

Community

Community Briefs

State of the Cities event slated Friday

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

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

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

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

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

LAH set to host July 4 'caravan'

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

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

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

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



COURTESY OF PETS IN NEED

Pets In Need's Buddy Boxes include games and coloring activities.

Pets In Need offers summer camp via mailbox

Town Crier Staff Report

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

As of June 15 and throughout the year, the organization is offering Camp PIN Pal Buddy Boxes, curated collections of

various pet-themed activities. A free version geared toward seniors is also available. The boxes may be purchased individually or through a subscription service.

"We are proud of our community programs at Pets In Need and are pleased to be able to offer an alternative, at-home experience for our summer campers and our seniors," said Al Mollica, the organization's executive director, in a press release. "Our Camp PIN Pal Buddy Boxes are kid-tested and senior-approved,

and are a fun way to educate children and adults about animal welfare."

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

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New Los Altos group aims to revitalize downtown area through public art

Town Crier Report

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

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



McBirney

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

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

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



COURTESY OF ARTS LOS ALTOS

"Dodi," a lighted sculpture from the Oakland artist collaborative HYBYCOZO, is scheduled for installation Monday at the Assistance League headquarters in downtown Los Altos.

State St. in downtown Los Altos. Members plan to host an unveiling party in early July.

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

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

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

"The sculpture was inspired by the geometry of the flower of life, a symbol found in almost ev-

ery ancient culture in the world, in plant and flower growth, as well as in the growing embryo during cell division," Arts Los Altos supporters said in a June 9 press release. "Composed of overlapping circles forming petal shapes, it represents the creation of beauty through unity, a sum greater than the parts."

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

For more information, visit artslosaltos.org.

Volunteer Ann Coombs: Author of book on LA trees

Town Crier Report

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

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



Mrs. Coombs

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

She also served on numerous committees, including the Santa

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

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

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

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

Her husband said she spent two years on the book, which updated a pamphlet on city trees that had been written 40 years earlier. Mrs. Coombs’ research expanded the inventory from 40 trees in the first edition to 110 trees in her revised version. Local philanthropists Bob Grimm and Paul

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

‘Smartest girl in class’

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

Clyde described his wife as “a very bright person, the smartest girl in the class.”

“She really wanted to make a difference – she tried to make things better,” he said.

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

There are no plans for a service at this time. For those wishing to make a commemorative donation in Mrs. Coombs’ name, among the charities she supported are the League of Women Voters, Second Harvest Food Bank, Community Services Agency and Los Altos Community Foundation.

Morning Forum of Los Altos cancels 2020-2021 season

Town Crier Report

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced organizers to cancel the upcoming season of the Morning Forum of Los Altos, unprecedented in the series’ 70 years of speakers.

The board of directors recently elected to scrub the 2020-2021 season in the wake of continued large-group restrictions. The group holds events Tuesday mornings at Los Altos United Methodist Church.

“I want you to know that this is not a decision we made quickly or easily,” board president Tim Farrell wrote in a June 12 letter to members. “We discussed the possibility of canceling only the fall/winter part of the season in the hope that restrictions on large-group

gatherings would no longer be in place by February, but decided that, even without restrictions, the majority of our membership would still be reluctant to attend until a vaccine is widely available.”

Farrell added that the board considered holding virtual meetings.

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

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

For more information, visit morningforum.org.

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and coloring activities. Both versions feature craft projects and PIN swag.

Proceeds from the sale of the children’s boxes will help PIN cover the cost of providing complimentary boxes to the Ronald McDonald House locations at Stanford and in Pasadena, as well as the Webster House in Palo Alto, a senior living community where PIN volunteers regularly brought dogs to bond with residents pre-COVID. Remaining

funds will go toward PIN’s animal rescue efforts.

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

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

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

Main Library: 650-948-7683
Woodland Br: 650-969-6030

Los Altos Library Highlights – July 2020

<https://scld.org/locations/LA>

Curbside Services Now Available at Los Altos and Woodland Libraries

<https://scld.org/curbside/>

Contactless services available Monday through Saturday from 1-5 pm

Curbside Holds Pickup and Walkup Holds Pickup



Staff will deliver your holds to the trunk of your car or leave your holds on a table outside the library. Place items on hold at scld.org or call 408-540-3947. Once you receive confirmation that your holds are available, make an appointment at <https://scld.org/curbside/> or call us at 408-540-3947. Visit the library during your appointment time to pick up your holds. Enjoy!

Please make an appointment after you have been notified that your holds are ready to pickup.

Library Returns



You do not need an appointment to return items, but items will only be accepted during the curbside service hours. When you arrive, park and place your items in the specially marked Library Return Bins. Face coverings and maintaining 6 foot distance from others is required.



The Los Altos Library Endowment
Here for Our Library - Today and Tomorrow!

P.O. Box 367
Los Altos, CA 94023-0367
www.lalendow.org

