska. Experience these majestic birds in flight, observe their diverse behaviors and discover the unique traits of this remarkable raptor!

Learn to Mend Clothing! for Teens. Tuesday, July 7, 3 p.m. Interested in learning how to fix holes or tears in your clothing? We will teach some basic hand sewing stitches and learn how to sew on buttons. All materials will be provided, but feel free to bring in any items you would like to learn to repair!

Classical Guitar Open Mic. Tuesday, July 7, 6:30 p.m. Sign up to perform up to 10 minutes of fingerstyle guitar music and watch performers during this open mic session.

Entering Their World: Ways to Relate with Compassion to the Family Member with Dementia. Wednesday, July 8, 7 p.m. Join us for a practical, evidence-informed session on transforming dementia care through a shift in perspective. Through real-life case examples, participants will learn how to respond to challenging situations with greater empathy, patience, and confidence. Attendees will learn how to foster meaningful connections with their family members, apply practical approaches to everyday activities and implement healthy boundaries to reduce stress and stay emotionally grounded. Presented by Commonwealth Club World Affairs, Peninsula Chapter, with Vanessa Valerio, Registered Nurse, Certified Care Manager (CMC), Gerontologist, and Certified Home Care Administrator (CHCA).

Unlock Your Ancestors' Military Records. Friday, July 10, 1 p.m. Discover the stories behind your ancestors' military records! This seminar shows how U.S. military records can enrich genealogy research by revealing an ancestor's life, service, and character. You will learn how to access records through powerful resources, interpret the records, and create a lasting memorial page to honor your ancestor's service and sacrifice. This talk will be given by Ron Chan, a published genealogy author and Co-Founder of the Chinese American GI Project, which works to ensure that veteran legacies are not lost, forgotten, or ignored.

Repair Cafe - Toss it? No way! Saturday, July 11, 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. Repair Café Silicon Valley will offer free repairs and repair advice on a first come, first served basis. Repair Cafe will bring tools, materials, and volunteer experts to help you make any repairs you need on clothes, furniture, small appliances, bicycles, crockery, electronics, lamps, toys and more. To cut down on unnecessary waiting times during busy periods, one broken item per person will be examined. After that, you can join the back of the line if you have a second item for repair.

Sharing the Spirit of America - the nationwide, simultaneous reading of the Declaration of Independence on July 8 at 3 p.m. PDT. Los Altos and Los Altos Hills will join cities across the United States for a simultaneous reading of the Declaration of Independence. This event commemorates the first time that the Declaration of Independence was read aloud to the American public on July 8, 1776. Los Altos and Los Altos Hills mayors and other local community leaders will all read sections. The reading will begin at 2:45 p.m. in Veterans Community Plaza.

OBITUARY NOTICE

**BETTY JANE
COSTALES LIDDICOAT**



*February 1, 1927 -
April 28, 2026*

Betty Jane (West) Costales Liddicoat passed away peacefully surrounded by family at her home in Los Altos, California on April 28, 2026, after a brief illness at the age of 99.

She was born on February 1, 1927, in Terre Haute, IN to Gilbert and Helen (Reinhart) West. After graduating from Gerstmeyer Technical High School, Betty worked as a flight attendant with United Airlines. Her love of travel began during these years and remained one of the great joys of her life.

After she relocated to San Francisco while at United, she met her first husband, Charles Robert (Bob) Costales, whom she married in 1953 at Carmel by the Sea. Together they built a loving family, first living in Palo Alto, CA, where they welcomed their first two children, John and David. The family later moved to Arlington Heights, IL, where two additional children, James and Susan, were born. Eventually, they returned to California in 1968, where Betty resided in Los Altos for the remainder of her life.

She was widowed in 1977 with the death of her first husband, Bob. Later in life, she was fortunate to find love again and married Kenneth Liddicoat in 1989. They shared many happy years together until his passing in 2025.

An avid traveler, Betty embraced opportunities to see the world and visited many countries throughout her life. She especially cherished spending several weeks each year in Mexico, where she enjoyed the warmth, beauty, and friendships she found there.

Betty had many interests. She was a highly skilled bridge player, earning the distinction of ACBL Life

Master in 1995 and Ruby Life Master in 2017. The game brought her both an intellectual challenge and lasting friendships, and she greatly enjoyed the many hours spent at the bridge table. During and after the Covid pandemic, she continued playing bridge online with cherished local and global partners. She also was an accomplished bowler and enjoyed dancing, gardening, and happy hour with a Manhattan by her pool.

Above all, she treasured her family. She will be remembered for her warmth, resilience, adventurous spirit, and devotion to those she loved. Her kindness, curiosity, and enthusiasm for life touched everyone who knew her.

She is survived by her sister, Mary Silvers; her sons, John, David (Althea), and James (Elaine) Costales; and her daughter Susan (Kris) Costales Toscano. She is also survived by her grandchildren, Matthew (Elizabeth) GIBLIN, Crystal Costales, Sarah Shaw, Jamie (Andrew) Vizer, Robin Costales, Alexis Costales, Robert Costales, and Nicole Costales; ten great-grandchildren; four great-great-grandchildren; and many extended family members and dear friends.

She was preceded in death by her first husband, Bob, her second husband, Ken; and her sister, Barbara Jean Collins.

A private memorial service and a celebration of life were held. In lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to the American Heart Association.

Her long and remarkable life was marked by love, family, friendship, travel, and an enduring appreciation for the people and places that brought her joy. She will be deeply missed and lovingly remembered by all who knew her.



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