



“GRANNYCORE” GAME. People play mahjong at an event organized by the YLL Mahjong Club in San Francisco. Eventbrite, a popular ticketing app, reports there was a 179% increase in U.S. mahjong events on its platform from 2023 to 2024. (AP Photo/Terry Chea)

Mahjong nights draw young crowds to San Francisco bars and restaurants

By Terry Chea
The Associated Press

San Francisco — When Ryan Lee first played mahjong two years ago, he got hooked. He dug out sets of the classic Chinese tile game from his parents’ house and brought them to San Francisco, where he started hosting mahjong nights in his apartment.

The gatherings became so popular that the 25-year-old Chinese American began hosting pop-up mahjong parties in restaurants, bars, and nightclubs around San Francisco.

Mahjong, invented in 19th-century China, is gaining popularity with a new generation of players looking to get off their phones and socialize in the real world.

Lee’s Youth Luck Leisure (YLL) Mahjong Club now hosts bimonthly parties with up to 30 tables and 200 guests. They attract a diverse, young crowd drawn to the festive atmosphere, live DJs, custom cocktails, and a chance to meet new friends. Instructors are on hand to teach novices.

“A lot of people are just really intrigued even though they don’t really know how to play,” Lee said. “There’s a cultural component they’re trying to connect with. It’s kind of like a cultural nostalgia.”

Eventbrite, a popular ticketing app, reports there was a 179% increase in U.S. mahjong events on its platform from 2023 to 2024.

The event platform says Gen Z is also showing a growing interest in other “grannycore” activities such as baking workshops and needlework circles that happen offline.

In mahjong, four players draw and discard tiles with different suits, numbers, and Chinese characters. The object is to build a winning hand of four sets of three and one pair.

“It’s a really tactile game, and it’s really a social game. It



really easily builds community among people,” said Nicole Wong, a writer and audio producer in Oakland. “It’s a good way to unplug and not just be on your phone.”

Wong learned how to play when she visited her Chinese grandparents in New Zealand in 2009. Several years ago she found her parents’ mahjong table and game sets, and started hosting mahjong nights with her friends.

In 2019, she launched The Mahjong Project, an instructional guide and oral history project inspired by her family’s love of the game. That led her to publish *Mahjong: House Rules from Across the Asian Diaspora*, an illustrated book that explores the game’s history, strategies, traditions, and styles of play.

“For the Asian American community, I think there’s interest in connecting to your heritage and your culture in a way that was not the case when I was growing up,” Wong said.

YLL Mahjong Club has held nearly 20 events in San Francisco since it started last year. Lee said it’s an opportunity to introduce people to the game as well as

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Parents of two college students killed in a Tesla allege design flaw trapped them in the burning car

By Bernard Condon
The Associate Press

The parents of two college students killed in a Tesla crash say they were trapped in the car as it burst into flames because of a design flaw that made it nearly impossible for them to open the doors, according to lawsuits filed October 3, 2025.

The parents of Krysta Tsukahara and her friend, Jack Nelson, allege that the company that helped Elon Musk become the world’s richest man knew about the flaw for years and could have moved faster to fix the problem but did not, leaving the two trapped amid flames and smoke that eventually killed them.

Tesla did not reply to a request for comment.

The new legal threats to Tesla filed in Alameda County Superior Court come just

weeks after federal regulators opened an investigation into complaints by Tesla drivers of problems with stuck doors. The probe and suit come at a delicate time for the company as it seeks to convince Americans that its cars will soon be safe enough to ride in without anyone in the driver’s seat.

Tsukahara, 19, and Nelson, 20, were in the back of a Cybertruck in November 2024 when the driver, drunk and on drugs, smashed into a tree in the San Francisco suburb of Piedmont, California, according to the suits. The driver also died. A fourth passenger was pulled from the car after a rescuer broke a window and reached in.

The Tsukahara lawsuit was first reported by *The New York Times*.

Tesla doors have been at the center of several crash cases because the battery

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