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

## Cleanup time at Stevens Creek



PHOTOS BY SHERRY TESLER/SPECIAL TO THE TOWN CRIER

Volunteers descended into the dry bed of Stevens Creek in Mountain View Saturday to participate in Coastal Cleanup Day 2021, an international event. Mountain View's Fire and Environmental Protection Division collaborated with the Creek Connections Action Group of Santa Clara County to organize the local effort. Collected trash included lottery tickets, bike tires, beer bottles, a mousetrap and even a shopping cart.

## Los Altos resident remains on guard after suspicious Ring security footage blip

By Megan V. Winslow  
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The man at Emily Morgan's door wore a T-shirt and shorts. He didn't carry a clipboard, a phone or the type of equipment Morgan typically associated with salesmen and utility repairmen. And she didn't see any vehicles on the street that might have transported him to her yard. He seemed nervous.

"It was extremely odd," the Los Altos resident said. "He just said, 'I want to know how you like your Ring doorbell.'"

The man approached at least three other homes in Morgan's Grant Road neighborhood that day, Sept. 7. All three featured Ring doorbells. While his intentions may have been innocent, the man's conversation with Morgan combined with video footage missing from his visit to

her home is a peculiar anomaly worthy of scrutiny, the Los Altos Police Department, a local cybersecurity expert and a representative from Ring, an Amazon company, agreed.

Morgan told the man she liked her Ring doorbell, but she grew uneasy when he proceeded to inquire about other security systems in her home.

"I said, 'We're not interested,' and he went and left," she said.

Later, when Morgan reviewed her Ring surveillance footage, she discovered the doorbell camera had filmed her husband prior to the man's arrival and again as her husband exited the home to search for the man. It did not, however, record any part of the man's visit.

"I couldn't see his face," Morgan said. "There was nothing there. It was black."

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## Controversial SB 9 becomes law, modifying single-family zoning

By Eliza Ridgeway  
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By allowing duplexes on parcels in suburban neighborhoods, a bill signed into law this week has eliminated "single-family zoning" in California, but the real-world impacts are projected to be modest.

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed two new housing reforms last week, Senate Bills 9 and 10, to make it easier to build more, denser housing in California. SB 9, which has the biggest projected impact on cities like Los Altos, permits lot splitting in

single-family neighborhoods and duplex construction, including on each parcel on a split lot. SB 10 streamlines the approval process for multifamily housing of up to 10 units in urban areas near transit.

Supporters hope the bills will fuel new construction in a stymied housing market and that denser, smaller homes will help broaden access to neighborhoods with high home prices, particularly those formerly restricted by stringent development standards subject to local control.

The impact of the bills will include a potential for more single-family-home neigh-

borhoods to see smaller houses on smaller lots with significantly smaller yards. How often those prospective new units will be built by current homeowners able to meet the substantial financial requirements of an eligible project remains an open question. An owner occupancy requirement written into the bill – aimed to prevent developers from buying parcels to split and redevelop – drew skepticism from critics like Los Altos Hills resident Barry Smith. He noted that only "intent to occupy" is required, a relatively toothless measure that will be difficult or impossible to enforce.

A landslide of new development is not anticipated by those studying the bills' likely impacts. UC Berkeley's Terner Center for Housing Innovation estimated that across the state, approximately 700,000 potential new housing units might become "market feasible" under the rules change. The study found that for the majority of eligible parcels, "the most financially viable outcome is not to pursue any development whatsoever," with the most notable anticipated impact being allowance for more units in a prospective

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