



OMVNA Newsletter

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Honoring Millie

by Miguel Guervara

I can't remember when I met Millie Levratto. I arrived in Mountain View during the 2015 summer. Millie was our neighbor. I do remember her white hair, her strong walking pace. I was amazed staring at this woman driving her car at her age.

Millie was 92 when I first met her in 2015. No one in my family has ever lived that long. Those who crossed the 80 year line, became too fragile to be self-sufficient. My only living grandmother is 86. She is aided by two nurses and had a stroke 2 years ago that left her unable to talk.

Millie is the opposite. Millie lives alone. Goes to the supermarket, and the doctor in her car. She tends her garden on her own. Takes care of her neighbors dogs when they're not around. She provides immense love to these dogs. In a way, I aspire to be like Millie if I live that long.

Coming to Silicon Valley was a lifelong dream. I grew up in Mexico where the Valley has an almost mythical aura. In the early 2000s all the big ideas that were reshaping our world were happening in the Valley. When I landed here, I had a sense of vertigo: I was finally in the center of the digital revolution.

Yet, I had an inkling about history: what had existed before

Continued on page 7

Thank you Ice Cream Social Team

On August 23, after a prolonged period of isolation, the OMVNA Ice Cream Social offered a wonderful chance to meet in person, and in accordance with CDC guidelines.

We sold over 300 ice cream treats.

Thank you to all who attended. Special thanks and credit go to Sam Blewis for chairing this event, and to all the volunteers who came together to make this a fun day. 🍦

OMVNA Annual Meeting

The OMVNA Annual Meeting and Steering Committee Elections are scheduled for:

**December 13, 2021
7:30 - 9:00 PM,**

Due to COVID19 concerns, our meeting will be held via Zoom. Visit OMVNA.org to see the slate of candidates.

To register for the meeting:
<https://bit.ly/3BmZTV0>



Restaurant Scene

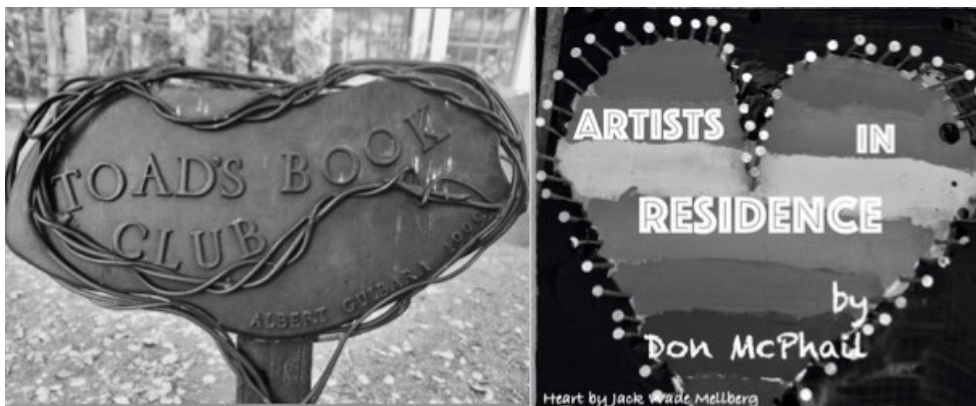
by Max Hauser

Samovar is a specialized grocery outside our neighborhood but accessible to it, on the quiet back corner of the block housing MV's Costco, near the 101/Rengstorff junction.

In size and regional importance it's like Rose International Market or Dittmer's, but Samovar's focus is foods of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, and Central Asia. From those regions' everyday pantry items to caviar. An entire freezer wall is devoted to the famous filled dumplings (pelmeni, pierogi, and manti), both commercial and made in-house, some with hard-to-find or seasonal fillings.

Near that wall is a chest freezer full of bags of frozen berries and wild mushrooms from Poland and Russia. Another wall handles refrigerated seafoods of diverse kinds. Packaged snacks and pastries crowd the shop; there's a good range of regionally popular dried pasta types (e.g., macaroni variations made with egg dough, uncommon in the US). Packets of East-European instant soups, including borschts and mushroom soups from Poland. Even tushonka (тушёнка), the folksy canned stewed meats popular in and around Russia.

Samovar, 1077 Independence Ave at Leghorn, 650-969-5327, bestrussianfood.com ✨



Whimsy is all around us, if we stay alert. In our town, there is even whimsy at City Hall. Not so much the political discourse, though that has its moments. This whimsy is situated in the patio area, just behind the public library building. It's called Toad's Book Club, and was sculpted by noted Bay Area artist Albert Guibara.

Earlier articles have highlighted the joyous colors and shapes from JoeSam, and a flight of fancy called Avatar, by L.C. Shank. Guibara's charming work is light-hearted in a different way, evoking friendly chuckles of recognition, and hand-pats from passing adults as well as children.

His exaggerated images of Toad and other classic *Wind in the Willows* characters encourage young readers to embrace reading, through a stack of books with cleverly twisted allusions to *Of Mice and Men*, *Tale of Two Cities* and *Red Badge of Courage*.

Guibara's true love is sculpture, and he consistently pushes his



work in new directions. His bronze works are internationally known, livening public spaces, resorts and private collections around the world. You may have seen them during a walk in Tiburon, if you passed *Blackie's Pasture*, a tribute to the elderly horse that occupied the area for many years. Or when you visited Kimpton Hotel's *Grand Cafe* in San Francisco. His distinctive donkeys and manini

fish also line the road to Kukio Resort in Kona, Hawaii.

Albert Guibara is a lifelong resident of California. Born in Los Angeles, he has lived in Northern California for all of his professional life. In addition to sculpting, he loves to paint, travel, and restore mid-'30s custom-body Packards. His work is stimulating, original, and a wonderful part of downtown Mountain View. 🚲

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Keeping Mountain View Safe: Updates and Advice from the Mountain View Fire and Police Departments

by Robert Maitland

by Jodie Pierce



Prompt Removal of Christmas Trees

There is good reason to part ways with your Christmas tree once the holidays are over - One-third of U.S. home fires that begin with Christmas trees occur in January.

Christmas trees are combustible items that become increasingly flammable as they continue to dry. The longer a tree is in the home, the more of a fire hazard it becomes. All Christmas trees can burn, but a dried-out tree can become engulfed in flames in a matter of seconds.

National Fire Protection Association statistics show that Christmas tree fires are not common, but when they do occur, they are much more likely to be serious. On an annual average, one of every 45 reported home fires that began with a Christmas tree resulted in a death, compared to one death per 139 total

reported home structure fires. NFPA recommends using the local community's recycling program for tree disposal, if possible; trees should not be put in the garage or left outside.

We also offer these tips for safely removing lighting and decorations and storing them properly to ensure that they are in good condition the following season:

- As you pack up light strings, inspect each line for damage, throwing out any sets that have loose connections, broken sock-ets, or cracked or bare wires.
- Wrap each set of lights and put them in individual plastic bags, or wrap them around a piece of cardboard.
- Store electrical decorations



in a dry place away from children and pets where they will not be damaged by water or damp-ness.

For more information on Christmas tree fire safety, visit <https://bit.ly/3nDZvwv>



Put a **FREEZE** on Winter Holiday Fires

Did you know?



A heat source too close to the Christmas tree causes **1 in every 4** winter fires.

As you deck the halls this season, be fire smart.



Read manufacturer's instructions for the number of light strands to connect.



Make sure your tree is **at least 3 feet** away from heat sources like fireplaces, radiators and space heaters.

U.S. Fire Administration NFPA



**Gathering online
until we can
gather in person.**

Join us on zoom
Sundays at 6^{PM}

Details at FrontPorchMV.org

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Just want critical alerts and advisories? Sign-up for Nixle via your smartphone by texting your Mountain View zip code to 888777.

What's Up?

Update on Development in Mountain View

by Robert Cox

Every eight years, the department of Housing and Community Development (HCD) of the state of California reviews the state's housing needs. HCD, which has divided California into 38 regional planning agencies, assigns each of them a Regional Housing Needs Allocation (RHNA) of housing units which it would like produced in that eight-year period. The regional planning agency for the nine-county Bay Area is called the Association of Bay Area Governments (ABAG) and the next eight-year cycle will start in 2023. ABAG in turn partitions out its RHNA to each of the cities under its jurisdiction. It is the responsibility of each city to zone for enough density to enable the building of the housing in its RHNA.

The allocations for the 2023-2031 cycle are much more aggressive than the previous cycle. HCD has assigned ABAG 441,176 units, which is 2.35 times the previous allocation. ABAG then assigned Mountain View 11,135 units, which is 3.81 times its previous allocation. This means that while Mountain View has been a top housing provider in Santa Clara county over the last eight years, it may need to zone even more aggressively to meet these new housing targets.

How will the rezoning be accomplished? Much of it could come from North Bayshore and East Whisman areas, whose precise plans were rewritten over the last decade to allow for more high-density residential units. But another way to add units

would be through the rezoning of medium density multi-family apartment complexes (referred to as R3). Up to 9,000 units could be generated by aggressively up-zoning these parcels, allowing up to nine story apartment complexes. The downside is that these complexes could be only 10 feet away from the property line of single-family homes.

In the next six months, city staff will be reaching out to our neighborhood and others, to gather input from the residents on how this rezoning should be accomplished. Watch OMOVNAtalk, Nextdoor, and our newsletter for details on how to participate. As always, if you care about the outcome, get involved! 🏠

All We Want Is Housing

by Jerry Steach

The holidays arrived early for Californians who seem to believe "Build housing at all costs" should be state's mantra. Two highly contentious bills, Senate Bill 9 and Senate Bill 10 (SB9 and SB10), passed both the state senate and assembly, then in September were signed into law by Gov. Newsom. Should they survive challenges presently underway—including a possible ballot initiative next year—the laws are expected to dramatically alter the residential landscape throughout California.

SB9 was written to allow homeowners to subdivide their single-family properties and build up to four units on them, while SB10 allows for even more dense housing—up to 10 units—in

transit- and jobs-rich areas. Each affords cities a small measure of "wiggle room" on implementation, but the bottom line is, Sacramento is throwing around its weight and wresting control over California cities' zoning.

The two bills were sponsored by a handful of California legislators who'd previously failed with similar initiatives. However those defeats clearly didn't deter them in their quest for far-more-dense residential neighborhoods. Several pro-housing groups and trade groups lent their support to the various incarnations of the bills. Opposing them were a number of cities—nearly 250 formally opposed SB9—and civic groups up and down the state, including Livable California and, locally,

Livable Mountain View. Letters, emails and phone calls to key legislators and Newsom, arguing the bills wouldn't have their stated effect, weren't enough to sway lawmakers or the governor.

That debate continues as to how much, if at all, these laws would ease the state's housing availability and affordability challenges, exacerbated by burgeoning population growth in metropolitan areas. In the meantime, a group named Californians for Community Planning has initiated a petition effort to get an initiative opposing SB9 and SB10 on the November 2022 ballot. If you're interested in the group and/or the petition, go to:

www.communitiesforchoice.org 🏠

MV Library Events: Enjoy Jazz and Unite Against Hate

by Kyle Hval

We are proud to announce that the City of Mountain View will be participating in United Against Hate Week (November 14-20, 2021) this year.



United Against Hate Week is a call for local civic action by people in every Bay Area community to stop the hate and implicit biases that are a dangerous threat to the safety and civility of our neighborhoods, towns and cities.

The Library will be hosting a Bystander Intervention Training led by the Council on American-Islamic Relations on Wednesday, November 17. In this virtual training, participants will learn hands-on skills about how to de-escalate a hate incident before it leads to violence, how to create a safe space and how to support the person being targeted.

We also encourage families to join us in Pioneer Park behind the Library on Saturday, November 20 for a community storytime centered on inclusion and unity. Bring your own blankets and chairs. No registration is required.

Our librarians have also created United Against Hate book lists for children, teens and adults, which are available on the MVPL website. Stop by the second floor and Children's Room and browse our displays for more recommended reads on anti-racism and social justice.



Join us on Saturday, November 6 for an afternoon of jazz in Pioneer Park behind the Library! Bring your own blankets and chairs and listen to the jazz stylings of renowned Bay Area trumpeter Dave Rocha and his quartet. No registration required.

Dave Rocha has been performing with his jazz group for more than 20 years. He has played in a number of major cities, including New York, Los Angeles, San Francisco and Seattle. His band plays an eclectic mix of jazz standards (by Miles Davis, Wayne Shorter, John Coltrane, etc.) "pop" tunes (Cole Porter, Gershwin and Jobim) and original compositions. This covers a wide variety of styles from up-tempo bebop, "modal" tunes, swing and blues, to latin jazz, ballads and jazz waltz. 🎷



Opinions expressed herein are not official positions of the OMVNA Steering Committee or its members unless otherwise stated.

Contact the newsletter team at: editor@omvna.org

Submissions for our February 2022 issue are due by January 19, 2022.

Tracing Calderon

by Susanne Martinez

Calderon Avenue runs through the heart of Old Mountain View between El Camino and Evelyn Avenue, parallel to Castro Street. The 1876 map of Old Mountain View shows large tracts of land owned by "Castro & Calderon." The Castro family is, of course, well known in Mountain View, but who was Calderon?



Andres Calderon was born in Buenos Aires, Argentina in 1828. He arrived in California around 1849, and like many early settlers, sought his fortune in the gold fields. He soon moved to Santa Clara County and settled in the Mountain View area. In 1856, after what was described in one newspaper as an "ardent courtship", he married Mercedes Castro, one of the daughters of Mariano Castro, for whom Mountain View's Castro School is named. In 1869, Andres became a naturalized American citizen. The 1870 census shows the Calderon and Castro families next to each other. He died at the age of 70 in 1892, leaving a large estate.

His widow, Mercedes Castro de Calderon, died at the age of 86 in 1898. Her obituary in the San Jose Mercury noted that she lived all of her life in Santa Clara Valley and had lived under the Spanish, Mexican, and finally the American flag. Calderon Avenue today commemorates these early Mountain View residents. 🌟

Family Traditions: Popcorn and a Movie on Thanksgiving Eve

By Christine Moore

Autumn light shone on the smooth leaves of the magnolia trees that grow along my block of Old Mountain View and stopped me in my tracks the other morning. I had been walking with a long list on my mind when I slowed down in appreciation of the stained-glass effect the light created. I found myself considering how simple gratitude can be.

Autumn is a dazzling season for sunlight, a kaleidoscope of shadows visible more than any other time of year. Gratitude can be this way, too—shining through and changing the shape of even the densest troubles in life.

For Thanksgiving, I look forward to the elaborate meal I'll prepare for my extended family—especially after last year's holiday, where we gathered over Zoom. Thanks to my morning walk, I also will focus on just how simple the pleasures of the holiday can be.

SIMPLE TRADITIONS

Our Thanksgiving would not be complete without a couch-camping session on the eve of the big Thursday. We watch "Planes, Trains and Automobiles" every year. We can quote the movie verbatim, but that

doesn't stop us from uproarious laughter throughout.

The absolute greatest snack for our movie night is olive oil truffle popcorn (recipe below) with a 2013 Terra Savia (\$29.99 at Ava's Downtown Market), a pairing that demonstrates how the simplest combinations can be the most satisfying. The beautiful sparkling wine from Mendocino County is the lightest of pink shades, with complex and bright raspberry aromas. A crisp finish with graceful yeastiness and luscious texture, this wine would be incredible on Thanksgiving Day, too.



CHRISTINE'S OLIVE-OIL TRUFFLE SALT POPCORN

8 tablespoons olive oil

1 cup popcorn kernels

Truffle salt (I like Sabatino

Truffle Sea Salt, available at World Market for \$12.99)



Heat heavy-bottom saucepan with handle over medium-high heat. Add olive oil and heat until shimmer. Add popcorn, cover and shake vigorously. When kernels begin to pop, shake until you can count 2 seconds between pops – this means popcorn is done. Pour in bowl and season to taste with truffle salt. 🍿

OMV resident Christine Moore is a certified sommelier and co-owner of Teac Mor Vineyards. Read more of her food and wine pairing suggestions on her blog



2021 OMVNA Steering Committee

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Historical Preservation:	Jerry Steach
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Next Regular Meeting:	January 24, 2022

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tech, before silicon chips?

My aunt's family is from the East Bay. When I moved to MV she told me: it's known to be a dangerous place. I was curious about this as I walked down Castro street on a summer evening. Was MV really dangerous? What was MV like in the 1980s, or the 70's?

I wasn't aware of the MV Historical Society and didn't know where I could go and peruse old pictures to see the street I was living on or where I could read what had existed in the house I lived in before it was built. Then I found Millie's house. As my curiosity grew, I decided to start paying her some vis-



Proud member of

Mountain View Rotary



**Tori Ann
Atwell**



its in the evening.

Millie is not only very strong, she has a photographic memory. When I first inquired what had existed before all those houses she was as precise as a scalpel: orchards. I imagined the trees that sprinkle OMV descending from a long line stretching back to 1940.

Millie also confirmed that MV had a reputation of danger around it. The sailors that inhabited close by would come to Castro for fun. Some of them would brawl afterwards. Castro was known for its fights, some of them deadly.

Millie has also seen the value of the neighborhood change radically. She bought her house for a fraction of today's selling price.

Millie is the only constant in Sierra Ave. She has seen neighbors come and go. Houses demolished only to be rebuilt later.

Age has started to take a toll on Millie. Last year she lost sight in one of her eyes. She still drives though, and recently passed a driving test. The pandemic was difficult. We couldn't visit her out of precaution but this year she celebrated her 98th birthday surrounded by friends.

If you ever walk past 635 Sierra Ave and see Millie, say hi to her. She might be the only link in our neighborhood to the changes it has experienced over time. ♥

Millie

COVID Update

by David Lewis

On a more cheerful note about Covid-19: by the time you get this newsletter, Santa Clara County will hopefully have enough folks fully vaccinated and a low enough Covid transmission rate that the County will be able to lift a lot of the restrictions that we have been living with for many months.

Marin and San Francisco Counties, which had more severe restrictions than Santa Clara, were able to do this in October. To get to this goal, we need more folks vaccinated, especially among our adolescents, and a small reduction in our rate of new cases.

Hopefully, by this time, nearly everyone out there, including our younger children, will have been vaccinated, permitting general reopening of schools for in-person learning, and most of us will have had our third (booster) shot, now approved for all the vaccines, including mixing vaccine types.

If we are sufficiently far enough along in our prevention efforts, that we went through Halloween successfully, and can get through the Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's holidays without another surge in cases, the end of the pandemic for us could be in sight. 🍷

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