

THE FLY

SENATE MEI-DAY

Two women of color running to replace termed out California State Sen. **BOB WIECKOWSKI** (D-Fremont) are neck-and-neck in fundraising and claim similar “firsts” in their political careers.

Candidates **AISHA WAHAB**—Hayward mayor pro tem and the first Afghan-American woman elected to public office—and **LILY MEI**—Fremont’s mayor and the city’s first elected woman and Asian American—each hope to represent more than 900,000 residents in Senate District 10, which includes Milpitas, Santa Clara and the northwestern corner of San Jose.

Wieckowski recently endorsed Wahab as his successor, but if campaign coffers are any sign, it’s still going to be a close race.

During the first six months of 2021, Mei raised \$300,456 and spent \$19,456, while Wahab reported \$243,937.88 and spent only \$485.

One major distinction, however, is the negative attention being shone on Mei’s political past.

While her campaign website cites an “unequivocal commitment to advancing the rights, well-being, and dignity of LGBTQIA+ people and their families,” moments from Mei’s tenure as a Fremont Unified School District Trustee from 2008 to 2014 paint a different picture.

She previously rejected a proposal to recognize a day honoring civil rights leader Harvey Milk, voted to ban “Angels in America,” a book about the AIDS epidemic, from FUSD curriculums and voted against inclusive sex education for all students.

Mei refutes these allegations, despite news coverage reporting otherwise—prompting the Alameda County Democratic Central Committee to unanimously withhold endorsements for anti-LGBTQIA+ candidates.

Mei’s current endorsers include U.S. Rep. **RO KHANNA**, San José Mayor **SAM LICCARDIO** and former CEO of the Silicon Valley Leadership Group **CARL GUARDINO**.

They Did What?

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EEK OUR GUEST The cast of *The Haunted Dinner: A Spooktacular Dinner Theatre Experience* welcome the evening’s diners to a night of haunts.

DEVILISH DETAILS

ThemeDream will transform IMMERSIVE: Los Gatos into a different dinner theatre experience each month **BY KATIE LAUER**

TREKKING UP THE stairs to the venue formerly known as Mountain Charleys was almost like entering the afterlife, where the remains of the beloved saloon now rest in peace.

Welcomed by a smiley Count Dracula who had just “woken up from an eternal nap,” guests were ushered into a Halloween world of costumes and gore—a family of spirits took the stage in front of a lobster and her chef date, an uncanny replication of Jack Skellington and Sally and more.

Every few months, ThemeDream will transform IMMERSIVE: Los Gatos into a different imaginary

world. The Haunted Dinner: A Spooktacular Dinner Theatre Experience (Blood Moon Rising) was the first show to break in the historic space, bringing together mystery and whimsy over good food, drinks and company.

The moment Immersive transitioned from a tricked out pub into a performance reminiscent of Cirque du Soleil was clear: “Our spirits have been waiting for you,” one of the ghostly ghouls declared. “We are not liable for any paranormal activities.”

The devil was in the production’s details: human faces embedded within lights on stage; moving portraits of the cast searching for escape; one bar fully stocked with high-end cocktails and goblets, the

other fully stocked with creepy dolls and skulls.

The space doesn’t boast excessive size. It’s a welcoming, intimate environment for 70 to 100 people seated in the main room for a dinner show and theater performance—underneath the same light fixture that’s hung precariously above patrons for the past 100 years.

The dedicated cast of haunted youth and elders paused their spooky storyline skits and talent exhibitions as drinks and appetizers were distributed—in this case, mini cauldrons of cold potato soup, a light yet decadent starter that left palettes wanting more.

From the mind of executive chef Paul Vigil, each course was either catered visually to the theme at hand or anchored to the mood in name, but centering flavor.

Dishes featured finger-shaped prosciutto topping a salad of balsamic greens and bite-sized “spider bite” fish tacos adorned with herbs and refreshing lime, followed by mashed potatoes with beef gravy and mushrooms and an anatomically accurate dark chocolate heart cake (well, as close as culinarily possible).