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Riders mourn the loss of a San Jose bus line relied on by vulnerable residents

By Adam F. Hutton

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight (Photo Courtesy of Monica Mallon) iders say they were heartbroken when Silicon Valley leaders recently voted to end a bus route that zigzags through the city across a dozen neighborhoods serving seniors, people with disabilities and students at San Jose State University and San Jose City College.

Linda MacLeod still rides the Route 65 bus. That route represented independence at a time when she needed it and taking it to work was a joy. Riding it now just makes her sad.

"I don't really know what I'm going to do," MacLeod told San José Spotlight. "I know what my options are, but none of them are good alternatives for me."

MacLeod, a 55-year-old attorney, relied on that route for more than a decade after she had to give up driving because of Usher's syndrome, a condition that's causing



her vision and hearing to deteriorate. And although her condition forced her into early retirement three years ago, MacLeod says the route improves her quality of life.

"For someone like me who is visually

impaired and going blind being independent is very important," she said. "The most convenient thing would be to take a Lyft or an Uber, because I'm not destitute. But it's not the same as being able to independently use public transportation."

The Valley Transportation Authority Board of Directors voted 8-2 on Aug.1 to end the 65 bus route after BART opens its Berryessa Transit Center at the end of the

The motion to put the brakes on the route was made by Downtown San Jose Councilmember Raul Peralez and seconded by county Supervisor Cindy Chavez.

"Clearly we are all having a tough time stomaching this because cutting routes is not part of the core mission of this agency — we want to improve and increase our services — and hopefully the decisions we are making now will allow us to do that in the future," Peralez said during the meet-

Los Gatos Town Councilmember Rob Rennie and East San Jose Councilmember Magdalena Carrasco opposed eliminating

See BUS LINE, page 2

Initiatives introduced to build backyard cottages

Abodu Corp. will rapidly install a backyard home in two weeks

> By William Bellou Publisher

he mayor recently unveiled a series of initiatives that he says would shorten the time and lower the cost to build a backyard home (Axillary Dwelling Units – ADU) by streamlining

'We all know that we are in a housing crisis," Liccardo said. "We are struggling

San Jose's application process.

mightily to get more rent restricted apartments built. We are not going to solve this crisis \$650,000 at a time—that's the cost to build a single apartment. We have to find ways to bend the cost curve."

San Jose lawmakers hope that as a result



Mayor Liccardo, council colleagues and the City of San Jose announce a new portal - Friendliest ADU City

of the initiatives, more people will build backyard cottages. The city's goal is to add 25,000 units—10,000 of them below-marketrate—to the city's housing units by 2022. ADU construction has been prioritized largely because it's a potentially cheaper, faster way to boost the number of housing units.

To make the process as easy as possible, the city has created an online portal and a checklist to educate homeowners about ADUs and the regulatory requirements to build them. Liccardo said a full-time employee, Sarah Shull, will help homeowners applying for an ADU permit. Officials estimate that there's room to build as many as 160,000 such backyard homes in San Jose.

ADU Online Portal

The new online portal asks San Jose See COTTAGES, page 6

Bus line

Continued from page 1

Carrasco said she couldn't imagine "imposing that kind of hardship on someone who is already struggling to make ends meet."

But MacLeod said losing Route 65 was no accident. She claims VTA officials for years have neglected the route and under-invested in the service, leading to its demise.

In a letter to transit officials, MacLeod accused VTA staff of plotting to kill the line for years — reducing service, raising fares, failing to properly market it and other changes that drove down ridership. She also says transit leaders rushed the vote to eliminate the route, moved the meeting location and did not take the concerns of riders into ac-

"The process didn't feel fair to me," MacLeod said. "It felt preordained and that was very disappointing.

VTA spokeswoman Brandi Childress denied those claims and told San José Spotlight the agency held more than 20 meetings on Route 65 throughout the county between Jan. and Aug. 1 — including public input meetings, sessions of the $\,$ Board of Directors and various VTA committee meetings.

"VTA staff presented the draft New Transit Service Plan numerous times," Childress said, adding that advocates for the line almost always spoke out at those meetings. "At the end of the day, this was a policy decision made by the VTA Board of Directors who heard from advocates loud and clear and were fully aware that there were people who wanted the route to remain."

Still, riders of all ages —

from senior citizens to college students — say they rely on Route 65.

Fred Buzo, 51, who has been using public transit since he moved to San Jose 25 years ago, rides much more frequently after sending his son off to college with the car he used to drive.

"The things that VTA says are options are not really options," Buzo said of the Route 61 route and 64b lightrail line that is supposed to replace Route 65 when the BART station opens.

Walking a half-mile in either direction to get to one of those options would be especially challenging for MacLeod.

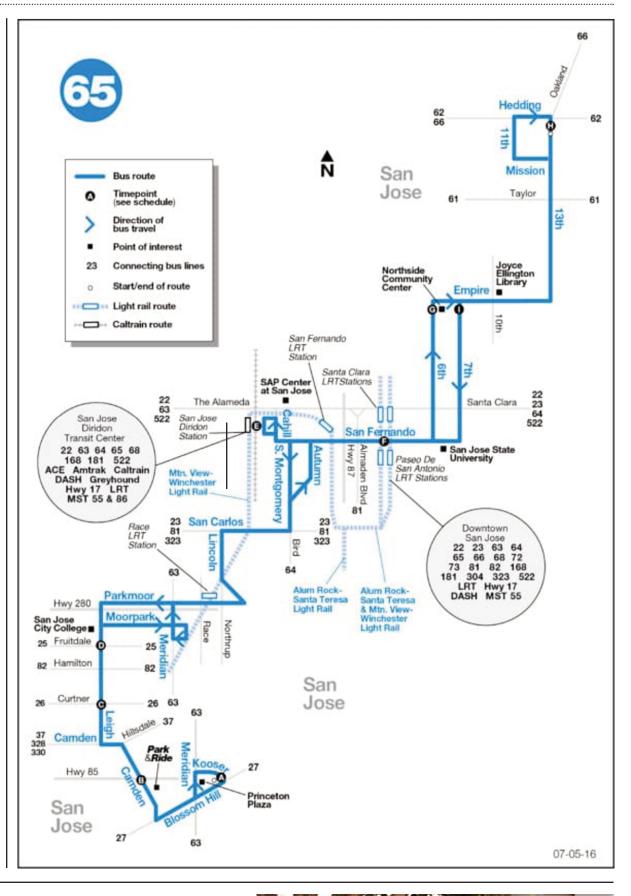
Monica Mallon, a 22-yearold San Jose State student, spent her summer waking up early and riding the route both ways in an attempt to drive up the average boardings-perhour past the benchmark used by the VTA. In July alone, Mallon says she made 150 trips on Route 65, relying on it to take her to her campus job.

"I completely rely on it to get around," Mallon told San José Spotlight. "It changed my life in such a major way and I want future generations to have access to it, that's the reason I'm willing to go to all these VTA board meetings and committee hearings.

"Seeing how much it would negatively impact people's lives made me want to fight even harder," Mallon continued. "I'll have options, but a lot of people won't."

The Route 65 service will continue until the end of the year, according to VTA offi-

Contact Adam F. Hutton at afhutton. sjspotlight@gmail.com or follow @adamfhutton on Twit-



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DC Comics releases its exclusive library card on the West Coast

San Jose Public Library and DC Comics partner to release a limited-edition library card

he San Jose Public Library (SJPL) and DC Comics have partnered to introduce a limited edition DC Comics library card in celebration of Batman Day which is celebrated around the world every year on September 21.

SJPL is the only library system on the West Coast to of-fer this limited edition card which features an official DC Comics design of Batman reading a comic book.

This card will be made available to the public at all 25 San Jose library locations, and will only be available while supplies last. Everyone is invited to pick up a FREE

card by becoming a member of their San José Public Library, or replacing their current card with the new design.

Partnering with organizations such as DC Comics allows the San José Public Library to further boost awareness, connect and engage with community members to ensure library programs, services and resources are being accessed by people of all ages and backgrounds. Currently, there are more than 550,000 San José library members, but with the help of partners, the library hopes to continue growing their number of memberships, and one day have every resident become an active user of their library.

For more information and to become a member of your San Jose Public Library, visit: http://www.sjpl.org/DCComics

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San Jose Post Office hiring full time career carriers

Por the first time since 2006, the San Jose Post Office is opening the rolls for full-time, career letter carrier positions. Effective now until December 16, people can go to www.usps. com/careers and search for Keywords: "CARRIER SAN JOSE."

New hires start the first day with excellent benefits, such as being covered by the Federal Employee Retirement System (FERS) where they can contribute to a Thrift Savings Plan (TSP) - similar to a 401 (k) plan, and get a 5% matching contribution by the USPS; Employees immediately have the option to enroll into the Federal Employees Health Benefits (FEHB) as well as automatic coverage in the Federal employees Group Life Insurance (FEGLI).

If that is not enough, employees have the option for dental, vision, long-term care insurance and a flexible spending account to cover eligible out-of-pocket health care and dependent care (day care) expenses.

The pay could very well be the best part, with a range of \$39,615 to \$64,413 that includes 10 paid federal holidays and accrued vacation and sick leave.

Whether it's your first career or next career, the San Jose Post Office is a great place to work that provides job security, career advancement opportunities and generous benefits.

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Valley Currents

cur rent (adj.) Present, topical, timely, newsworthy. (n.) Movement in a definite direction, a flow.

The invisible epidemic in the Bay Area

By Raeena Lari Special to the Times

Month. Yet, for my family – like hundreds of thousands of families across the country – every waking minute is a constant painful reminder.

Bay Area Lyme Foundation, a national non-profit organization that focuses on funding medical research to "make Lyme disease easy to diagnose and simple to cure," provides some astounding information: Lyme disease has been detected in 42 of 58 California counties, tick season is yearround in California, the greatest incidence of Lyme disease is among school age children, and a single tick bite can transmit many other diseases besides Lyme, commonly referred to as coinfections.

In recent years, media coverage of Lyme disease has expanded because of the growing number of people affected, but, sadly, funding for research lags significantly behind this growth. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there are over 400,000 new Lyme disease cases every year in the U.S.,

232,570 new breast cancer cases, and 50,000 new HIV cases in the U.S. annually. Yet in 2018, the National Institutes of Health (NIH) awarded \$30 million to Lyme research, while awarding \$721 million to breast cancer research and \$3 billion to HIV research.

Everything about this disease is complicated, making patients feel like they live in an alternate, unreal, and surrealistic universe. It can take many different doctor visits over many years to obtain a diagnosis, mainly because not everyone gets the tell-tale "bull's-eye" rash, or even recalls being bitten by a tick.

In a survey of more than 12,000 patients, lymedisease.org, a national advocacy group, reported that over 51 percent of respondents waited more than three years for a diagnosis, and 72 percent were misdiagnosed before receiving the Lyme diagnosis.

Lyme can be caused by the bite of infected ticks, tiny arachnids that can be the size of a poppy seed and are almost impossible to detect. Some people get immediate acute symptoms, while others have a gradual slow deterioration



Tick (Photo courtesy of the Bay Area Lyme Foundation)

in health. In addition, the myriad symptoms may often mimic many different diseases, earning Lyme the moniker "the Great Imitator."

Anecdotal evidence suggests that doctors and others involved in helping patients recover are primarily those that have been personally impacted. U.S. Rep. Chris Smith of New Jersey introduced legislation in January (H.R. 220 - "National Tick-Borne Disease and Accountability Act") to create a new national strategy on Lyme disease and is an outspoken supporter. His own family has apparently been affected.

Lyme is a disease that is unfathomable to people who are untouched by it. Mothers have been accused of Munchausen by Proxy syndrome because they are the ones who tend to advocate the most vociferously for their children. Families have been torn apart at a time when they most need to be united, because of a

lack of awareness and understanding caused in most part by an abysmal failure of the medical system.

So how do we correct this egregious medical failure and reverse a disease that has all the manifestations of becoming a pandemic? Please begin by visiting the website bayarealyme.org for education, and by calling and/or writing your U.S. House Representative to support HR 220, which includes the creation of a national tickborne disease strategy, related to prevention, diagnosis and treatment of tick-borne diseases.

So far, Zoe Lofgren is the only representative from California cosponsoring the Bill. It is important to remember that no one is immune.

Raeena Lari is a former economist and has been a resident of San Jose for nearly 25 years. She has an MBA from the University of Chicago Booth School of Business and a BA from Bryn Mawr College.

Councilwoman proposes ban on vaping

an Jose Councilwoman Magdalena Carrasco wants to prohibit sales of flavored tobacco products and e-cigs not approved by the FDA.

While we have combatted the rise in cigarette use, vaping companies have been successful in recapturing their audience through the use of flavored products that are marketed towards children," Carrasco said in a statement

Recent studies revealed that nearly one in three teens in Santa Clara County have tried vaping. Also, more than one in four tobacco



retailers lie within two blocks of a school. So, Carrasco wants to ban the sale of tobacco products within 1,000 feet of K-12 campuses and places where kids gather and within 500 feet of other businesses that sell tobacco and related products.

After the U.S. surgeon general declared smoking harmful in 1964, smokers who could not quit began purchasing low-yield ciga-

rettes, marketed as safer and having less tar than regular cigarettes. However, use of lowyield cigarettes has shown that it does not lower smokers' death rates.

Mary Ann Dewan, the superintendent of the Santa Clara County Office of Education, has called the recent surge in vaping a "health crisis"

The CDC said there were more than 200 possible cases of vaping-related respiratory illnesses reported in 25 states, with six deaths.

San Francisco already has a vaping ordinance in place and last year, San Mateo County restricted the sale of flavored tobacco products. The Richmond City Council has also moved to limit the sales of vaping products.

President Donald Trump recently tweeted that he wanted to stop the sale of flavored vaping products. "While I like the Vaping alternative to Cigarettes, we need to make sure this alternative is safe for all! Let's get counterfeits off the market, and keep young children from Vaping!"

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Symphony Silicon Valley opens 2019-20 Season

ymphony Silicon Valley presents Peacock Variations & Tchaikovsky, Saturday, Oct 5, 2019 at 8:00 p.m. and Sunday, Oct 6 at 2:30 p.m. at the California Theatre, 345 South First Street. San Jose.

The Symphony Silicon Valley season opens with a richly exotic, song-filled work by Zoltán Kodály. Based on a Hungarian folk tune, its variations set a festive mood. That mood shifts in the second half with Tchaikovsky's deeply emotional final symphony. The composer heard only its first, poorly received performance; but its second was a triumph, and this symphony

remains one of his most celebrated and beloved.

PROGRAM:

Zoltán Kodály: Variations on a Hungarian Theme - Peacock Variations

Pyotr Iliych Tchaikovsky: Symphony No. 6 - Pathétique

Conductor: **Carlos Vieu** (pictured) Prices: \$50 - \$98; Box Office:

 $408.286.2600\ or\ www.symphonysiliconvalley.org$

Or visit the Box Office between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. Monday through Friday at 325 South First Street, San Jose, between San Carlos and San Salvador Streets just one-half block from the California Theatre. Easy, inexpensive parking is just one block away at San Jose City Garage on San Carlos Street with entrances on 2nd and 3rd Streets.

Photo courtesy of Symphony Silicon Valley





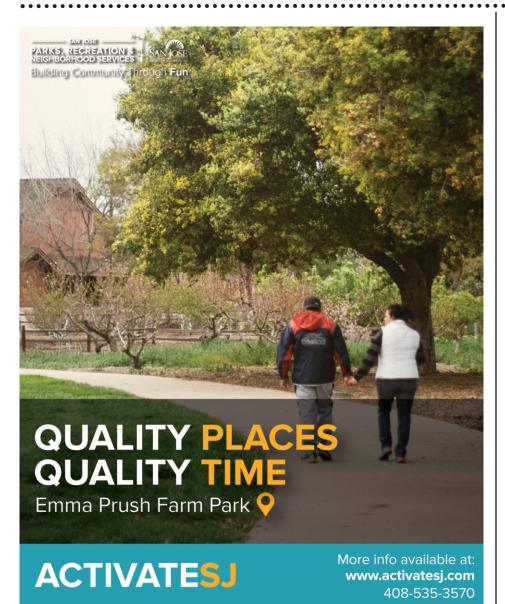
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Cottages

Continued from page 1 residents to sign up for infor-

mation on how to build and permit Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and how to take advantage of ADU programs. The online portal will also allow homeowners to

determine if their property qualifies for an ADU, and begin the application and permitting process. The online portal can be accessed at www.sjbackyardhomes.com.

Abodu launches new"backyard home"

Abodu, San Jose's first pre-approved ADU builder, has begun selling homes this month in San Jose. The company is offering backyard homes for extra space or rental income with a fast 2-weeks-in-your-backyard install process.

"We won't solve our housing crisis \$650,000 at a time—we have to bend the cost curve in order to build more housing," said San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo. "We're grateful for Abodu's partnership in offering residents pre-approved "backyard homes" — which will help add critically-needed affordable housing to our city's housing stock. I encourage others to follow their lead."

Abodu says it builds well-designed backyard homes and offers an easy delivery process, installing a new home within two weeks in a backyard. Abodu claims its homes add "unparalleled functionality, value, extra space and/or rental income to a home."

"Abodu is proud to enter the Bay Area market and provide a new, cost-effective alternative for those seeking more space or looking to monetize their backyard via rental income," said John Geary, Co-Founder at Abodu. "Whether a buyer is installing an Abodu backyard home for a family member or as an additional source of income, this is a great and easy way to increase the value and functionality of a home."

Geary said, "Abodu backyard homes are a balance of thoughtful design and a right-sized space. Each 495 square foot unit is highly customizable, providing options for a range of uses -- all with the goal of creating a no-compromise, standalone unit owners will be proud to have in their backyard."

"We applaud Abodu for working with us on our new Master Plan Program, and for creating an ADU product that enables customers to swiftly install an ADU," said Rosalynn Hughey, director of Planning, Build-



Abodu's Auxiliary Dwelling Unit

ing and Code Enforcement. "ADUs can help us address the housing crisis, and San Jose is committed to making ADUs easy to build; we welcome and appreciate vendors like Abodu for helping achieve that goal."

Installation process

"Installation of an Abodu backyard home living unit is transparent from beginning to end, Geary said. "Abodu starts with a fixed-price approach in the purchase process and provides multiple financing options. Abodu works with the buyer to find the best financing from a flexible set of options, whether they want to put \$0 down or pay entirely up front. With home construction off-site, buyers do not have to listen to a construction crew in the backyard for four months or more. Each Abodu home is crafted in a nearby factory and engineered to the highest environmental standards."

Abodu units arrive fully constructed, with interior plumbing and electric completed in factory and Abodu units are fully electric and can be ordered with supplemental solar power. Abodu handles all of the work required to connect the unit to local utilities including water, plumbing and electric. Abodu backyard homes come fully appointed when delivered. This includes a dedicated bedroom (with built-in wardrobe), full bathroom (with large shower, built-in vanity and recessed medicine cabinet), fully appointed kitchen (including a full sized fridge/freezer, stovetop, oven, vented hood, dishwasher and kitchen sink) and a dedicated living room (with window bench). Additionally, all Abodu backyard homes come standard with air conditioning, heating and include a water

Abodu's pricing

Pricing for Abodu's 495 square foot model starts at \$199K and customers have the option of upgrading certain features including the entry door, exterior siding and appliances. As with all newly built homes in California, Abodu offers a limited warranty on the structure for 10 years.

For more information, photos of Abodu backyard homes, visit www. Abodu.com



Brittany (Jillian Bell)

MOVIE REVIEW

'Brittany Runs' a Marathon

By Joshua Kim

Special to the Times

n the first Sunday of every November, 50,000 runners from all fifty states and more than 139 countries will gather in New York City to run in the largest marathon in the world.

Lined across the streets of New York City are even more spectators, who for one day of the year will take a break

from rudely ignoring each other to cheering on the runners as they trek the 26.219 mile course.

As its title suggests, *Brittany Runs a Marathon* is ostensibly about our protagonist Brittany who trains to run the NYC Marathon, but this only acts as a frame, as there is actually very little running in the film. Instead the film devotes much of its run to exploring themes such as the struggles of mediocrity, self-worth, and failure.

Brittany Runs a Marathon is a well-crafted film that transcends its seemingly simple plot and will make you laugh, cry, and cheer.

The film begins by introducing Brittany (Jillian Bell), who is a 27 year old usher liv-

ing in New York City. Brittany is barely able to make a living and emotionally struggles as she sees everyone around her succeed while she is stuck in a dead end job instead of pursuing her dream of working in advertising. Amidst these struggles, Brittany learns from her doctor that she is dangerously unhealthy and is advised to exercise and lose weight. This is when Brittany

decides to turn her life around and decides to train for the New York City Marathon.

The film portrays Brittany's journey from being unhealthy and struggling to run one mile to becoming a better version of herself in a manner that is many times hilarious, but also sometimes emotionally devastating. The film also takes

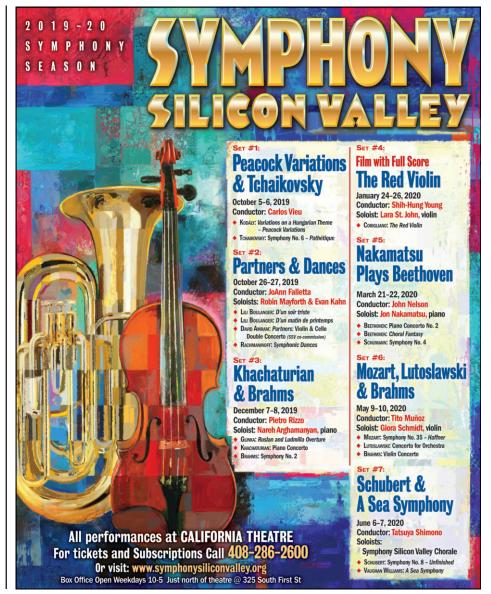
some twists and turns from the conventionally expected story that were pleasant and refreshing, which I very much appreciated.

Overall, I highly recommend *Brittany Runs a Marathon*. While the film is ostensibly about training for a marathon, I think that the film will connect and empower all audiences who struggle with feelings of mediocrity and failure.

Brittany Runs a Marathon is currently in limited release but will expand to more theatres soon.

Score: 8/10

Brittany Runs a Marathon is rated R for language throughout, sexuality and some drug material.







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Times Community



Gifts for Teens volunteers (left to right) top row: Sharon Bouska, Kris Rosendin, Jan Giroux, Leslie Saviage, Barbara Purdy, Kathy Heihn, Catherine Edwards, Rise Berry, and Beverly Bassett. Sitting (left to right): Peg Carlson-Bowen, and Elaine Benoit.

Gifts for Teens mobilize for December gift bag assembly

Special to the Times

ifts for Teens, a local non-profit, is now in its 22nd year giving back to South Bay homeless and low-

Active committee members, many whom are residents of Almaden Valley, work yearlong to collect donations, work with community tech organizations and high schools for donation drives and purchase useful and fun gifts to fill holiday gift

Gifts for Teens goal this year is to fill 1,200 bags which are distributed to five community agencies for their clients. For many of the teens, this will be the only present received over the holiday. More

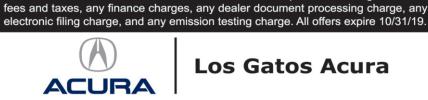
importantly, these gift bags motivate teens to connect with services within the agencies who offer counseling, health care, job training and educational programs.

This year the gift bag assembly dates are December 4-16, which include Saturday shifts. Shifts are from 9 a.m. -12 p.m. and 1 p.m. - 4 p.m. Individuals and families are welcome. Interested volunteers can contact Kathy@gifts4teens.org. For groups contact Cheryl@gifts4teens.org.

Urgently needed is a work site for the gift bag assembly. Working space needs are 6,000 square feet, parking and available from December 1-16. Contact Elaine@ gifts4teens.org for potential work sites.

To learn more about Gifts for Teens visit: www.gifts4teens.org.





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Times Local News

Cortese calls on local governments to respond to climate crisis at U.N.

Supervisor speaks at first Climate Restoration Forum in New York

ddressing the first annual Climate Restoration Forum at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City, Supervisor Dave Cortese on Tuesday, September 17, called on local governments across the country to follow the lead of Santa Clara County and declare a climate emergency now and take action to respond to the environmental crisis.

Referring to President John F. Kennedy's question of 55 years ago, "Ask not what your country can do for you, ask what you can do for your country," Supervisor Cortese said we face a new question now for another generation: "Ask now what your planet can do for you, ask what you can do for your planet, and humanity itself."

The global implementation required to respond to this humanitarian crisis, he said, "will occur one individual at a time; one town at a time; one city at a time, one county or province at a time, until we have knit together a global movement that is unstoppable."

Supervisor Cortese was the only elected official invited to speak at the forum, which was hosted by the Foundation for Global Climate Restoration as an event leading into the 74th Session of the U.N. General Assembly. The event was supported by the United Nations Office for Partnerships in partnership with Earth Day Network and Future Coalition.

Specifically, he called on local leaders to take the action that Santa Clara County has, by pledging to use every resource, every tool available to address this crisis. Santa Clara County is the only government in the U.S. to declare a climate emergency with a restoration component.

Cortese asked other governments to:

- Declare a climate emergency now. (The Board of Supervisors declared a climate emergency on August 27.)
- Pledge to make your own government 100% renewable.
- Shift your procurement to green fleet vehicles.
- Start a Youth Climate Club in your community, empowering your children to change the world.
- Create green energy utilities and enroll your local households and business customers leading them away from fossil fuels. (The County created Silicon Valley Clean Energy).
- Adopt policies that will reduce vehicle miles traveled and vehicles idling on roadways.
- Adopt "Reach Codes" requiring carbon restoration in your own building codes and permits in your own cities.
- Invest in renewable energy storage as efficiently and as quickly as you can.



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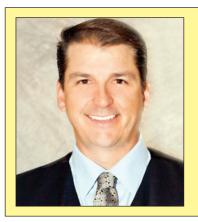
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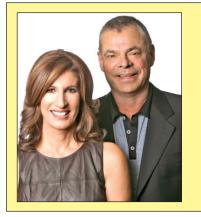


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Announcements

Evergreen School District

NOTICE OF PUBLIC HEARING:

Open Hearing scheduled for the October 10, 2019 Evergreen School District Board of Trustees Meeting, at 6:30 p.m. in the Board Room at 3188 Quimby Road, San Jose Re: THE AVAILABILITY OF TEXTBOOKS AND INSTRUCTIONAL MATERIALS -2019-2020 SCHOOL YEAR.

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