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June 2018

Wood City's Monthly Magazine



## Steve Penna 1958-2018

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# THE Spectrum JUNE 2018

Redwood City's Monthly Magazine

**W**

we bring you the June issue of The Spectrum with great sadness. This magazine's founder and publisher, Steve Penna, passed away on June 1. After the initial shock at the sudden and unexpected loss, we resolved to continue and publish the issue. We had been in the middle of production, and most of the content had already been assembled. Steve personified The Spectrum Magazine, and there is so much of him in every bit of the issue. We have added a collection of tributes to Steve from many of his friends and members of the community, which you will find on page 18. And we are certain Steve wouldn't want you to miss out on all of the stories he pulled together for this issue.

Our feature article this month is on San Mateo County Controller Juan Raigoza. One might ask, what does a controller do? Well, our contributing writer Joseph Luther will answer that and also give you a little insight into the very nonpolitical Raigoza, who just happens to be a longtime resident of Redwood City.

We have our regular features on senior activities, community interests, cultural and entertainment events, "Insurance Tips" from Hector Flamenco, information from the Redwood City School District, "Library Matters," Greg Wilson's award-winning feature "Walking Redwood City" and "P.S. The People Speak," which has The Spectrum teaming with VOCA to bring you opinions and views from our readers and our community. Our updates on the city's new neighborhood associations have become a very popular section. What's going on in your neighborhood this month? Find out now.

Our small-business advertisers are an important component of our community and provide much-needed sales tax revenues. Steve was always conscious of the fact that by supporting them we are contributing to our local economy. Check out our "Shopping Redwood City" guide on page 6 and make sure you visit them or use them when you need their services.

In this monthly welcome message, Steve always wrote about how proud he was that The Spectrum is Redwood City's only locally owned media publication, and he made a point to thank our readers for making us the most read as well.

The closing note he wrote for this month's welcome reflects his enthusiasm for his beloved hometown: "Get out there and enjoy our community, Redwood City!"



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

- 5 RCSD Corner**
- 6 Shopping Redwood City**
- 7 Library Matters: This Year's Library Summer Learning Challenge Is More Exciting Than Ever**
- 8 Celebration of Life: Steven Paul Penna**
- 12 Walking Redwood City: Trouble With the Curve**
- 14 Hale Kicks Off City Council Campaign**
- 15 P.S. The People Speak**
- 16 Cultural Events**
- 18 Memories of Steve From Family, Friends and Members of the Community He Loved So Much**
- 23 Community Interest**
- 24 Connecting Redwood City Neighborhoods and Neighbors**
- 26 Juan Raigoza: The Watchdog of Numbers**
- 29 Insurance Tips: High-Tech Features on New Cars Drive Up Auto Insurance Rates**
- 30 Senior Activities**

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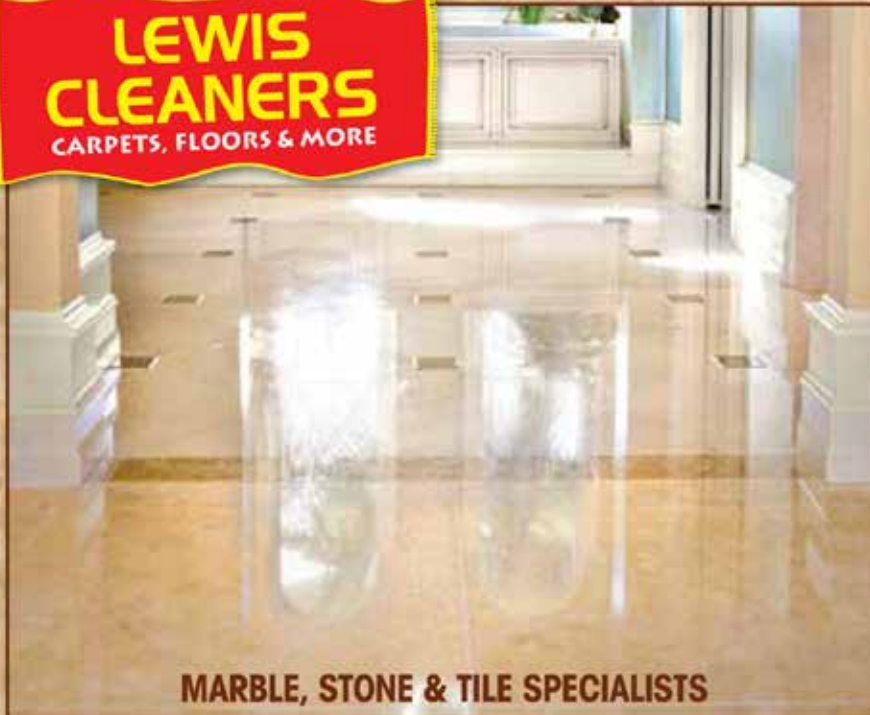
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## GRAND CANYON ECOLOGY TREK EARNS A KENT AWARD FROM THE SAN MATEO COUNTY SCHOOL BOARDS ASSOCIATION

**H**ow do you get middle school students engaged in their study of science, social studies, mathematics and writing? For seventh-grade students at Kennedy Middle School and McKinley Institute of Technology (MIT) in Redwood City School District (RCSD), the Grand Canyon becomes their classroom for 10 days each spring. Students go off the grid while they explore the evolution of life on earth through geological layers, log their observations in their daily journals and create group skits to demonstrate what they have learned. The trip, which has evolved into an experience that has transformed thousands of local students since 1978, has now earned a Kent Award from the San Mateo County School Boards Association (SMCSBA).

“We are excited and honored that Kennedy is being honored for a school tradition that many people often refer to as a rite of passage for Kennedy students,” said Kennedy Middle School Principal Sabrina Adler. “This award is dedicated to all of the volunteers over the years who have contributed thousands of hours to make this trip possible.”

Adler explained that this trip “goes far beyond the science, geography and writing lessons that students learn.” She said that the trip “pushes students out of their comfort zones and teaches them lessons and skills that they can utilize in the future. Students learn determination, responsibility, leadership, communication skills, compassion and friendship. As no electronic devices are permitted, which is unusual in this day and age, this is an opportunity for students to learn to appreciate the beauty and calmness of nature.”

Joined by a group of 15 to 18 adult volunteers who are on duty 24 hours a day during the trip to guide the students and make sure they are safe, students depart for the trip early on a Wednesday morning, spend the first night in a motel in Needles, California, and arrive at the Grand Canyon early the following afternoon. During the hike down to Havasu Falls and during the hike back up, students carry their own backpacks, sleeping bags and food.

During the trip, each student carries a journal that they must complete over the course of the 10 days. The journals contain stories, mathematics equations, science lessons, word puzzles and astronomy lessons that take advantage of the thousands of stars that they will see each night while camping at Havasu Falls.

Preparation for the trip begins many months beforehand, when students and their parents gather for a general information meeting. Three months before departure, selected students take part in a practice hike from Kennedy Middle School to Cañada College, an uphill trek of

approximately three miles. This gives the students an idea of the physical requirements needed for the trip.

The cost of the trip is \$700 per student, which is defrayed by fundraising in the months leading up to the event. One of the key goals is to make the trip possible for all students. The adult chaperones pay their own costs and are asked to make a five-year commitment; many have served for 10 years or longer.

The value of the trip is summed up well in the reflection of this student, who participated last year: “The whole experience was amazing. We learned how to carry ourselves not only in nature, but in real life as well, especially since the hikes were mentally and physically draining. We got to spend time with friends and got to know our friends and classmates

better. To this day, in eighth grade, we still talk about those memories.”

The Kent Awards are presented by the San Mateo County School Boards Association to outstanding and innovative programs either in the classroom or outside the classroom as well as districtwide programs. Applicants must demonstrate their programs promote student success, employ a high degree of creativity and demonstrate transferability. Naming the awards after past San Mateo County Superintendent of Schools J. Russell Kent, SMCSBA initiated the program during the 1980–81 school year.



**“THE WHOLE EXPERIENCE WAS AMAZING. WE LEARNED HOW TO CARRY OURSELVES NOT ONLY IN NATURE, BUT IN REAL LIFE AS WELL.”**

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### Canyon Inn

**586 Canyon Road** – Great fresh food and great service. The memorabilia displayed around the restaurant is great too! They serve everything, including gluten-free and low-fat options. Pick your poison and toast your evening — drinks are also served here. This restaurant is more than willing to accommodate families, so kids are welcome to tag along. Want to soak up the sun? Come grab a bite and sit out on the gorgeous patio. At Canyon Inn, you won't have to wait for your large or small group to be seated.

## REAL ESTATE

### Greg Garcia Real Estate Sales & Development

**650-771-0656** – Greg has been a leading real estate broker in the Bay Area for more than 25 years. Home buyers and sellers alike have come to depend on his professionalism and expertise to handle all their real estate transactions. Much of his business comes from repeat customers and referrals. Greg resides in the Emerald Hills area of Redwood City with his wife, Jennifer, and their two children, Ashley and Sydney.

### Michelle Glaubert at Coldwell Banker

**650-722-1193** – Michelle has been a full-time, top-producing real estate agent since 1978. With a proven track record, she has helped buyers achieve their dreams of home ownership and sellers make successful moves to their next properties. The majority of her business is garnered through referrals from her many satisfied clients. Living in Emerald Hills, she knows the area well and is involved in the community. Count on Michelle's years of experience to guide you through your next real estate transaction. Visit her online at [www.glaubert.com](http://www.glaubert.com).

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### Ralph's Vacuum & Sewing

**837 Main St.** – Our favorite vacuum and sewing center has expanded in a most unusual way. In addition to selling and repairing sewing machines and vacuums, sharpening knives and scissors, and teaching sewing to children and adults, they recently opened an inset business called Mary's Closet, which carries clothes and jewelry. Visit [ralphsvacnsew.com](http://ralphsvacnsew.com) for more.

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# THIS YEAR'S LIBRARY SUMMER LEARNING CHALLENGE IS MORE EXCITING THAN EVER

It's time once again for everyone's favorite annual tradition of summer learning at the library! This year's theme is "Reading Takes You Everywhere," and there will be an exciting array of programs and activities for the whole family.

The National Summer Learning Association has documented that children, especially from low-income families, can experience losses in academic growth over the summer. However, with participation in fun and engaging summer learning activities like those offered by the library and Redwood City School District, kids can even experience academic growth during summer break instead of losing ground.

The 2018 Summer Learning Challenge begins on June 1, and kids of all ages can sign up at any Redwood City Public Library location (Downtown, Fair Oaks, Redwood Shores or Schaberg) or through the library website at [www.redwoodcity.org/library](http://www.redwoodcity.org/library). All four libraries have weekly events all summer long, including magic and ventriloquism (Magic Dan, Randel McGee and Groark, and Dan and James Chan), music and dance (Soul Soup), comedy and circus (Coventry & Kaluza), animals (Norcal Bats, Conservation Ambassadors), theater (Circulo Cultural) and puppets (Magical Moonshine).

But that's not all! Other special events will include

STEAM (science, technology, engineering, arts and mathematics) activities like Library Coding Club, math workshops, cooking classes, Preschool STEM Discovery, visits from the Bay Area Discovery Museum, creative writing workshops at the Fair Oaks Library and much more.

Speaking of the Fair Oaks Library, we will have a full day of activities and celebration for the ribbon cutting and grand reopening following five months of construction to renovate and expand the branch to add a teen area, support additional technology and create more children's activity space. We hope you can join us for the ribbon cutting at 9:30 am on Saturday, June 23. If not, come by any time during the day to check out our new digs.

All of our fabulous summer programs are made possible by the generous support of the Friends of Redwood City Public Library, who have sponsored summer reading/summer learning activities for many, many years.

Last summer, over 22,000 people from Redwood City and North Fair Oaks participated in the Summer Learning Challenge at Redwood City Public Library, which almost doubled our participation from 2016. However, we're not content with that number — our goal is to get every child aged 0-14 in Redwood City and North Fair Oaks to enjoy the benefits of the program (along with teens and adults as well!). So tell

your friends, family, kids, grandkids, great-grandkids, school connections, members of your church: The library looks forward to seeing everyone during the 2018 Summer Learning Challenge!

This year, the Library will once again play a critical role in the Redwood City School District's Big Lift Inspiring Summers camp at Roosevelt School. Library staff will play a role in developing enrichment activities and helping kids enjoy the learning experiences. This summer's camp will be held at Roosevelt School starting June 18 and is open to students entering first grade in the fall. Visit [www.thebiglift.org/register/](http://www.thebiglift.org/register/) for more information or to sign up.

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**Steven Paul Penna**  
**July 20, 1958 – June 1, 2018**

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Steven Paul Penna was born on Hilton Street and lived in Redwood City for his entire life. He attended Hoover Elementary School, Sequoia High School (class of 1976) and Cañada College.

Predeceased by mother Georgia Akers Penna and father Louie (Phil) Penna, he is survived by siblings Phil Penna, John Penna, Gary Penna, Kathy Thrasher Penna and Sue Penna, and five godchildren.

Perhaps best known in Redwood City as the owner/publisher of The Spectrum Magazine (established in 2004), he was also the owner/founder of Penna Media & Consulting. In addition to his media work, he was co-owner of Stuff on the Square, a gift shop located at Courthouse Square in downtown Redwood City. Before starting The Spectrum, Steve had a successful career in advertising and sales with the San Mateo Daily Journal, San Mateo County Times and Examiner news publications.

Steve won several awards for his work with The Spectrum, including a Golden Apple Award — recognizing significant contributions in support of local education — from the Redwood City–San Mateo County Chamber of Commerce. The magazine also won multiple awards from the San Francisco Peninsula Press Club for Steve’s monthly column, “As I Was Saying...,” for other features and for design.

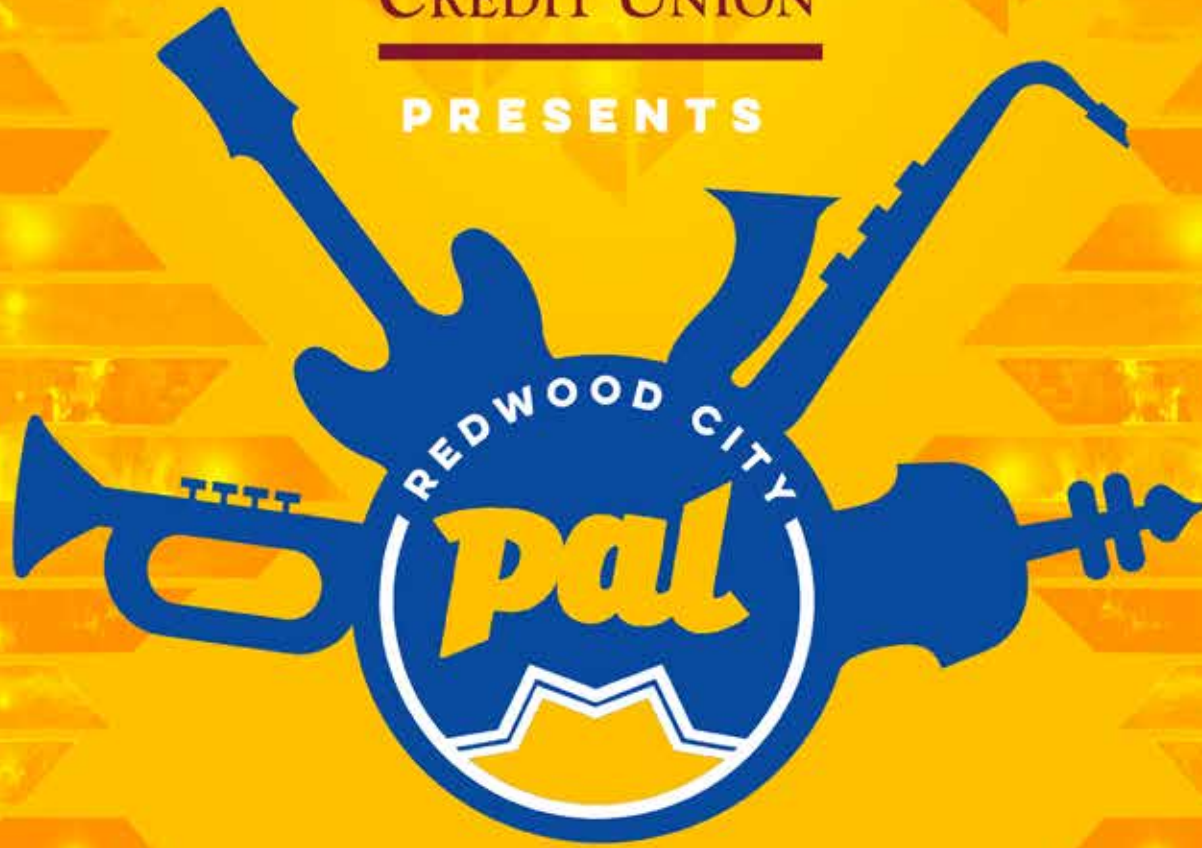
Steve was active in many nonprofit and community organizations. He was an original board member and served as president of Redwood City PAL (Police Activities League). He helped to raise \$11.5 million to restore Carrington Hall at Sequoia High School and was active in community theater. Steve was a CASA child advocate and served on several boards of directors in the Redwood City community. He held annual fundraisers to help support the city’s summer Friday night concert series.

His sudden passing has shocked and saddened the entire community of Redwood City, the hometown he loved so much. Steve inspired everyone’s lives with a broad brush of positivity, encouragement and excitement. He will be truly missed.



~SAN MATEO~  
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## TROUBLE WITH THE CURVE



**T**his post's title is borrowed from the 2012 movie of the same name starring Clint Eastwood and Amy Adams. The subject of the movie — it's about the relationship between an aging baseball scout and his daughter — has absolutely nothing to do with this post's topic, but the title fits the topic well. And my wife and I did like the movie...

At its April 23 meeting Redwood City's City Council was asked to approve traffic calming improvements being planned for Hopkins Avenue and authorize city staff to move to the next phase: to put together construction drawings. I watched the whole meeting, as I often do, but paid particular attention to that one item. I did so because I live in the area (I live in the vicinity of Sequoia Hospital) and walk and drive up and down Hopkins Avenue a lot. I'm not the only one out there, of course: The whole reason for this particular project is the increased volume of traffic that Hopkins Avenue has seen over the last several years and the safety issues that have arisen from that.

To the casual observer Hopkins Avenue may seem just like any other residential street, but it really isn't. First off, the way that it merges into Broadway makes it an ideal way for motorists coming from Emerald Hills, from San Carlos and from Highway 280 to get to downtown Redwood City (or even just to El Camino Real). For most of its length Hopkins Avenue is a very wide street, which subconsciously encourages motorists to ignore the posted 25 mph speed limit signs and instead drive at a much faster rate. The fact that Hopkins cuts through a heavily populated residential area that contains not only a busy neighborhood park but also a number of nearby schools means that there are a lot of children crossing the street at various times of the day, both on foot and on bicycles. The presence of Stafford Park, right on Hopkins Avenue between King and Lowell, raises the possibility of children running into the street after stray balls (I have seen a couple of balls roll into the street over the years, although fortunately the people chasing them have been very careful), and

of course during the summer concert season (which begins on June 13 this year) things get particularly messy, traffic-wise, in the vicinity of the park.

And then there are the curves. Hopkins Avenue is for the most part straight as an arrow, but the very unusual way in which Broadway and Duane Street meet Hopkins Avenue, and the curve at the intersection of Hopkins and Alameda de las Pulgas present challenges, especially for drivers who are not well familiar with the route.

As I told my wife the other day, sometimes my blog almost writes itself. The City Council meeting was in the evening of Monday, April 23, but I wasn't able to watch it until the next day, Tuesday. On Wednesday afternoon, while driving back from an appointment in San Jose, I was thinking about what that week's blog post would be about. And when I got near home, I saw this (above photo).

**B**ecause the cars are in the way it's a bit hard to see, but this is the troublesome curve where Hopkins Avenue meets Alameda de las Pulgas. Here there is a "Y" that lets westbound drivers on Hopkins who want to turn northbound on Alameda (going toward Highway 280 or San Carlos) do so without having to stop at the conventional intersection just visible at the left edge of the picture. The above map shows this particular intersection.

**T**he curve in question is the top part of that small triangle in the center of the map; without it, the intersection of Hopkins and Alameda would be a conventional one. But this curved leg gives some of the drivers transitioning between the two streets an additional option. For drivers heading west on Hopkins and using this curve to head north on Alameda, it works pretty well; drivers still have to pay attention to the yield sign where they merge onto Alameda — which they don't always do — but I'm not aware of a great many problems at that point.

The real problem with this particular curve is that drivers going in the opposite direction — those traveling southbound on Alameda de las Pulgas and wanting to head east on Hopkins Avenue — have the option to either approach the conventional intersection and make a standard left turn, or use the curve. If they choose the latter, they have to negotiate a somewhat awkward — due to limited sight lines and an abundance of people not obeying the speed limit — merge onto Hopkins. Although I did not witness the incident in the picture — I arrived just after it occurred — from the position of the cars it appears that the white car came off Alameda following the curve and when merging onto Hopkins didn't see the grey sedan coming up the street right at them.

I haven't personally witnessed many actual accidents at this particular intersection, but I've seen quite a few near misses. Where the curve reaches Hopkins there is a stop sign, but people often slow down and then roll right through after quickly looking in both directions. Because there could be traffic approaching from either direction on Hopkins, or from Hillview Avenue (the other street that meets at this intersection), unless the driver on the curve really stops and takes a good long look in every direction, it's easy to cause, or just barely avoid, an accident here.

Fortunately, an important part of the plan for the Hopkins Avenue Traffic Calming Project addresses this very intersection. While the presence of a couple of houses along it mean that this troublesome curve cannot be eliminated altogether, the plan is to change this short, curved section of road from two-way to one-way, and require that cars on Alameda wanting to turn onto Hopkins proceed to the four-way stop and make a conventional left turn. Going the other way, westbound cars on Hopkins Avenue wanting to turn north onto Alameda de las Pulgas will still be able to use the curve to do so. This seems a simple and easy-to-implement solution that will go a long way toward improving safety.

Near the other end of Hopkins Avenue, down toward El Camino Real, is Hopkins Avenue's other curve. This one also includes a "Y" intersection but complicates it with a loop.

**S**everal years ago, when this particular configuration was first installed, it felt somewhat confusing to navigate. However, those of us who live in this part of Redwood City, plus those who regularly commute along this route, quickly adjusted. Once people coming up Hopkins from El Camino Real (in the map pictured opposite, top left, people heading from the top edge to the lower left corner along Hopkins) realized that they don't have the right-of-way and have to stop at Duane, yielding to cars





## EITHER APPROACH THE CONVENTIONAL INTERSECTION AND MAKE A STANDARD LEFT TURN, OR USE THE CURVE.

is the project's only semi-controversial aspect: Each block between Nevada Street and Elwood Street is slated to get one or two small raised islands in the center median. It is the location of those islands that can be somewhat controversial, given that they could potentially restrict entry or exit from individual driveways and, at Grand Street, block left-hand turns. However, the city's plan is to work with individual homeowners, block by block, to ensure that the islands — which are intended to make the street feel narrower, something that has been shown to cause motorists to slow down — don't unduly burden any particular resident. Hopefully this process will go smoothly: I would hate to see this badly needed project held up due to the placement or size of a particular median island.

As one who walks along Hopkins Avenue frequently, I really want to see the pedestrian improvements that this project will bring: more and better-marked crosswalks in several locations plus curb "bulbouts" that will increase pedestrian visibility and reduce the amount of time a pedestrian is actually in the street. And, at the park, an on-demand flashing crosswalk (at Lowell Street) plus a raised crosswalk that will do double-duty as a very gentle speed bump (at King Street) — which together might be effective enough to eliminate the need for the temporary stop signs at those intersections during the summer concert season.

My one frustration with this project is the glacial pace at which it is proceeding. This project began back in the summer of 2015, and since then there have been four community meetings and a community survey. As well, the project was reviewed by the Complete Streets Advisory Committee (who recommended the project

to the City Council) and, now, by the City Council — who unanimously approved taking the project to the next step, the creation of construction drawings. But funds for construction have yet to be approved, and Mayor Bain seems to want yet more community input before that will occur. Even if things go smoothly, we aren't likely to see this project built for another year and a half, meaning that from initial conception to construction this project will have taken over four years. Does anyone but me think that that is a bit excessive, given that, unlike a truly controversial project such as the Farm Hill Boulevard Pilot Street Improvement Project (which reduced the number of traffic lanes along a heavily traveled corridor) this project adds no stop signs, takes away no traffic lanes (except at the short Hopkins/Alameda curve) and essentially only adds some small islands and some better marked crosswalks?

This project needs to be approved, so that the city can start thinking about the next project, whatever that is. Let's address that troublesome curve at Alameda de las Pulgas before additional accidents happen, and make the corridor safer for all of the area's many pedestrians.

— *By* GREG WILSON, special to The Spectrum

*Editor's note: Greg Wilson has been out and about on foot, exploring Redwood City's nooks and crannies. His blog is intended as a record of those wanderings, with particular emphasis on the details of the building boom that Redwood City is currently experiencing. Each month The Spectrum Magazine features postings from Wilson's blog: [www.walkingredwoodcity.com](http://www.walkingredwoodcity.com).*

coming around the loop, things seemed to settle out. I don't live in the immediate vicinity of this particular intersection (although I travel through it very frequently), but I get the impression that safety-wise this unusual intersection actually works out OK. As a pedestrian I find it a tad tricky to navigate, but I've worked out my favorite routes. I will note, however, that there is no marked route to get to the park in the center of the circle: There are no crosswalks that lead to it, and thus people wanting to use the small park find themselves having to essentially jaywalk to get there.

My assessment that this particular curve along Hopkins Avenue (technically, I guess it is on Broadway) is a relatively safe one seems to be borne out by the fact that the Hopkins Traffic Safety Project is really doing nothing to this particular part of Hopkins Avenue. Between this curve and the one at Alameda, however,

### Redwood City Players Presents **Dogfight**

July 14th-29th, 2018.

American Legion- Post 105- MacDonald Hall. Redwood City.  
Donations taken at the door.

It's November 21, 1963. On the eve of their deployment to a small but growing conflict in Southeast Asia, three young Marines set out for one final boys' night of debauchery, partying and maybe a little trouble. But, when Corporal Eddie Birdlace meets Rose, an awkward and idealistic waitress whom he enlists to win a cruel bet with his fellow recruits, she rewrites the rules of the game and teaches him the power of love and compassion. Based on the 1991 Warner Brothers film, *Dogfight* takes audiences on a romantic and heartbreaking theatrical journey that stays with you long after the performance.

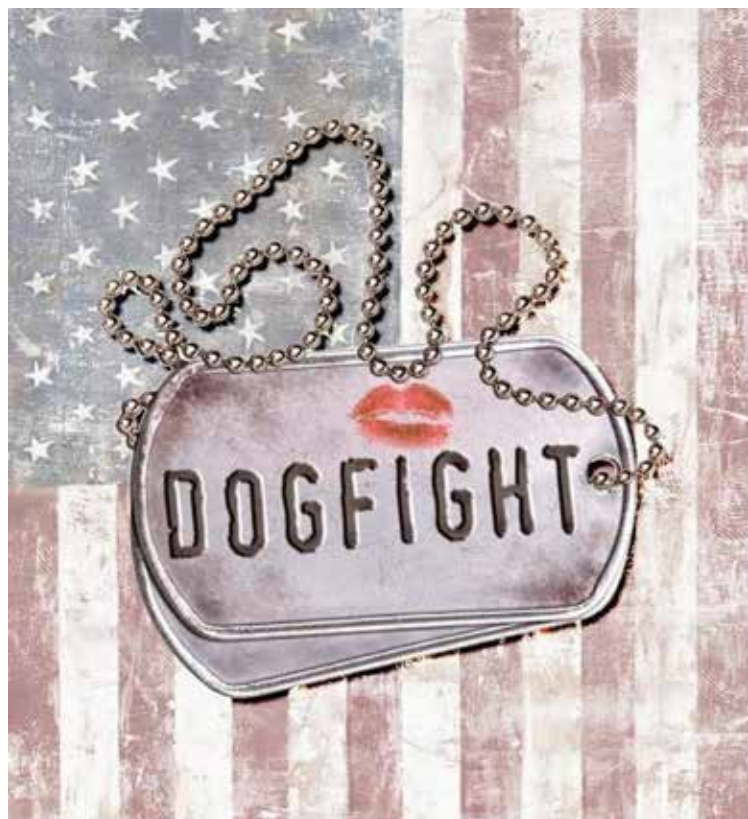
The hauntingly beautiful musical, *Dogfight*, by Pasek and Paul (*The Greatest Showman*, *La La Land* and *Dear Evan Hansen*) and Peter Duchan, was praised by countless critics and nominated for numerous awards, winning the Lucille Lortel Award for Best Musical.

Marley Teter- Director  
Kevin Brownstein- Vocal Director  
Benjamin Belew- Music Director  
Gary Ferguson- Choreographer  
Rachel Beck- Historian  
Alissa Clyne and Crystal Amaya- Stage Managers  
Produced by- Redwood City Players Staff

Starring:

Sage Emiliana Alberto - Meaghan Anderson - Paul Hogarth - Raissa Marchetti-Kozlov - Jason Mooney  
Morgan Peters - John Charles Quimpo - Michelle Skinner - Molly Thornton - Thomas Times

[www.redwoodcityplayers.org](http://www.redwoodcityplayers.org) || [info@redwoodcityplayers.org](mailto:info@redwoodcityplayers.org)





## HALE KICKS OFF CITY COUNCIL CAMPAIGN

“I’m running to be a strong voice for all residents of Redwood City and a much-needed one for families and children. ... Whether you’ve lived in Redwood City for 20 years or 20 days, I want you to be a part of the process of shaping the future of this city,” is how planning commissioner and Facebook marketing director Giselle Hale kicked off her campaign for a seat on the City Council in this November’s election.

“This campaign is really a symbol for a movement taking place in Redwood City that embraces what we love about our past and prepares us for all the great things taking place now and in our future,” Hale stated in front of a packed house at Cyclismo Cafe that included Council Members Jeff Gee, Shelly Masur and John Seybert, San Mateo County Sheriff Carlos Bolanos and former Mayor Jeff Ira.

Hale gave a very personal speech, telling supporters, “My road to Redwood City started with an eviction notice. My husband and I were newlyweds and both working, but like many young people with school loans and new jobs we were sharing a rental with roommates. One day seven years ago, we got the call from our landlord saying that they were ready to sell and wanted us out. Fortunately, after doing the math we realized that with a little help, we could buy our first home together. We chose Redwood City for three reasons: the diversity, the vibrant downtown and the close-knit community values that matched our own. This was the place where we wanted to start and raise our family.”

Hale applied for a Planning Commission seat because, she said, “I believe that the way we design our cities matters to our health, safety and quality of life. I was excited by the possibility of literally shaping the community where she [my daughter] would grow up. Serving the last four years has been a rewarding experience and one I hope to build on as a council member.”

She added, “This next council will have no shortage of challenges to tackle. Topping that list are housing and transportation, a complex puzzle of problems to solve, and [the council] will also tackle the second Downtown Precise Plan and General Plan updates, which will impact our city for years to come.”



**Housing:** “We urgently need more affordable housing to aid residents who are being squeezed by the cost of living. There are a number of solutions to pursue, from inclusionary zoning to making it easier to develop or expand in parts of our city that are naturally affordable. We have single-family homes and large apartment buildings. We need to address the missing middle of housing — condos, townhomes and small to mid-sized rentals — where families can get started and seniors can downsize with more certainty. We need more family housing. Where are families supposed to grow who can’t afford a single-family home? Let’s encourage more family-style and multigenerational developments.”

**Transit:** “We must address traffic, safety and parking. I’ll be a strong team player in executing the award-winning El Camino Real plan, which will bring vast transit improvements to one of our city’s main arteries. I’ll work to get the 101/Woodside Road interchange project moving and support our Vision Zero plan, adding safer options for pedestrians and bikers.”

**Working families and community:** “Families need access to high-quality child care. In 2015 Redwood City was short 225 infant child care seats and 500 preschool seats, and those numbers have undoubtedly climbed. I want to see more developer community benefits

directed towards our schools. I strongly support the Senior Center project, a phenomenal multigenerational project that will provide community and programming for seniors. We need ways for families of all ages to have fun by attracting family-fun businesses and building that downtown park. Let’s add to our vibrant downtown by building an active nightlife, supporting performing arts and street-front retail.

“I’m a fan of our revitalized Neighborhood Association program. Since I announced my run I’ve reached out to all 17 neighborhood associations and I’ve sat down with each one that has responded.”

Hale also mentioned the responses from residents she has spoken to: “What I heard are stories of a growing disparity in Redwood City, which disproportionately impacts young people, families, seniors on fixed incomes and children.”

Hale ended her speech with a unifying statement: “So, Redwood City, I’m humbled and honored to kick off my campaign with you all here today. Just like our journey, this campaign won’t happen without you. Let’s go far; let’s do it together.”

*Editor’s note: The Spectrum Magazine will be covering and reporting on each Redwood City City Council candidate’s kickoff event. All candidates to date have been informed of our intentions and it is each candidate’s responsibility to inform us of each event. This is the third in our series.*

# THE Spectrum

Redwood City’s Monthly Magazine



**WE ARE PROUD  
TO BE  
REDWOOD CITY’S  
MOST READ  
PUBLICATION!**

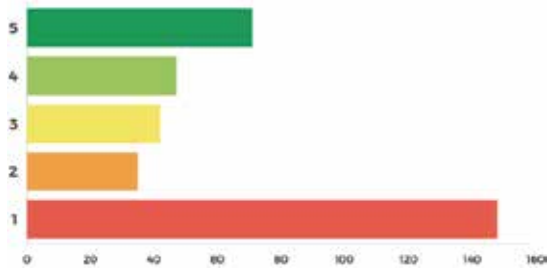


Each week VOCA asks residents of Redwood City their opinions on a local issue. Polls are conducted via text message, and participation is free and open to anyone who signs up for VOCA at [voca.vote](http://voca.vote). Responses are shared with City Hall, on social media and now in a monthly digest in The Spectrum Magazine.

Here are the results of four recent polls asked by VOCA.

Note: Polls are structured with 1-to-5 levels of support or agreement for the headline statement. 1 means strongly oppose or disagree. 5 means strongly support or agree. 3 means neutral or don't know. Respondents can also leave comments that can be upvoted by other VOCA users who agree.

### I would vote in favor of increasing Redwood City's sales tax by ¼ percent to address the city's budget deficits.



Total responses: 350 | People in support: 118  
People in opposition: 188 | People with neutral rating: 44

#### Top upvoted comments

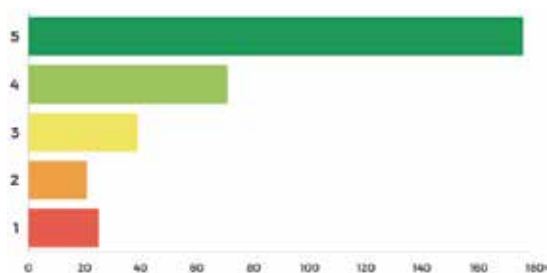
*In support:* "Let's fix the short term by increasing sales tax to raise money for necessary services, but long term we need pension reform."

*In opposition:* "C'mon, the elephant in the room is pension costs; they're rising and only going to get worse. An increased sales tax is just the tip of the iceberg in terms of what's going to be needed. Address the pension issue now before we're spending huge amounts of money supporting pensions for retired city employees but can't afford any current ones. A hybrid system or one that caps city contributions has to be considered immediately! I love RCPD but they have to live in the real world just like the rest of us. Just because the state of California is in denial doesn't mean we should be."

#### What happened next?

City staff is moving forward to create a sales tax proposal that would require City Council's blessing before going to the November ballot for voter approval.

### Redwood City should require active ground-floor uses for all commercial properties downtown.



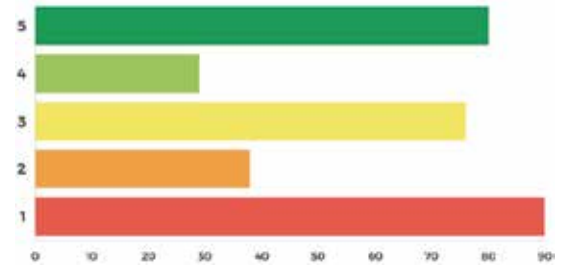
Total responses: 335 | People in support: 248  
People in opposition: 47 | People with neutral rating: 40

#### Top upvoted comments

*In support:* "This will bring and attract more people to come and in turn will entice more businesses, etc. Would rather stay and shop locally to support our downtown."

*In opposition:* "I'm no libertarian, but how about we just let people do whatever they want with their space and don't waste city tax dollars enforcing low-value rules when much more serious community needs exist."

### Redwood City should reduce the size of its City Council from seven to five.



Total responses: 319 | People in support: 112  
People in opposition: 128 | People with neutral rating: 79

#### Top upvoted comments

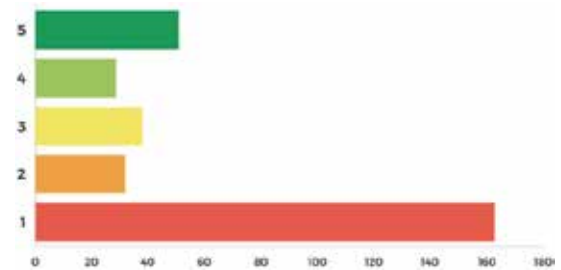
*In support:* "Totally support. I think that a seven-member council does not guarantee diversity any more than a five-member council. And whatever small cost savings results from the reduction of council seats should be put into an 'election fund,' so that Redwood City can once again afford elections and not have to 'pass over' scheduled democratic process elections that are supposed to be 'a given' and a non-negotiable item. The majority on our seven-member council nonchalantly voted themselves in another year. They did not have the judicial right to tamper with the peoples' right to vote. For this we need a seven-seat council!"

*In opposition:* "The entire council is less than 0.5 percent of the budget, so calls to cut two of seven seats is just populist political theater by grouchy people who seemingly can't (or won't) do the math. The marginal cost (or savings) of adding (or cutting) two members is essentially nothing due to the overhead of having a council at all. For perspective: police and fire are 59 percent. Add parks, rec and library and you're up to 82 percent. A smaller nearby city, Palo Alto, has nine council members. And so what? What a total waste of time when practically every other issue imaginable is of greater significance."

#### What happened next?

City Council approved by a 5-2 vote marijuana delivery and nursery businesses, with zoning and other restrictions, at their April 9 meeting.

### I support the Harbor View project being built in Redwood City.



Total responses: 323 | People in support: 81  
People in opposition: 203 | People with neutral rating: 39

#### Top upvoted comments

*In support:* "Who would say no to more jobs? The Bay Area is in need of more housing, and the NIMBYs in Redwood City are not helping. Enough with the straw-man arguments against jobs. Redwood City is in a unique position to become the new center of job creation in the Peninsula. Let's not exclude people from our city, lest we end up back in our Deadwood City days."

*In opposition:* "Seriously? Five thousand office workers at one of the most dysfunctional interchanges in Northern Cali. I don't think so. Keep [an] eye on Singer Association (the PR firm hired by Jay Paul for this project). They are also funding Climate Magazine. I expect Climate to be endorsing council candidates who look favorably upon this project. Hopefully they'll prove me wrong."



**CLUB FOX**

**2209 Broadway St.  
Downtown Redwood City**

Tickets available at [www.clubfoxrwc.com](http://www.clubfoxrwc.com), [tickets.foxrwc.com](http://tickets.foxrwc.com), 650-369-7770 or 877-435-9849

Club Fox Blues Jam – Ashbolt Stewart’s Beats Working: 7 p.m., Wednesday, June 6, \$7

Music on the Square – Metal Shop: 5 p.m., Friday, June 8, no cover – Perfect location, drink specials, beer and wine to go, air conditioning

The Members: 8 p.m., Saturday, June 9, \$5 adv/\$10 day of show

Christie Lenée: 7 p.m., Sunday, June 10, \$20

Club Fox Blues Jam – Fillmore Slim: 7 p.m., Wednesday, June 13, \$7

Moonalice: 8 p.m., Thursday, June 14, \$13 adv/\$16 day of show

Music on the Square – Mustache Harbor: 5 p.m., Friday, June 15, no cover – Perfect location, drink specials, beer and wine to go, air conditioning

Dutch Uncle, Jesse Charles Band & The Even Deep: 9 p.m., Saturday, June 16, \$15 adv/\$20 day of show

Club Fox Blues Jam – The Lucky Losers CD Release Party: 7 p.m., Wednesday, June 20, \$7

Music on the Square – Steel ’n’ Chicago: 5 p.m., Friday, June 22, no cover – Perfect location, drink specials, beer and wine to go, air conditioning

Private event – Have your next event at Club Fox: Saturday, June 23

Club Fox Blues Jam – Paula Harris & The Beasts of Blues: 7 p.m., Wednesday, June 27, \$7

Music on the Square – Cisco Kid: 5 p.m., Friday, June 29, no cover – Perfect location, drink specials, beer and wine to go, air conditioning

Neon Velvet: 9 p.m., Saturday, June 30, \$17 adv/\$20 day of show



**SAN MATEO COUNTY HISTORY MUSEUM**

**2200 Broadway St., Redwood City  
650-299-0104**

[www.historysmc.org](http://www.historysmc.org)  
Tuesday–Sunday, 10 a.m.–4 p.m.  
\$6 for adults, \$4 for seniors and students, free for children 5 and under

The San Mateo County History Museum is located within the 108-year-old “Old Courthouse” in Redwood City. It features exhibits related to the use of natural resources, suburban development, ethnic experience and entrepreneurial achievement on the Peninsula from the times of the Ohlone Indian through today.

**Free First Fridays Program on July 6**

Not only is admission free the entire day (10 a.m. to 4 p.m.), but two programs are planned for the public without any fees. At 11 a.m., preschool children will be invited to learn about farming.

**Your Country Needs You: Posters From World War II**

Through Oct. 7  
Seventy-five years ago, the United States was embroiled in World War II. Homefront activities were of major importance. Government posters were an effective medium to convey basic messages about patriotism, awareness of spies, conservation of resources, drives for war bonds and a variety of other themes. Dr. Frank Stanger, the founder of the San Mateo County History Museum, made it his business to collect reminders of homefront activities in San Mateo County and compiled a large collection of wartime posters. A selection of some of the most interesting of these makes up the new exhibit. This display will complement another exhibit at the history museum that explores aspects of the wartime experiences, “Peninsula at War: San Mateo County’s World War II Legacy.”

**Sketches From World War I**

Recognizing America’s entry into World War I in 1917, the San Mateo County History Museum opened an exhibit entitled “Sketches From World War I,” which features Peninsula soldier Alvin Page Colby’s art, created when he was training at Fort Lewis and then serving in France as a cook in the 91st “Wild West” Infantry Division. Colby was a Burlingame resident working at Wisnom’s Hardware when he joined the Army. His letters home often included comic sketches



about daily life, many of which are featured in the exhibit. After the war he returned to Burlingame and continued working at the Wisnom’s store in San Mateo. These sketches have never been on display for public viewing before.

**Model Ships Gallery Gets Update**

The San Mateo County History Museum reopened its popular exhibit gallery “Charles Parsons’ Ships of the World.” The gallery got a \$58,000 upgrade that includes new interactive activities, video presentations, graphics and murals. This project was made possible by a grant from the Christensen Family Foundation.

The gallery features the 24 beautifully conceived model ships fashioned by expert model maker Charles Parsons (1917–2004), who lived in San Carlos. The ships are an eclectic collection representing Parsons’ intense interest in maritime history, from a Greek warship of 500 B.C. to the World War II destroyer The Sullivans.



**THE MAIN GALLERY**

**1018 Main St., Redwood City**

650-701-1018  
[www.themaingallery.org](http://www.themaingallery.org)

The Main Gallery, an artists’ cooperative with 23 members, showcases the work of some of the best local talent in the Bay Area. The gallery is located in the historic yellow Victorian cottage at the corner of Main and Middlefield. The Main Gallery is open Wednesday through Sunday from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 31



## Redwood City Parks and Arts Foundation Donors and Volunteers Appreciation

## EVENTS AROUND TOWN

The Redwood City Parks and Arts Foundation celebrated their donors and volunteers with some tasty homemade New Orleans gumbo and cornbread while the rockin' sounds of the bayou played in the background. Pamela Estes, president of the all-volunteer organization, said, "This party is our way to thank our donors and volunteers for all that they do all year-round. We are an all-volunteer board and an all-volunteer organization. We can't do all that we do without all of our amazing volunteers and donors!" The event was graciously hosted by Box, who also supplied some tasty appetizers enjoyed by all. Many fun events are coming your way this summer, beginning with Chalk Full of Fun on the Square, a chalk painting festival on July 3 & 4. Pictured are the two guests, Robbie Moffat and Andrea D'Souza, who found a baby in the cupcakes and were crowned queens for the evening. To donate or volunteer, go to [www.rwcpaf.org](http://www.rwcpaf.org).





# Memories of Steve

*from family, friends and members of the community he loved so much*

---

The families of Steve Penna are still unable to believe their beloved Steve is gone. He had not only his Penna family but was also a member of the Lutticken and Markwith families. Losing Steve has left all of us heartbroken.

Steve's wishes are for cremation. Crippen & Flynn Woodside Chapel is handling his disposition. There will be no services; the families will be having a private gathering to help process our sudden loss.

His families understand he wanted to share his love for life with everyone he could reach. In remembrance of Steve, Redwood City is having a public Celebration of Life sometime in July. Details are in the planning stage.

We can't thank EVERYONE enough for the kind words, emotional support and time.

To quote Steve, he would want all of us to go out and "Make it a GREAT Day."

**The families ask in lieu of flowers,  
please donate in his name to PAL (the Police Activities League) at [redwoodcitypal.org](http://redwoodcitypal.org)**



Steve Penna, Gary Penna, Kathy Thrasher Penna, Phil Penna, Sue Penna, John Penna









Steve used The Spectrum to highlight the “little guy” — members of our community who are quietly making a difference. He cared deeply about people like that and understood the critical role they play in making our community function.

But Steve didn't just write about the community, he actively participated in trying to make Redwood City a better place. He served on the board of the Police Activities League for many years and was a champion for programs that engaged our youth, taught them to be good citizens and kept them out of trouble. He participated in theater and led the effort to restore Carrington Hall on the Sequoia High School campus. I had the opportunity to work closely with him on that effort, and I remember his passion for leaving a lasting impact on his community.

Steve was a big supporter of our downtown concerts and just one week before he passed, he held an event featuring local businesses who donated time, money and food to help raise money for the concert series. The event was highly successful and well attended, and Steve was incredibly happy and upbeat. That is how I will remember him.

A community is only as good as its people, and how much they are willing to get involved and give back. I am grateful to Steve for the many ways he gave back, and I hope his story will inspire others to think about what more they can do to make our community a better place.

— Ian Bain



Death can never take a good man away, for in the hearts of the people he inspired, the legacy remains and continues throughout generations.

Steve Penna was one of the first individuals I met when I became police chief in Redwood City. Steve's big smile, goofy laugh and extreme love for the city of Redwood City will be something I will never forget and always cherish. I will miss him at PAL events, Music on the Square and our lunch meetings at City Pub. There is no doubt that today Steve is telling the angels in heaven how much he loved Redwood City. Steve was a great friend to many and may his soul find eternal rest.

— JR Gamez

Steve Penna was incredibly kind to me and to a little upstart and unknown Facebook group page that I started about four years ago called Redwood City Residents Say: “What?”

He gave us many mentions in his “As I Was Saying...” section and he also featured me in The Spectrum's “A Minute With” section.

When we did an “October 15 March” for housing, Steve was there — doing a live feed — even though he was scheduled to take a plane that morning, in just a couple of hours, en route to his vacation!

He made time for people.

I will never forget him, for his award-winning expertise as a journalist, for his balance and fairness and straightforwardness in his writing and for his courage and empathy. He was a good man and a friend to Redwood City.

While we were at Starbucks one day before a meeting, upon standing up to leave, I looked up at him and I said, “My goodness! I hadn't realized before how tall you are!”

This time — a man of few words — “Six-eight!” he said. He stood tall in many ways.

— Julie Pardini

I first heard of Steve Penna when I chose Redwood City as my home in 1999. I regret that it wasn't until recently that he and I actually spoke in person.

Prior to that we had open discussions online and via email that truly showed the kind and open nature of his beautifully huge heart. One of the things I most admired about him was how I didn't feel nervous when he and I were in disagreement. I always knew that we could have a discussion of any kind and not have differences of opinion get in the way of friendship. Only recently we had been working on what was going to become a story for The Spectrum. During this time I only grew to cherish him more. He was a glorious light. Redwood City will forever be dimmed because of his absence.

— Stasha Powell



One of the joys of knowing Steve well was knowing not only the gregarious larger-than-life persona he wore so well in public but also the quiet, caring side he shared in small groups. Whether an intimate gathering for dinner on his patio, sitting with a glass of wine in our yard or out to dinner at one of his favorite Redwood City spots, it's that Steve that we treasured. When we moved out of Redwood City this past December we said it would be the people we would miss the most and Steve was at the top of that list. Just days before his passing he was making plans to come up to see the new house. We know he'll still be with us in spirit as we watch the sunset with a glass of wine but we sure will miss the hugs, the laughs and the conversation.

— Cherlene and Alex Wright



Gary Penna, Steve Penna and Gary Markwith (photo by James Kaspar)

Steve Penna and I have been lifelong best friends with too many stories to tell. We talked daily and Rosie and I hung out with him weekly. My only wish for you is that someday you too can have a friend like Steve.

With tears running down my face, I am happy to say that we now have a 6-foot-5-inch, 300-pound angel with us. How lucky we are to have shared a life with you.

We love you, Steve.

— Gary and Rosie Markwith



Steve always brought a smile to the room. He cared about our youth and wanted to make Redwood City a better place. Some may have disagreed with him on politics, but he only wanted to keep Redwood City somewhat the way it was when he grew up here. Whether or not you agreed with him, he was always honest.

When he first started The Spectrum, he came to me. He said, I need your help, I need you to take out an ad. I said, OK. And I've been on the back page of The Spectrum ever since. He had the power of the pen. If anyone ever wanted to put on an event, he would put an ad in The Spectrum for free or for a discounted rate. He did that for fundraisers I was involved in for PAL and Kainos.

At a Christmas party once, Steve volunteered to help the hostess pass out chocolates. These chocolates were like \$3 each. As I watched Steve walk around the room offering chocolates, it seemed like he was eating one for every three he passed out. I went up to him and asked, Steve, are you passing out three and eating one? With that big, hilarious laugh of his, he said, It seems that way. God, we all laughed.

I was recently in a motorcycle accident and he was planning to come down to take care of me for a couple of weeks. He was my buddy and I miss him.

— Alpio Barbara





Steve, We shared so many wonderful times together! I don't know how to even begin. I will miss our talks about dieting and exercising. Our working on fundraisers together. The downtown summer concerts. Being one of your confidantes! Your infectious laugh. The debates, you always had to have the last word! I will miss you harassing me and always taunting Dominic when your teams would play against each other during football season. We have shared laughs, cried together, big bear hugs and extended lunches! The picture I am sharing is my favorite, when you texted me this one day while I was getting my hair done. This was the highlight of my day! I will miss your OLD SCHOOL mindset. Forever MADONNA! All those LIVE video FB blogs! Thank you for teaching me that it is OK to be ME and who cares what others think! I will always have a special place for you in my heart! Every day is a BLESSING!

– Kat Petrick



Thank you, Steve Penna, for being a champion of the Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department and the downtown events! You were always there to support us, to be an advocate, a cheerleader, a funder, an organizer and so much more! Your tremendous spirit, friendship, smiles, hugs and presence will be greatly missed.

– Chris Beth

Steve, There are no words to adequately express the sorrow I am feeling over your untimely passing. I am so grateful for your loving and loyal friendship throughout the many years we've known each other. As you knew, I considered you a cherished member of my extended family. I will always hold your memory in a special place in my heart-space and pray that you are at peace embraced in the warmth of God's love.

With blessings of love, your sister-of-the-heart, Paula.

– Paula Uccelli

Steve had been a member of San Mateo Credit Union since 2014 but he was so much more than that. He was always friendly, always involved, and both he and his magazine represented an important voice in our community. SMCU was a steadfast advertiser in The Spectrum, but beyond that Steve also wrote several articles about the credit union over the years. Perhaps the most enduring impact Steve had on us, however, was the annual PAL Blues Festival. This event has been immortalized as part of a mural inside our downtown Redwood City branch and we will always remember Steve when we look at it. Our deepest sympathies go out to his family and friends. Steve and everything he brought to the community will be greatly missed.

– The staff at San Mateo Credit Union



(photo by James Kaspar)

Sadly, Steve was only 59 and when I looked through the covers of The Spectrum online, I recalled how he featured so many people and businesses in Redwood City and in doing so promoted them as well as a sense of community. There is no question he will be missed; he was a friend to many and an important voice for the opinions of the community. The Spectrum also served as a vital channel for the happenings and activities of Redwood City. Personally, as the photographer for The Spectrum for over nine years, it was a very enriching experience, challenging my photographic capabilities and letting me get to know civic leaders and ordinary people who were making notable contributions or achievements. I'm grateful I had the opportunity to be part of the magazine's history and I look back on those years with fondness and appreciation. Steve was a unique individual, controversial at times but unquestionably one who cared deeply about his city and the people in it. May he rest in peace for a job well done.

– James Kaspar



Steve, my friend, I will miss you forever. One of the last things you said to me was "Let's go take a pic in front of Fox!" I wish we would have. Another last statement: "Looks like we are going to see a lot of musicals this year!" I wish we could. I thank you for all the support and friendship you have given me over the last 13 years. Thank you for being a champion for my children (everyone's children) and never being a ME and I person. You were a best friend to so many! Family to everyone who knew you. I will miss our lunches and community gatherings and late-night chats. We will all miss you advocating for those who have no voice. I meant it when I said you are our Lorax. I love you, my friend, and again I will miss you forever. I hope I will continue to feel your presence in all your regular spots so that we are reminded that we are a community. Redwood City will never be the same without you.

– Vicky Costantini



As I think of the loss of such a man who brought so much light into this world, I cannot help but think, Steve, you are in heaven, sharing your smile with everyone. Steve, you meant so much to all of the folks in the downtown Redwood City area, and everywhere you went you made it your call to friend everyone. The thing that touches me the most is how you loved those who live on the streets with such a passion. Every time we saw one another, your first question to me was "How's my peeps on the streets?" I loved you for that. The compassion you showed toward my wife, son and me for what we do to help those on the streets was felt very deep in our hearts. Steve, you will be missed dearly but never forgotten, and Steve, from those who live on the streets, your peeps hold you in their hearts forever. God bless you, my friend.

– David Shearin

CONTINUES ON PAGE 32



# SPOTLIGHT

Spectrum Magazine Publisher Steve Penna and friends held their annual Friday Night Concert Series preview night to bring our community together and raise funds to help support the popular concert series. Joining Penna were Mayor Ian Bain, Vice Mayor Diane Howard, Council Members Janet Borgens and Jeff Gee, City Manager Melissa Stevenson Diaz, County Controller Juan Raigoza, Police Chief Dan Mulholland, Parks, Recreation & Community Services Director and Mr. Redwood City 2018 Chris Beth, Miss Redwood City Brooke Muschott and an estimated 500 local concert supporters and involved residents.

Special thank-you to all the businesses that came out to help! **RESTAURANTS:** CAFÉ LA TARTINE \* SAKURA \* LV MAR/LA VIGA \* GREEN LEAF BISTRO \* NIKKO'S MEXICAN GRILL \* SCROLL BAR WATERSIDE KITCHEN \* GO FISH POKE BAR \* CROUCHING TIGER \* BUBBLE WRAP WAFFLE \* TEASPOON \* LOVEJOY'S TEAHOUSE \* BROADWAY MASALA \* SANDWICH SPOT \* **BUSINESSES:** OPTIMIST CLUB OF REDWOOD CITY \* RALPH'S VACUUM \* CALIFORNIA BLENDZ BARBERSHOP \* SOTHEBY'S REDWOOD CITY \* OBSTACOURSE \* SEQUOIA REALTY \* STUFF ON THE SQUARE/BABY BOTTOMS \* **ENTERTAINMENT:** DJ ANTIDOPE of TEMPLO RECORDS and THE STUDIO S ON BROADWAY DANCERS \* **SPECIAL FRIENDS:** REGINA VAN BRUNT \* LYNN SWIFT CAMACHO \* ROSIE MARKWITH \* FELICITAS (SAM) CHAMORRO \* MICHELLE MARIRANI \* KAS PILON \* GINGER SILVERMAN





## Cañada Fashion Students to Visit Florence, Italy

Twenty Cañada College students will study fashion in Florence this summer with Professor Ronda Chaney and Kathleen Lorist. Cañada College in collaboration with the American Institute for Foreign Study will again host a 3-unit class in this beautiful Renaissance city in magnificent Tuscany. Florence is the perfect place to study the work of designers such as Ferragamo, Gucci, Capucci and other designers as students visit museums and boutiques. A trip to Milan to the Armani museum, attending a Florence Fashion Week, and a visit to the textile capital of Prato are special highlights of the class. Delicious Italian foods will be a part of their cooking class.

This is the third year that Chaney has recruited a group for this exciting study. There have been two full-day Saturday classes where students have learned about Italian history and the many influences on clothing and textiles. Students are surprised to learn that fiber development during World War II in Italy still impacts clothing available today.

During the free weekends, students have the opportunity to travel to other nearby cities. Many lasting friendships are created through this exciting study abroad. For information about summer 2019 contact [chaney@smccd.edu](mailto:chaney@smccd.edu).



## Kiwanis Awards Scholarships to Local Students

The Woodside Terrace A.M. Kiwanis Club of Redwood City has selected 10 local high school students as recipients of their annual scholarship program offering \$14,500 in total scholarship funds. Students from Sequoia and Woodside high schools were honored at the annual dinner at the Old Spaghetti Factory in Redwood City. The honorable Ian Bain, mayor of Redwood City, provided congratulatory remarks.

The following senior high school students have demonstrated academic achievement and commitment to community service and volunteerism and will receive these awards:

### THE KEY CLUB OF SEQUOIA HIGH SCHOLARSHIP

Angela Khov, Sequoia High School

### THE GERI MAYERS MEMORIAL COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

Teresa Najera, Woodside High School

### THE CHARLES AND JEAN RIGG SCHOLARSHIP

Kaitlin Raynor, Woodside High School

### YAMADA FAMILY SCHOLARSHIPS

Clara MacAvoy and Alejandra Sanchez-Castro, Sequoia High School

### WOODSIDE TERRACE A.M. KIWANIS ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Luis Espino Cervantes, Maya Gotthard, Jessica Morales, Juan Osorio de Jesus and Lauren Sterns, Woodside High School





## CONNECTING REDWOOD CITY NEIGHBORHOODS AND NEIGHBORS



### Canyon

On April 25, the Canyon Neighborhood Association held their inaugural meeting. The meeting took place at the Canyon Inn restaurant with 35 community members attending; all present said this was their first time attending a neighborhood association meeting. City staff presented information on the following items: city fiscal/revenue measure, accessory dwelling units and recent City Council decisions. Issues discussed included speeding on Canyon and Cordilleras, traffic and affordable housing. Additionally, Police Department personnel provided a report on crime statistics and information on how to organize a neighborhood watch program.



### Downtown

The Downtown Neighborhood Association held a neighborhood mixer on Thursday, May 10, at Cyclismo Cafe. Over 20 residents attended this event. Following a welcome from Neighborhood Association Chair Jason Galisatus, city staff presented a city fiscal/revenue measure update and invited residents to participate in city-sponsored affordable housing community conversations. The CityTrees nonprofit invited residents to attend their upcoming Prune and Pub event that will take place on June 21 at 6 p.m. (citytrees.org). The Downtown Neighborhood Association plans to hold their next meeting in the summer.



### Friendly Acres

The Friendly Acres Neighborhood Association held a meeting on Thursday, May 17, at the Police Activities League building. Over 20 residents attended the meeting. The city's fire chief provided an update on the city's recently updated fireworks ordinance, which increases penalties for illegal firework activity in the city. Stanford Medical provided an update on their construction project — the new parking garage is scheduled to be complete in August. The Sobrato Organization provided an update on their proposed Broadway Plaza project located at 1401 Broadway. Residents discussed a proposed permit parking program for the neighborhood. Additionally, residents were invited to attend upcoming city-sponsored affordable housing community conversations.

### Redwood Oaks

On May 9, the Redwood Oaks Neighborhood Association hosted a meeting at the Veterans Memorial Senior Center. Twenty community members attended. City staff presented a city fiscal/revenue measure update, provided an update on the Hallmark House apartment building on Woodside Road and shared an update on housing initiatives, including recently adopted and upcoming council policies. The majority of the meeting was dedicated to city staff following up on a small flooding drainage control project in the neighborhood. At a previous Redwood Oaks Neighborhood Association meeting on Feb. 11, city staff committed to a flood drainage control project. Staff presented five potential project locations that would allow the installation of underground water storage basins or bioswales. The community members present supported moving forward with a project at the corner of Oakwood Drive and East Oakwood Boulevard. Additionally, community members requested that a flooding drainage study of the neighborhood be included in the city's Five-Year Capital Improvement Plan to identify future locations for small drainage projects throughout the neighborhood.

### Upcoming June meetings

Interested in learning more about your neighborhood association and participating in events? Here are the upcoming neighborhood association meetings for the month of June. To learn more about your neighborhood association visit [www.redwoodcity.org/neighborhoodassociations](http://www.redwoodcity.org/neighborhoodassociations).

**Friendly Acres:** June 21 at 7:30 p.m. at the Police Activities League building, 3399 Bay Road.

**Redwood Shores:** June 14 at 7 p.m. at the Redwood Shores Library, 399 Marine Parkway.

**Bair Island:** Food truck event June 26 at 6 p.m. on Turnbuckle Drive with Sam's Chowder Mobile.

**Palm Park:** June 21 at 7 p.m. at the Community Activities Building, 1400 Roosevelt.



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640 Buckeye | Redwood City  
Represented the buyer \$2,200,000.00 (sold)



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1230 Orange Ave. | Menlo Park  
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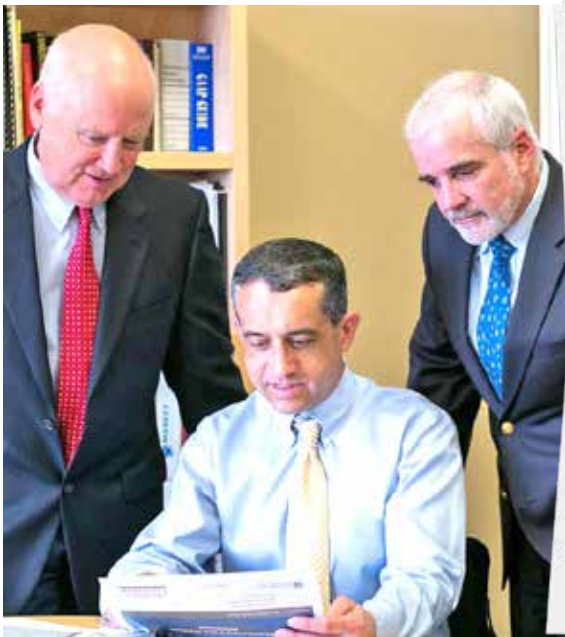




# Juan Raigoza

## *The Watchdog of Numbers*

—By JOSEPH LUTHER, contributing writer



“So, what do you do exactly?” It’s a question he gets a lot. For most people, it’s an innocuous enough conversation starter. But for San Mateo County Controller Juan Raigoza, his answer is usually the source of strange looks, feigned interest and uncomfortable fidgeting. Eyes glaze over. Thoughts turn to yard work and grocery shopping. And by the time he gets to the part about “to properly pay all valid claims against the county and to distribute taxes to the 131 local government agencies, including the county, cities, school districts and special districts,” it’s all over. “Nice to meet you. It’s time to clean the grill.”

It’s a good thing he likes what he does. Raigoza has lived and breathed the work of the county Controller’s Office for the past 17 years. “I love my job as controller,” he says. “I enjoy my work every single day.” Raigoza has served as county controller since January 2015. But he began working for the County of San Mateo Controller’s Office way back in 2001 as a senior internal auditor and later became the division manager of the controller’s payroll and information systems divisions. Prior to being elected controller, he was the county’s assistant controller for three years.

And although there are more glamorous jobs, what he does, he does well. His office has received the Government Finance Officers Association’s (GFOA) Award for Excellence in Financial Reporting for the County of San Mateo’s Comprehensive Annual Financial Report for 17 consecutive years. Similarly, the county’s Popular

Annual Financial Report has been honored for 15 consecutive years. The latter reports on how the county receives and spends its funds in reader-friendly format. GFOA’s award is the highest level of recognition in state and local governmental financial reporting.

“These award-winning reports and our annual Property Tax Highlights publication show our commitment to the county’s financial accountability and transparency,” says Raigoza. “The property tax publication is a popular, citizen-friendly report that shows the taxes collected and distributed to 131 local government agencies operating in the county.”

And before you start thinking about the charcoal in the toolshed, remember this: The work that takes place in Raigoza’s office touches the lives of everyone in San Mateo County. His customers include myriad county departments, taxpayers, and the cities, towns, school districts and special districts across the area. The work of the Controller’s Office supports all the financial functions of the county, allowing its departments to provide direct services to residents, particularly the underserved. Countywide services include public safety, health, social, housing and parks, plus city-type services such as roads, water, sewer and police in unincorporated areas.

Raigoza describes it like this: “As the San Mateo County controller, I am the internal watchdog working for the county’s taxpayers and residents and am directly accountable to the citizens of San Mateo County. The work my team and I do is all about making independent decisions based on laws, policies, facts and reason —

and not based on political agendas that may not be in the best interest of taxpayers or residents. Knowing that the work I do contributes to and promotes the county’s effectiveness, financial accountability and financial transparency makes me look forward to, and excited about, my job every day.”

And although the office of controller is an elected position, for Raigoza, politics doesn’t come easy. He’s a numbers guy to the core and prefers to avoid the political fray. So when he does occasionally take a stance, it’s enough to make one take notice.

“I believe that we, as a society, should treat all people equally and give everyone opportunities to succeed. Whether we believe it or not — and whether we like it or not — we’re all in this together. So, we might as well treat each other with respect,” he says. It’s about as close to a political statement as you’ll get from Raigoza. The message of “opportunity” is one that’s close to his heart.

Raigoza’s family emigrated from Mexico to California when he was 4 years old. He grew up in Orland, a small rural town in the Sacramento Valley near Chico, where most of his family still lives today. Much of his extended family, whom he still visits periodically, lives in Guadalajara, Mexico.

When they first came to California, both parents worked as farm laborers. His mother worked as a sorter at a local nut processing plant and his father worked in a milk processing plant. His parents instilled in him a sense of responsibility, respect for others and a desire to take pride in himself and his work. “Even though my dad was only able to complete third grade and my mom the sixth





**“AS THE COSTS OF PROVIDING ESSENTIAL SERVICES CONTINUE TO INCREASE, THE COUNTY AND OTHER LOCAL AGENCIES SHOULD CONTINUE TO THINK LONG TERM AND PLAN APPROPRIATELY.”**

grade — the highest offered — they both knew the importance of a strong formal education and always encouraged me and my siblings to do well in school,” says Raigoza.

Growing up on *Star Trek* and dreams of faraway places, Raigoza imagined becoming an astronaut. He earned money mowing neighbors’ lawns, picking olives and helping his uncle Librado feed and milk cows on weekends. Librado would become a key influencer for the young Raigoza, shaping his outlook and instilling in him the principles of responsibility, hard work and pride in a job well done. “Over the summers of my freshman and sophomore years in high school Librado would give me rides to work in the local fields and orchards. I remember working in the fields of sunflowers, onions and squash.”

Raigoza went on to earn his undergraduate degree in accounting and finance from the Chico State University College of Business while working between 30 and 40 hours a week at a warehouse job and attending school full time. After graduating, and tiring of small-town life, Raigoza set off to fulfill his big-city dreams. He moved to San Mateo County in 1989 and has lived here for over 20 years.

Raigoza’s first job out of college was working as a tax auditor for the California Franchise Tax Board out of their San Francisco district office. He audited the income tax returns of high-income individuals and multinational corporations to verify compliance with tax laws — and he loved it. Later, Raigoza earned his Master of Business Administration, with an emphasis in management information systems.

Prior to joining the county, Raigoza worked for two Big Four accounting firms. First, as a state and local tax

consultant for Ernst & Young and then as a management consultant for Deloitte & Touche, where he primarily advised public sector clients.

And although during this month’s election Raigoza ran unopposed, in 2014 it was a different story. “Running for the countywide elected office of San Mateo County controller in 2014 was one of the hardest things I have done,” he says. “Prior to that, I had never considered running for office. I was very grateful to have received the support of many community leaders throughout the campaign and to ultimately have the citizens of San Mateo County elect me to serve as their independent county controller.”

Since then, Raigoza has served the county during a time of unprecedented economic growth. A thriving economy and booming housing market are responsible for a sixth year of San Mateo County property tax revenue growth while tax rates remain steady. According to Raigoza, property tax revenue grew \$163.2 million or 7.3 percent as compared to the previous year, and a total \$530 million or 30 percent since fiscal year 2012–13.

Despite the optimistic financial forecasts, Raigoza urges caution. “While the county and most local government agencies have recently experienced significant growth in their annual property tax revenues due to the growing economy, in the long term, this is unlikely to be sustainable,” Raigoza said in a press release. “Historically, good economic times have not gone on indefinitely. Furthermore, as the cost[s] of providing essential services continue to increase, the county and other local agencies should continue to think long term and plan appropriately.”

But today, times are good. The days are long, and the sun is high. Raigoza talks about his passion for the area: “I appreciate living in the middle of Silicon Valley within a vibrant city that includes a diverse community with many highly educated people. I enjoy the great parks and many opportunities to hike in the magnificent open spaces all around us. As a road cyclist I also enjoy the many scenic roads that are available throughout the county to ride my bike.”

For Raigoza, being an active part of the community means giving something back. As a Rotary Club member, he enjoys being able to provide scholarships to local, financially deserving students attending a four-year university or community college. He volunteers as an event coordinator to organize and put on the club’s annual scholarship Fun Run, a community event that helps raise scholarship funds to benefit local students. He and his wife, Donna, also enjoy supporting local organizations such as the Redwood City Library Foundation, Redwood City Education Foundation, San Mateo County’s Jobs for Youth and other great organizations.

As for future political aspirations, Raigoza says, “The only political aspiration I have is to continue to serve as the San Mateo County controller for as long as the citizens of San Mateo County will allow me. Although I am an elected official, I consider myself an independent professional who works directly for the taxpayers, residents and citizens of San Mateo County as the county’s chief accounting officer and its independent internal watchdog.”



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# HIGH-TECH FEATURES ON NEW CARS DRIVE UP AUTO INSURANCE RATES

— By **HECTOR FLAMENCO**, special to The Spectrum

**T**he gee-whiz gadgets on new cars — the backup cameras, the large touch-screen controls, the blind-spot monitoring — make us all feel a little safer about navigating the roads. But high-tech, advanced safety features come at a fairly steep price, so they're driving up car insurance rates, too.

"If they're damaged, they're much more expensive to repair," said James Lynch, chief actuary for the Insurance Information Institute. "You can't just go to a shop and pick up a part that you can jerry-rig on."

Fixing a bumper isn't the same old job. Repairing a bumper on an entry-level luxury car, for example, can cost about \$3,550 for a 2016 model for parts and labor, compared with about \$1,845 for a 2014 model, according to data from Liberty Mutual Insurance.

Why? The 2016 model has a distance sensor; the 2014 model does not. Parts are 130 percent higher and labor is 18 percent higher. "Increasingly, simple, small repairs can now be much more costly and complex to do," said Maxime Rieman, product manager for insurance at ValuePenguin.com, a personal finance research firm with a website that can help consumers select insurance plans.

Consumers often don't think about the cost of insurance when they're shopping around for a new car — or a newer used car, such as one of the many 2015 models that will come off lease in 2018. But they should plan for higher insurance expenses relating to some advanced safety features and other factors.

"While it's improving safety, it's also increasing premiums on policies," said Todd Kozikowski, co-founder and chief revenue officer for Clearurance, a crowdsourced review and ratings tool for insurance.

Just take a quick glance at where some sensors are placed. They're located on bumpers and side mirrors, spots that are easily hit — either in a significant accident or some minor fender benders.

The car payment is one part of the financial decision, but car insurance is another. So consumer experts advise reviewing insurance costs before buying a car, as well as comparing insurance premiums for different makes and models.

Kiplinger's Personal Finance magazine notes in a February report that consumers may even want to shop around for car insurance when their lives change, such as when they marry or get a new job.

Car insurance rates are likely to rise in 2018 across the country, according to industry experts. The consumer price index for auto insurance jumped up 25.9 percent — the largest five-year increase — from early 2012 through early 2017, according to ValuePenguin.com.

During the same time, the overall consumer price index rose by 6.7 percent.

Nationwide, the average cost of auto insurance has gone up from \$915 in 2015 to \$980 in 2016, according to the Insurance Information Institute.

By 2017, though, the average cost of auto insurance was \$1,060. It's expected to climb to \$1,150 in 2018.

Michigan is notorious for its high car insurance rates given its unique no-fault system. Michigan ranks as the most expensive state for car insurance with an average of \$2,394, according to rankings by Insure.com.

To be sure, insurance premiums are going up across the country for a variety of reasons other than expensive auto parts. The Insurance Information Institute also blames higher rates on distracted driving, more drivers on the road during the economic recovery, faster driving and, in some states, legalized marijuana.

The more people are working, the more they're driving, the more likely they are to get into an accident.

The average age of vehicles on the road is 11.6 years. So many people who trade up to a new vehicle aren't even considering how new technology might drive up their insurance bills.

"You would like to think that all this additional technology would reduce cost," said Karl Brauer, executive publisher of Cox Automotive Inc. brands, including car-shopping website Autotrader and researcher Kelley Blue Book.

But Brauer said insurers still need to evaluate how consumers are using new technology and what could be leading to higher claims.

For example, he said, the introduction of anti-lock brakes in the 1980s didn't necessarily reduce accidents initially, as some drivers tended to drive more aggressively because they were banking that anti-lock brakes would prevent an accident.

Right now, he said, distracted driving from texting, cellphone usage and other sources is outweighing some benefits of newer safety features. Drivers who aren't paying attention don't react quickly even when alerted to change course by advanced safety equipment.

"Ultimately, you will see a reduction with accidents," Brauer said. So while forward collision warning systems, for example, can scan the road ahead and alert the driver to take action to avoid an accident, repairing such systems after an accident will drive up the severity of collision claims by about 2 percent, said Matt Moore, senior vice president of the Highway Loss Data Institute at the Insurance Institute for Highway Safety.

The complexity of the repairs goes up in part because sensors are mounted in the front bumper and must be repaired and may need to be recalibrated after an accident. "The insurance industry is very focused on the repair costs associated with these new technologies," Moore said.

"When the reduction in the crash risk associated with any advanced driver assistance system is greater than the increased repair costs, then insurance premiums will likely go down," Moore said.

Backup cameras, for example, will be required on most new vehicles beginning May 1. Most automakers have already begun putting backup cameras on new vehicles as standard.

Rear cameras — introduced on model year 2002 vehicles — are expected to be on more than half of registered vehicles in 2021, according to the Highway Loss Data Institute.

It will take decades for most registered cars on the road to be equipped with rear cameras, rear parking sensors, forward collision warning, blind-spot monitoring and lane departure warning, as well as automatic braking and adaptive headlights.

Ray Fisher, president of the Automotive Service Association of Michigan in Lansing, which represents repair professionals, said some repair costs are higher but the benefits overall may outweigh those costs. "Like anything else, there's a cost of having a camera there. And it's going to be an added cost when there's an accident," he said.

But standard backup cameras can prevent injuries and save lives when a driver might not see a small child when backing up.

It's likely that many advanced safety features in the long run can keep people from being injured, he said. So the higher repair or replacement costs associated with safety features in the grand scheme of things would be relative.

"I think the good will outweigh the bad," Fisher said.

*Editor's note: Please note that this article is not a professional consultation and is for general information only. Always seek specific information from a licensed insurance professional. Hector Flamenco is an agent with State Farm Insurance. Visit his website at [www.flamencoinsurance.com](http://www.flamencoinsurance.com).*

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The following activities are open to the public during the month of June.

### Free Friday Movies for Everyone at 1:15 p.m.

We show a free feature movie in our full-size theater! We always try to have popular recent releases. Please note: Movies may be changed at any time due to availability. Whenever possible, movies are captioned.

**June 8:** *Just Getting Started*

**June 15:** *Three Billboards Outside Ebbing, Missouri*

**June 22:** *All the Money in the World*

**June 29:** *A Wrinkle in Time*

### Nutrition Program

Our prepared on-site lunches are now being served on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays. Meals and hot soup are still available for takeout on those days. You can still purchase frozen homemade soup to go Monday through Friday depending on availability.

Our prepared lunches are always cooked on-site and include homemade soup and/or salad, entree with side dishes (as appropriate), choice of beverage and dessert, and you'll get all this for only \$8. Call 650-780-7259 to make your reservation or to check on the availability of our frozen homemade soups.

### Café at the Center

Fridays, 11 a.m.–1 p.m.

Come have a snack-type lunch and then enjoy the free Friday movie in our full-size theater! Food is cooked to order.

### Seniors on the Square – Elder Abuse Prevention Awareness Day

Friday, June 15, 10 a.m.–12 p.m.

Join us at the Redwood City Courthouse Square to end elder abuse. You will hear from speakers, vendors and community leaders what you can do to prevent and report elder abuse. Refreshments, goody bags and plenty of giveaways.

### Fourth of July Celebration Luncheon

Friday, June 29, noon

Redwood Room

\$10/person

We'll be celebrating with good eats and entertainment! Everybody always has fun celebrating the founding of our nation. Music from Sisters in Crime and the Songbirds. To make a reservation call 650-780-7259.



### Family Day of Fun – Annual Fisher House Fundraiser

Saturday, Aug. 25, 11 a.m.–3 p.m.

VMSC Grounds

Bagpipe salute, honor guard, classic cars, barbecue, live music, raffles, baked goods, free kids' zone with bounce house, play center, face painting and much, much more!

Fisher House provides a “home away from home” for families of patients receiving medical care at major military and VA medical centers. Fisher Houses have provided more than 5.8 million days of lodging to over a quarter of a million families since 1990. This “Family Day of Fun” will raise funds for the Fisher House that serves families of veterans receiving medical care at the Palo Alto VA.

### Music Lovers

July 11–Aug. 22

\$35 for 7 weeks

Learn about music from the 1930s to the present, including world music, especially from Latin America and Europe. Class looks at songs, singers, composers and musical films. Call Todd at 650-533-1076, 10 a.m.–10 p.m., for more information.

To learn more about the Veterans Memorial Senior Center, call 650-780-7270. Redwood City Parks, Recreation and Community Services Department provides recreational facilities and activities for all ages and interests, and supplies building and custodial services for city buildings. Redwood City Parks also operates the Veterans Memorial Senior Center and the Fair Oaks Community Center, providing social, educational and cultural activities as well as information, referral and counseling services to persons living in Redwood City and neighboring communities. Redwood City Parks is more than you think! Its website is located at [www.redwoodcity.org/parks](http://www.redwoodcity.org/parks).



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 16

**Local Artists Debut “Plus One” Group Show**

The Main Gallery is pleased to announce the opening on June 20 of “Plus One,” a local artists’ multimedia exhibition. A reception open to the public will be held on Saturday, June 23, from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m.

The Main Gallery’s innovative “Plus One” group show is a unique collaborative exhibit with each Main Gallery artist inviting another accomplished artist to join the gallery artists in exhibiting their artwork. This expansive show will feature both 2D and 3D work in photography, mixed media, sculpture, collage, watercolor, acrylic, jewelry, woodturning, glass, mosaic and ceramics.



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**I** moved my office to Redwood City six years ago from Daly City and I had the pleasure of knowing Steve since then.

He approached me as a new business owner in Redwood City to solicit me to advertise in his Spectrum Magazine. We met, talked about Redwood City for hours, and we have been friends ever since. He did not only make me feel welcome in Redwood City from the very beginning, he became my client, I became his client, and a longstanding friendship started! I will miss Steve, his laugh, love for life and foremost getting together for lunch to talk and laugh!

He was a bigger-than-life person!  
Rest in peace, Stevie.

— Hector Flamenco

**I**'ve never met or known another news reporter, local history buff or overall Redwood City community worker who has done as much for Redwood City as Steve accomplished. He truly was a bright headlight on Redwood City's train to success! We'll miss him! Who can fill his shoes?

— Jim Thompson ("old" resident and attorney)



**I** met Steve over 30 years ago when I worked for the Sequoia Union High School District, and he supported initiatives like the 24-Hour Relay, which in those days helped fund youth activities at Sequoia High School.

Many will remember that Steve ran for City Council those many years ago. It happens that he engaged my son, Kashwan Reddy, and his friend Greg Markwith to post "Steve Penna for City Council" flyers all over town. We have now come full circle with Steve supporting me, and other City Council candidates, with his kindness and experience. My heart is broken, but I will hold his warm embrace in my heart forever. Here is Council Member Janet Borgens and me basking in one of his famous warm embraces!

— Diana Reddy

**S**teve, Kind-hearted and generous soul... Thank you so much for all you have done to support Sakura as well as the entire community. Your loving, positive spirit will be eternally present in Redwood City! Love,

— Rose Tran and Sakura family



**S**equoia High School 1972... It was my freshman year when I first met Steve Penna. My sister Lori and I (and our mom) became friends with Steve then, and our friendship grew and grew through the years with our many adventures. Steve was always so full of life and wanting to take on the world. Our lives after high school took us in different directions as often happens. It wasn't until our 30th high school reunion that we reconnected. Steve and I were part of a large group of friends who rediscovered each other and how much fun we all had together. We began to spend time together again. We celebrated summer every Friday night at Music on the Square. Steve was our host — leading us in singing and dancing, introducing us to his myriad of other friends he knew through his work on The Spectrum and in Redwood City. He was the mayor of our group of friends — he made us laugh, made us think by always asking honest questions and encouraged us to live our lives to the fullest and always be our best.

With Steve's passing, there is a void in my life that will never be filled. He is irreplaceable — his personality, his commitment to the city of Redwood City, his love of life and most importantly the joy he had spending time with his family and friends. Thank you for the gift of you, Steve — you will be in my heart forever and never forgotten. Love,

— Lynn Swift-Camacho

**S**teve, you left us way too soon. I have been trying to process the tremendous loss to me personally, the loss to your family and the huge amount of people whose lives you touched. You were an original and there will never be another Steve Penna. I will always smile when I remember our times together! I am honored to have been your friend in this lifetime. You are my/our angel now, looking out for all of us — especially our Redwood City community. As many have stated so eloquently, you were there for everyone you ever encountered. So positive, happy and available to spend time with a friend new or old. I drove by the Courthouse this morning and looked as I always have for your smiling face sitting there. Rest in peace until our paths cross again! "Don't cry because I am gone, smile because I was here."

— Michelle Glaubert



**W**e will always remember the fun party Steve helped us throw at Main & Elm to celebrate the marriage of our son, Matt, and his wife, Julia. Steve worked closely with us as we planned the party, recommending menu items and refreshing drinks for a warm summer evening. On the evening of the event, he turned the casual Main & Elm patio into an elegant outdoor dining room and paid attention to every little detail — even asking about the wedding colors so he could match with the color of the table linens. Steve recommended a jazz trio for entertainment and gave me ideas on where to buy centerpieces on a budget. He was beaming as our guests arrived and remarked on how beautiful it all was! Thank you, Steve! You will be missed in Redwood City — may you rest in peace!

— Rick and Naomi Hunter



**O**ur Mr. Redwood City, Steve Penna. A life-long resident of our wonderful little town. Our family has known Steve since he was a young boy. Our daughter, Kathy, attended school with Steve throughout Sequoia High School. Steve and Kathy belonged to "Young Life" organization and we held the meetings at our home. A funny story I will never forget is when Steve first came over. He was by far the tallest person there and hit his head on the chandelier!

During his time at Sequoia High School he developed a great interest in city politics and carried on that interest into his adult life. If Steve felt a certain way, he let you know!

When Steve started The Spectrum, we at Davies Appliance were one of his first advertisers. And we have not missed an issue! We looked forward to his "As I Was Saying..." section every month.

We had many meals together and we looked forward to his monthly lunches. He is the most sincere and wonderful person we had ever met.

God bless you, Steve, and your wonderful family you leave behind. We will miss you terribly. Love,

— Joe and Virginia Biddle



**N**ot the first question a candidate usually gets in a job interview. He got the answer I thought he wanted about fundraising. “Sometimes I’m a centurion,” he said with that trademark Steve Penna smile.

Ah, one of the bad boys of Bethlehem A.D. I didn’t get the job. But I did get a gig as a contributing writer for Spectrum Magazine.

Like almost everyone else, once I met Steve, our paths would cross outside the confines of Spectrum.

Of course I saw him at the Sequoia Awards. We would wave to each other as I danced past him as a Bethlehem A.D. angel in the Hometown Holidays parade when he was a parade announcer.

A request for him to portray King Herod for one Bethlehem night. The next night he would be one of the Magi. Without hesitation, “Sure!”

He was always willing to help nonprofit groups. Would he be a media sponsor for Ombudsman Services of San Mateo County? “Just send me the information.”

That’s how I will think of him. Always willing to help and always smiling.

— Dyane Hendricks

**T**here was a time in the political arena where people were asking how I could be such good friends with Steve, and my answer has always been... our friendship was just ours. He cared for me because of me and not who I was affiliated with. We had a mutual admiration for each other that had nothing to do with anything except our love and care for one another. He was truly a gentle soul and he loved people. Everyone had a story and he wanted to know it. He most definitely had his opinions but always wanted to hear someone else’s. Steven always encouraged me to be “me.” We could sit for hours watching Taylor Swift videos, the real housewives of any city, have great singalongs and talk about anything over wine and snacks. There are a few people in my life that had teamed up to love and support me and my family through our personal life changes and I couldn’t have asked for a better best friend than Stevie. My wife, Lisa, and girls Jessi, Heather and Megan have felt this loss because of his love for them. Stevie I LOVE and ADORE you and will forever. I can’t wait to read your best edition of “As I Was Saying...”: the Real Housewives of Heaven.

— Melanie Theibout



**O**ur Dear Steve, Thank you for everything you have done for us and our community. You gave us so much to remember, and we can never forget all that you are. You will always live in our hearts forever. Love,

— Arron Pellarin and Corrin Rankin



**I** had the privilege of meeting Steve Penna at Sequoia High School in 1973. Though we were a year apart in school, he became and remained one of my most treasured friends. He was a kind soul with a big heart, a friend truer than most, with a voracious appetite for life. Some of our fondest memories include cruising around Redwood City in my Mustang, shows at the Fox, grabbing sandwiches at Food Villa for lunch, hanging in Hell’s Corner and Friday night football games. One of my most memorable stories about Steve that speaks volumes about the kind of friend he was happened when I was running for junior class president. The verdict was that I’d won the election fair and square, or so I thought, until Steve and I were called into the principal’s office the following day. Someone had stuffed the ballot box, and of course it was the one and only Steve Penna. Only the best of friends would risk their neck to see you succeed. This was Steve. His big personality, even bigger heart, and Steve in all his greatness will be sorely missed. When you’re having a tough time mourning the loss of this friend, remember his smile and his words to live by, “Go out and make it a great day!”

— Vicki Ioimo



**S**teve loved Bethlehem A.D. Last year he played a VIP wise man, part of a group comprising Redwood City dignitaries and civic leaders, of which he definitely was one. In earlier years, with spear and sword in hand, he brightened the set by playing the role of a centurion.

Our condolences go to Steve’s family, whom he loved bringing to Bethlehem so that they could enjoy the experience with him.

We will always be thankful that Steve graciously published yearly articles about Bethlehem A.D. in Spectrum’s December issues.

The cast and crew of Bethlehem A.D. mourn the loss of Steve and appreciate his stalwart support of Bethlehem through the years. He will be remembered and honored by those who love Bethlehem A.D. as much as he did.

— Paula Paulin Dresden (director, Bethlehem A.D.)



**S**teve Penna has been involved with the Redwood City Police Activities League (PAL) since its inception under Chief Carlos Bolanos in 1995. Steve coordinated fundraisers, participated on the board of directors, provided input into youth programs and was PAL’s biggest cheerleader. Steve’s birthday party/fundraiser at Courthouse Square after the PAL Blues Festival was a must-go-to event and was festive. All the proceeds went to PAL.

One of PAL’s most popular programs is the Police, Fire and Sheriff’s Office Christmas Toy and Book Drive. Steve volunteered as Santa Claus for several years. Steve’s size and jolly personality made him the perfect Santa Claus. When Steve walked into the houses and apartments delivering toys, the children stared in amazement; he was bigger than life. It was always fun to be part of Steve’s toy delivery team. After all the deliveries were made, Steve would invite the volunteers to the Deseo Tequila Bar on Main Street where he had a VIP liquor cabinet. Funny stories were retold about the toy deliveries and Steve was always thinking of ways to make the program bigger and better.

Even in Steve’s passing, he continues to support PAL. Steve’s family, knowing his commitment to PAL, has asked in lieu of flowers for donations to PAL. Steve’s dedication and commitment to PAL will greatly be missed.

— Dan Smith

**I**’m still in disbelief that my great friend has left us. We had a lot of great times together from the first time I met Steve freshman year in Johnna Schaefer’s English class at Sequoia. Lily and I will miss him.

— John Coleman

**H**eat and soul of our community! Steve Penna, my close friend and business partner, my advisor, my working mentor on Spectrum Magazine and the Redwood City Downtown Directory, my heart is broken. It will heal in time. Thank you for touching my life in so many ways. Miss you every day. Redwood City has lost one of its best!

— Regina Van Brunt

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE





Steve has been a force of nature for all things RWC. As the founder and producer of ART on the Square, I worked with Steve and PAL as a participant of the PAL Blues & ART Festival for the last 11 years. He was dedicated to kids, not only with his involvement with PAL, but also in following him on Facebook and seeing him with his godsons. I was also fortunate to have been chosen to grace The Spectrum cover to highlight the emergence of the Redwood City art scene. It is hard to imagine Redwood City without Steve, but he dedicated his life to Redwood City and made an impact on many, many lives in his too brief time here. There is so much to remember and celebrate him by.

— Beth Mostovoy

What can one say about our dear friend Steve Penna? Words just aren't enough. Sure the words *spirited, uplifting, honest, hilarious, kind, smart, activist* are just a few, but to me there is no way to describe Steve unless you knew him. I was fortunate enough to meet Steve at Sequoia, where he was in the class behind me. Because of that, he often introduced me as his "much older" friend Kathy! Steve never forgot to remind me that my "career" at H. Salt Esq. Fish and Chips happened because of him... Ha! How we loved to sneak the "forbidden deep-fried mushrooms" as if they were rare delicacies! One reason I saved up and purchased my own telephone (with my own number) was so Steve and I could talk and gossip and laugh in the middle of the night! Times I will never forget. No one will ever come close to being like Steve Penna, but I am so truly blessed and proud to have been able to call him my friend. Until we meet again... Big hugs and love,

— Kathy (Biddle) Chambers-Lowenstein

Steve Penna and my husband, John McLeod, played husband and wife as Edna and Wilbur in *Hairspray*, which I choreographed. Working with Steve was so much fun. He worked hard, practiced every day and performed like a professional. On stage he ad-libbed some very funny moments that had the audience doubled over laughing. The part was written for him. Our relationship was love and respect in every way. On Memorial Day, we met at Starbucks while he told me he was proud of me and what I had done with my dancers at Studio S Broadway and my own children, Sam, Makaila and Cameron. He had great ideas and wanted to help Cameron's career in any way possible. He seemed to be in a very good place in his life, doing for other people, which he did so well. I'm so proud of him. I might have forgotten to say that back. The McLeods love you, Steve! God bless and take care of you.

— Shari McLeod

The way I will remember Steve is at the Friday opening night fundraiser held May 25 in Courthouse Square. He was standing on the stage with a smile from ear to ear, cheering everyone on to pose and smile for our annual Courthouse Square group photo. He looked so happy and his friends and family were there with him. That is how I will remember him. Bigger than life with a genuine love of Redwood City. His will be big shoes to fill. Blessings to his family.

— Diane Howard (vice mayor, Redwood City)

If asked to describe Steve, I would have to say so full of life, love and knowledge. He just knew and loved everyone, especially his family, his beautiful godchildren who were like his own, his best friends Gary and Rose who were always part of the most important parts of his life, and so many very close friends that can't imagine not feeling that great big hug and seeing that beautiful smile. He was always the life of the party. He loved Redwood City and knew everything that was happening in town or what was going to happen. I could go on forever about the great things Steve did for all of us but mostly, Steve, you left a big hole in our hearts when you left us. We will never, ever forget you and you will always live in our hearts. I loved you, Steve, and was so very blessed to be able to call you friend.

— Felicitas Chamorro (Sam)



I am not able to find words. Steve was this big man with this big personality and huge heart. He loved life and people. He was just so incredibly unique. How does one find the words to describe or memorialize him?

— Kas Pilon

How will we remember Steve? For his big heart, open ears and contagious smile. When we first opened our restaurant in Redwood City, he was one of the first to knock on the door and welcome us to town! He would go out of his way to introduce us to events in Redwood City! Whether things were good or bad, he just showed up or called. The last time we saw him was over dinner and as usual we smiled and laughed and he always would ask about the kids and summer plans. We took so many photos, which he has; I wish I had them saved. But we will always remember him for being that genuine teddy bear he was.

Everyone at Arya Steakhouse will miss him dearly.

— Pat Black

— Fera Hashemi



One takes for granted that when we start our day, everyone else does as well — at least, that's the hope. Like many, I was stunned to read death and Steve in the same sentence. All emotions, including anger, came over me. How could this happen?

This joyful individual who moved a community in so many ways abruptly leaves with no sign, no visible illness... nothing? Steve, aka "Mr. Redwood City," promoted and valued his hometown in his heart. How can one not recognize his absence? He was EVERYWHERE! It doesn't help that he was as big as a linebacker with a voice and personality equal to his size. How can that be replaced? Our less than casual relationship went back 20 years. His transition from the San Mateo Journal to The Spectrum was when we met. We discussed, brainstormed, disagreed over so many things. Steve had the most insane ideas that I saved you ALL from seeing, but that's what I loved. He was spontaneous and had larger-than-life dreams! Yes, at times he was a wrecking ball with charm, but he was also a vehicle for change and charity.

In a recent dream, a vibrant Steve hugged me and when I awoke, I felt truly settled. I said my farewell and could now refer to him in the past. I vowed to encapsulate all that he was in my heart and emulate his zest for life. I am honored our love was reciprocal. RIP, you OUTSTANDING individual!

— Damaris Divito



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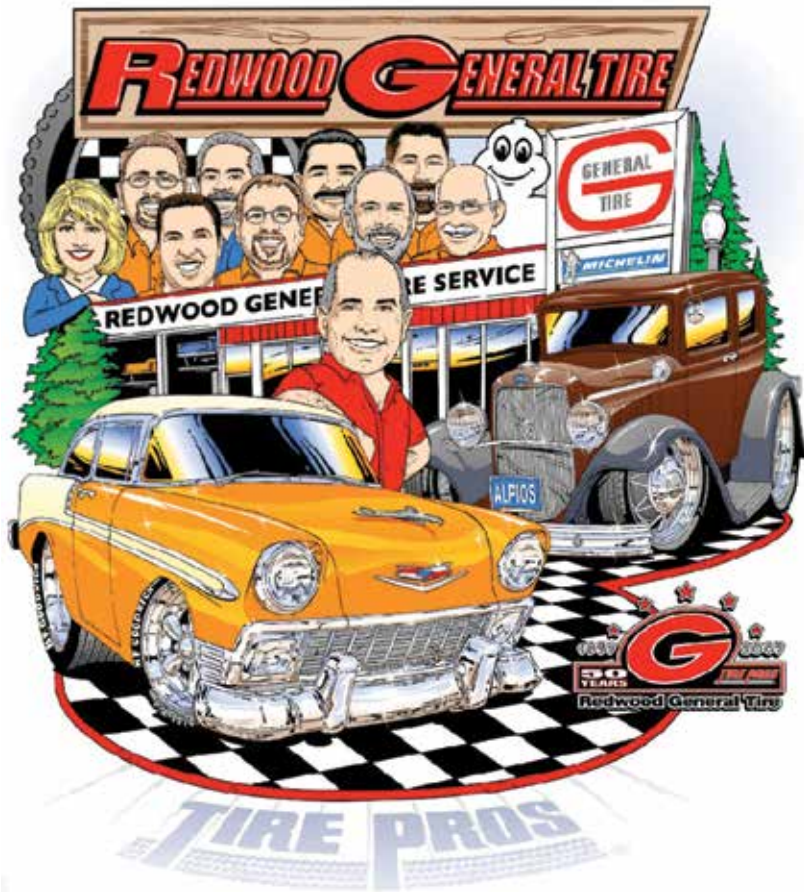
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