# SEASON'S GREETINGS! Wishing you the best this Holiday, season from the staff of the Times

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DEC. 20, 2019 - JAN. 2, 2020 • VOL. 36, NO. 26



#### Community Seva non-profit makes sure there is never an empty stomach

By Kevin Larsen Times Staff Writer

he annual "A Meal to Heal-Tree of Life Luncheon" was held to fundraise for the nonprofit Community Seva last month.

Community Seva organization was founded by Nathan Ganeshan who got the idea from his seven year old son.

"On a Sunday morning in spring 2013, when Nathan See SEVA, page 20



2721 Aborn Road, Suite 10, San Jose, CA 95121 (408) 238-7500 nothingbundtcakes.com



Evergreen Village Square hosted some Holiday Dancing Christmas Trees, who thrilled the audience. *Photo courtesy Steve Natale Photography* 

#### HOLIDAYS IN EVERGREEN

# Evergreen Village Square brings in the *Dancing Christmas Trees* and creates joy to the world

By Kevin Larsen

Times Staff Writer

n Saturday, December 7 the Evergreen Community was treated to a special event at the Village Square Branch of the San Jose Public Library sponsored by the merchants of Evergreen Village Square.

There were free photos with Santa and Mrs. Claus and District 8 Councilmember Sylvia Arenas provided arts and crafts for kids to construct picture frames to hold their Santa photos. Friends of The Library held a great library book sale as well.

In the library community meet-

ing room was a puppet stage and more. Involved Evergreen gave away holiday-themed rubber duckies. The walls were beautifully decorated with the words "Merry Christmas" and lots of glittering snowflakes. Hundreds of parents and little ones squeezed in to enjoy the festivities.

Lori and RJ from Cotton Candy Express were there to provide entertainment along with Magic with Gerald, The Dancing Christmas Trees, Ranjana Singh Yoga Presentation, Bytes and Notes Singers, Evergreen Montessori School Performers, and to finish it all off, the enchanting Puppet Company who came all the way from "Fairyland" Children's Park in Oakland, CA, you know, the place where Walt Disney went to visit before he created Disneyland and it is still there today!

Lori stated, "Love the event and the Evergreen Community. They are all very special to me; we have grown to be friends. We've watched all the children grow up as well as the Evergreen community. I'm so glad to be a part of their memories of the holiday season. I've been doing this for about 15 years. When we first did the Evergreen Holiday Event there were no buildings surrounding the fountain. Only one market, Lunardi's. It's always been an outside event. Event coordinators decided that since we usually battle weather of some kind each year, with the opening of the new library they have allowed us to take the event into their community See HOLIDAY, page 12

#### Chaboya students Mehta and Garimella earn first prize at Churchill Invitational Tournament

The Chaboya Science Olympiad White team participants Parth Mehta and Raghav Garimella earned 1st place for their Elastic Launch Glider event at the Churchill Invitational Tournament on Dec. 7, held at Churchill Middle School.

Science Olympiad is a Club at Chaboya Middle School, which is an integral part of the science curriculum at the school, and it is a team competition in which students can compete in any 23 events pertaining to scientific disciplines such as earth science, chemistry, biology, physics and engineering.

A team of coaches train and assist the Science Olympiad Club students in 23 individual events.

The training pays off, as the young scientists at Science Olympiad never fail to impress the judges and parents with their high standards and ingenuity they present each year. Parents, teachers and the principal help make the event possible.

Young brilliant scientists that are members of the Science Olympiad Club members are working on new projects, ready to compete on March 22, 2020 at San Jose State, where they will strive for excellence.



Parth Mehta and Raghav Garimella, representing Chaboya Middle School, win first place in the annual Science Olympiad Churchill Invitational.

### VTA's All New Service Valley Transportation Authority



Starting December 28, 2019

#### **VTA Light Rail Changes**

Light Rail will now have three distinct lines, which will be color-coded, and the new Orange Line will connect Downtown Mountain View to the Milpitas Transit Center. During weekday peak hours, service will be every 15 minutes and weekend peak hours will be every 20 minutes.

#### Orange Line – Alum Rock to Mountain View

- Transfer at Baypointe for the Blue Line
- Transfer at Champion, Lick Mill, Great America or Old Ironsides for the Green Line

#### Blue Line – Santa Teresa to Baypointe

#### Green Line - Winchester to Old Ironsides

#### Other Changes to Light Rail

- The light rail segment from Ohlone/Chynoweth to Oakridge will be discontinued and will now be served by Route 64a.
- I-880/Milpitas station renamed to Alder Station
- Montague Station renamed to Milpitas Station
- New Route 60 will serve SJC, Valley Fair/Santana Row, Downtown Campbell and Milpitas Transit Center.
- Only passengers boarding from SJC will board Route 60 for free.

#### **The Frequent Bus Network**

will operate every 15 minutes or better on weekdays between 6:30 a.m. and 6:30 p.m. and every 15 to 30 minutes on weekends.

Rapid 500 San Jose Diridon Station to Downtown San Jose

Rapid 522 Palo Alto Transit Center to Eastridge Transit Center

Rapid 523 Lockheed Martin Transit Ctr to Berryessa Transit Ctr

Route 22 Palo Alto Transit Center to Eastridge Transit Center

Route 23 De Anza College to Alum Rock Transit Center

Route 25 De Anza College to Alum Rock Transit Center

Route 26 West Valley College to Eastridge Transit Center

Route 57 Old Ironsides Station to West Valley College

Route 60 Milpitas Transit Center to Winchester Transit Center

Good Samaritan Hospital to Sierra & Piedmont (via Route 61

King/Mabury)

Route 64 Almaden & Crown to McKee & White

Route 66 Kaiser San Jose to Milpitas/Dixon Landing Road

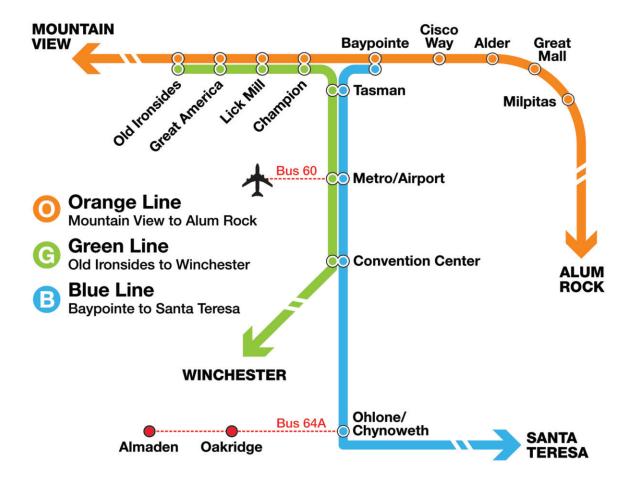
Route 68 Gilroy Transit Center to San Jose Diridon Station

Route 70 Eastridge Transit Center to Milpitas Transit Center

Route 72 Senter & Monterey to Downtown San Jose

Route 73 Monterey & Branham to Downtown San Jose

Route 77 Eastridge Transit Center to Milpitas Transit Center



#### **Improved Bus Routes**

- Route 20 Sunnyvale Caltrain Station to Milpitas Transit Center; 15-minute frequency during commute periods and 30-minute frequency in midday.
- Route 21 Stanford Shopping Center to Santa Clara Caltrain station; a merger of Routes 32 and 35 into a single route.
- Route 51 Moffett Field to West Valley College; hourly service on weekdays.
- Route 56 Lockheed Martin Transit Center to Tamien Station; 30-minute service on weekdays and weekends.
- Route 59 Old Ironsides Station to Valley Fair Transit Center; 30-minute frequency on weekdays and hourly on week-

Bus Routes that have been discontinued or changed: Bus Routes that have been discontinued or changed: Routes 17, 34, 45, 58, 88; Limited Routes 304, 321, 328 and 330; Express Bus 120, 140, and 180 will be discontinued. Express Bus 181 will continue to operate until BART service opens. Contact VTA for other options.

#### Times Community News

### Santa attends annual pancake breakfast at the Evergreen Community Center

he Evergreen Community Center invited Santa to their annual pancake breakfast event on December 7.

Children were excited to have their picture taken with Santa and their parents.

Santa said it was the smiling children, hot pancakes, pats of butter and lots and lots of maple syrup that drew Santa to accept the cordial invitation.

Parents watched as their children created holiday artwork out of construction paper.

The event ended with a raffle for some exciting prizes.

#### Santa interview

This year Santa made time to answer some top secret questions. As he checked his cell phone the calendar was completely full. He had the ring tone off and it rang and rang almost every second. Looking at the screen it had a calendar and it was filled with events and his name next to them for him to go to. Wow was he busy.

Some days he may even have gone to many places just to hear the children speak softly to him about their wishes.

In an *Evergreen Times* exclusive, he spoke of some secrets of the North Pole.

Here is the quick interview before attending the Breakfast with Santa event.

**Reporter:** What happens to the elves at

the North Pole when you deliver packages? What do they do while you're away?

Santa: Some come with me.

**Reporter:** That's breaking news, no one knew this Santa.

**Santa:** I chose the ones that like to fly.

**Reporter:** What about Mrs. Claus, what does she do that makes all at the North Pole happy leading up to Christmas?

**Santa:** Well, she makes the most wonderful waffles you ever tasted, just beautiful with lots of whipped cream on top of maple syrup, all you want, and other toppings that the elves find delicious nutritious, well mostly just delicious.

**Reporter:** Santa, there are reports that some people out there in our world are acting "Bah humbug" lately and are a bit mean too. What do you think about that?

**Santa:** I've got a secret for you. There is love and kindness in all people.

**Reporter:** Some want to know if you have any favorites as you deliver presents here and there throughout the world.

Santa: No favorites.

**Reporter:** How do you get everywhere so fast?

**Santa:** Because Santa is the Spirit of Christmas and I can go anywhere at any time.

**Reporter:** I see you have to go to your



The **DeVitto family** with Santa at the Breakfast with Santa event. Pictured (I to r) are: John, Aydin, Santa, Wyatt and Venessa. Below: Children, with adult supervision, create holiday artwork at the Breakfast with Santa event.



next gathering of children. It sure is nice you make time to see so many. Do you wish to say anything else for today?

**Santa:** I just want to say that I love Mrs. Claus and she has been the sweetest lady in the world for centuries.



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#### **LETTERS**

## Zito helped explain development

Dear Editor,

Nearly a dozen years ago our CalOakCreek community faced a daunting task when a developer attempted to build mass housing in our semi-rural neighborhood. The developer proposed over 100 units in what now holds 34 beautifully developed homes.

With 60+ residents from the Meadowlands and CalOakCreek we presented our case at City Hall. Impassioned mothers and fathers spoke about increased traffic, school impact and a contrasting neighborhood look. San Jose's City Council voted and we won.

What people never knew is that then Planning Commissioner Jim Zito helped us win by explaining the process.

I cornered Jim as he sat for a haircut at Great Clips. Thankfully, he has a sense of humor and gave me his card. He promised to listen to me at a later time. We spoke over 2 hours and I learned how to officially and legally proceed with our cause. Our joint neighborhoods worked 2 years covering every obstacle thrown at us. We never relented.

We endorse Jim Zito for San Jose City Council District 8 because he is there for his constituents when they need him. Jim listens to his community and serves their best interest. He is exactly what we need at city hall.

Jean and Reed McCauley
Evergreen Valley

### **Evergreen Times**

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# Valley Currents

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

### Two high school students bring community together to raise funds for 'Cure a Little Heart Foundation'

ure a Little Heart Foundation Youth Chapter, led by local high school students Shriya Vejendla and Chetana Ganga, recently held a 5K run/walk to raise funds to benefit underprivileged kids in India suffering from congenital heart disease (CHD).

Each year about 180,000 children are born in India with CHD. With less than 50 qualified health care centers in the country to take care of these children, about 80% die without seeing a specialist. Currently, only 5% to 8% of suffering children receive the lifesaving surgeries that enable them to live healthy lives into adulthood.

The mission of Cure a Little Heart Foundation is to reverse this tragic trend by funding the facilities and medical equipment necessary to support volunteer surgeons who perform the vital procedures.

Hundreds of runners, volun-



Councilwoman **Sylvia Arenas** congratulates **Shriya Vejendla**, **Chetana Ganga** and other young volunteers from the Evergreen area who organized a successful 5K Walk/Run for "Cure a Little Heart Foundation" to benefit underprivileged kids in India suffering from congenital heart disease.

teers, performers and civic leaders gathered at Almaden Lake Park for the Cure a Little Heart 5k fun/walk on October 27, 2019. The successful event raised more than \$10,000 for the Cure a Little

At the December 11

meeting, committee

members were pre-

sented with the most

recent data, [which]

reinforces the exist-

declining enrollment.

ing data regarding

Heart Foundation through participant registrations and sponsor donations.

#### **ESD SCHOOL CONSOLIDATION UPDATE**

### **Superintendent's School Consolidation Advisory Committee hard at work in the school consolidation process**

By Dr. Emy Flores

Superintendent, Evergreen School District

ver the past month, Evergreen School
District Management and Staff and the
Superintendent's School Consolidation
Advisory Committee have been hard at work
on the next steps in the school consolidation
process.

The Committee has met twice, and at the December 11 meeting, committee members were presented with the most recent data developed by our demographer, Decision Insite. The information presented reinforces the existing data regarding declining enrollment, and committee members asked thoughtful questions about the reasons for the decline.

Some of this information was answered by the demographer and staff followed up with additional answers and the committee was presented with information about the district budget, school profiles, and criteria to consider for consolidating schools. The Committee recently added an input session to each of its

meetings to allow stakeholders the opportunity to provide input, feedback and ask questions.

On Dec. 19, I will be hosting a community information meeting. This meeting will provide stakeholders the opportunity to ask questions, express feedback, priorities and concerns and get questions answered by Cabinet members, who will also be present at this meeting.

In addition to these meetings, I will also be responding to telephone calls and emails from stakeholders regarding the school consolidation process. I have also met with those who have requested meetings.

Altogether, stakeholders will have eight formal opportunities to share their input and feedback through the Committee Input Process and community meetings, not includ-

ing public comments at the board meetings and public hearings.

Looking ahead, after the month of December, Evergreen School District will have one

more Community Information Meeting and two more Superintendent's School Consolidation Advisory Committee meetings before making its formal recommendation of which schools to consolidate at its January 22 meeting. Immediately following this meeting, staff and parents of the affected schools will be notified, and I will be meeting with each community (staff and parents) of those schools affected on Jan. 23 and January 24. Following that, the

Board of Trustees will be holding two public hearings: one on January 27 and the other on February 3, and then the Board will take final action on my recommendations at its meeting on Thursday, February 13.

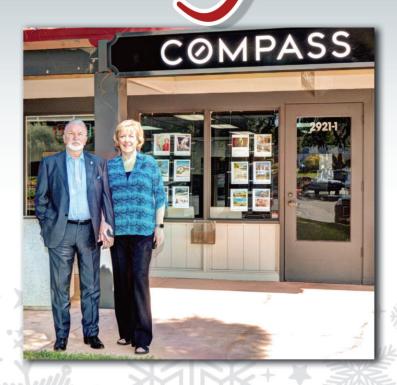
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#### **Times Community News**

OP ED

#### Your holiday gift to veterans: Leave your fake service dog at home

By Sean Brown

Special to the Times

Piece dog users are asked to leave hotels, restaurants, taxis, movie theaters, airplanes, malls, apartment houses and other public places because people don't understand our dogs' access rights under the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the Fair Housing Act and the Air Carrier Access Act, all of which protect people with disabilities.

But even more often, people buy fake

credentials and jackets for their pets and bring them on planes...especially during the holidays. This abuse of the system makes the situation even worse for people like me. It shouldn't be so easy to pass off a pet with false credentials, but it is. In Florida, it's a second-degree misdemeanor, punishable by a fine and community service time. So please don't do it.

Dogs like my life-saver, Pella, are trained by Southeastern Guide Dogs to perform tasks that mitigate invisible and physical disabilities. They spend two years learning obedience and commands at a cost of tens of thousands of dollars, and are provided to veterans like me free of charge. A service dog can calm someone with severe anxiety, retrieve dropped items, provide stability, remind a handler to take his/her medication, turn on a light, give reassurance and much, much more.

Pella makes it possible for me to face crowds, to shop in a busy supermarket and eat in a restaurant without anxiety. Far from being a pet, she provides me steady empathy, support and sensitivity to the flashbacks, nightmares and stress that used to be crippling. By contrast, non-housebroken, aggressive or otherwise untrained pets being passed off as service dogs often create trouble for merchants, the airlines and restaurateurs. People can fly with an emotional support animal as long as they have a doctor's letter, and many professionals say they now get pressured to write such letters for their patients. Many times, these animals bite, make a mess in public or otherwise give legit service dogs a bad name.

This holiday season, please stop and think. Fake service dogs aren't just wrong, it is also against the law to pretend your pet is "working" to mitigate a disability when you know it isn't. On behalf of the guide and service dog handlers out there with true need, please don't do it.



#### Mail carriers start their deliveries before the crack of dawn

No need for alarm.

That clatter and rattle some households may hear before the coffee is brewed, as early as 5 a.m., is not Santa getting an early start. It's really his postal helpers, the mail carriers, hitting the street before the break of dawn in order to get everyone's packages delivered with great speed.

The jingle and jangle so familiar this time of year is part of the hustle and bus-

tle that Post Offices experience during the peak holiday rush.

The Postal Service is projecting more than 800 million packages to be delivered between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, and 200 million just the week of December 16-22, forecasted to be the busiest week of the year.

The notion of the "busiest day" is a thing of Christmas past, due to the early and heavy online shopping.



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Times **OpEd** 



### **Season's Implications**

In age old stories, from long past We're told of a child who was born In a stable, in Bethlehem, Placed in a manger, where cows ate!

We today could not fathom that! We're born in sterile, pleasant rooms, With everything at hand to help Assure us of good life ahead!

Shepherds came with smell of ovine From their trek upon barren plains First to visit, first to worship, This baby wrapped in swaddling cloth!

Why shepherds? Why lowly people? They came to see a Lamb, their charge, The only thing they cared about! Revealed by Heavenly chorus!

Later, Wise men from Eastern Realms, Brought gifts of gold, frankincense, myrrh, Gold to crown Him, frankincense for A sweet savor, what he is now.

Myrrh, spoke of his great sacrifice He would make in his later life. These gifts tell us to do the same Toward our fellow human kind!

The Christmas Story's not complete Without all of us who now live, Doing works our Forerunner did, Being martyrs for each other!

-Frank Shortt

#### !! MISSING !! REWARD of \$1,000



A Nuclear Gauge was stolen from a locked truck at the Creekbridge Community near Beacon Hill Drive in Salinas on Monday, October 21st at 2:38 a.m.

A reward will be provided for the return of the missing item and its contents.

If you have any information please contact:

Alan (RSO): (650) 444-4270 Steve (ARSO): (650) 804-6274

# PUBLIC SAFETY WORKSHOP SERIES

Presented by



Crime Prevention Overview & Package
Theft Workshop

Thursday, December 19th from 6-8pm Evergreen Community Center

**Gang Awareness Workshop** 

Wednesday, January 15th from 6-8pm Welch Community Center

Vision Zero Initiative Pedestrian & Traffic Safety Workshop Friday, January 17th from 6-8pm Village Square Library

**Business Watch Workshop** 

Wednesday, January 22nd from 6-8pm Evergreen Library

To RSVP, please contact my office at (408) 535-4908 or district8@sanjoseca.gov







racism women

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#### Times **Features**



### **'Shop with a Cop' brings holiday experience to underserved kids**

By Carina Woudenberg

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

hey were on the hunt for a teddy bear for Martinez's mom and a basketball for her brother — among other items for her family members. For herself, Martinez is hoping to get her hands on a container of slime.

It was a crowded day at Target as the two were joined by more than 200 children who were matched with uniformed officers across various departments to complete their holiday shopping.

The annual event, which was started by retired officer Darrell Cortez and his wife Alicia more than a decade ago, provides underserved children with the opportunity to select gifts for family members and themselves. Cortez serves as the executive director of the Shop with a Cop Foundation Silicon Valley which funds the program.

This year, the foundation provided each participant with a \$175 gift card to spend however they wanted.

Martinez spent most of Tuesday thinking about what she would select for each person on her list, even staying up late to complete the task.

"I'm so excited to buy stuff for my family," Martinez said. "I'm grateful for them."

Officer Robinson — who's been an officer with the San Jose Police Department for a year and a half — says she enjoys it too.

"I love it," she said. "Especially helping the kids."

The foundation selects some of the par-

ticipants from the Readers Are Leaders campaign. Students who do well in the program are rewarded with the holiday shopping spree. Other children are selected for the event due to hardship in their lives such as domestic violence or the loss of a parent.

Cortez says the idea is to allow children to get to know uniformed officers in a normal setting rather than a time of crisis.

"We have to show that cops are human," said Cortez, who retired from the police department ten years ago after three decades.

The annual event continues to grow every year. Among other agencies, officers representing the military, Drug Enforcement Agency, Federal Bureau of Investigation and the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Department were on hand to assist the young shoppers while 100 volunteers from various organizations helped by wrapping the gifts.

It's a thrilling day for the children, organizers say, but often it's just as rewarding for the officers who get to relax a little on the job.

"We get to lower our guard," said Officer George Constantina, who participated in the event for his first time. "(The children) can see a different side of us."

Anyone wishing to volunteer, participate or donate to Shop with a Cop Silicon Valley can visit shopwithacopsv.com or mail checks to P.O. Box 8003 in San Jose.

Contact Carina Woudenberg at carinaw86@gmail.com or follow @carinaew on Twitter.



**Zuleyna Martinez**, a 9-year-old student at Gardner Academy, paused to go over her shopping list with San Jose Police Officer **Sabrina Robinson** as the pair strolled the aisles of the Target on Coleman Avenue on Dec. 4 for the 12th annual Shop with a Cop event.

#### **Times Features**



#### Best places for New Year's Eve **Celebrations**

**y**ith New Year's Eve around the corner and the majority of Americans spending up to \$200 each on the occasion per year, the personal-finance website WalletHub today released its report on 2019's Best Places for New Year's Eve Celebrations (as well as accompanying videos) to go along with its 50+ New Year's Eve Facts – Traditions and Spending.

To help Americans ring in the new year without breaking the bank, WalletHub compared the 100 biggest cities across 28 key metrics. The data set ranges from legality of fireworks to average price of a New Year's Eve party ticket to forecasted precipitation for Dec. 31.

To view the full report and your city's rank, please visit:

https://wallethub.com/edu/best-placesfor-new-years-eve/17263/

#### 50+ New Year's Facts - Traditions, Spending & More

- \$1.1 Billion Estimated cost of New Year's air travel, with at least 6.7 million people expected to pay an average of \$165 for a round-trip ticket.
- 8 in 10 Share of Americans who spend less than \$200 on New Year's Eve.
- \$758 Difference in the cost for a couple to enjoy dinner and a show on New Year's Eve in the most expensive (New York) and least expensive (Philadelphia) cities.
- 360+ Million Number of glasses of sparkling wine drunk each New Year's

#### Best Cities for New Year's Eve

1. New York, NY	11. Chicago, IL
2. Denver, CO	12. Washington, DC
3. Las Vegas, NV	13. San Antonio, TX
4. San Diego, CA	14. New Orleans, LA
5. Los Angeles, CA	15. Dallas, TX
6. Atlanta, GA	16. Buffalo, NY
7. Orlando, FL	17. Seattle, WA
8. San Francisco, CA	18. Birmingham, AL
9. Miami, FL	19. Minneapolis, MN
10. Philadelphia. PA	20. Louisville, KY



#### **District 8 Community Round Table Upcoming Meetings**

#### January 9 at 7 p.m. at Village Square Library

- Discussion on changes on voting processes in the County
- Presentation from advocates of the proposed Buddhist Temple

#### Candidate Forum - January 25, 2020

- Candidates for San Jose City Council and State Senate District 15
- PLEASE RSVP TO: info@d8crt.org





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**Times Community** 

### Looking back at 2019 and looking forward to 2020

By Supervisor Dave Cortese Special to the Times

appy Holidays! If you're like me, you're looking forward to the winter holidays and the opportunities to gather with friends and family, sharing food, memories and perhaps reviewing the past year's events.

For me, the end of 2019 is bittersweet. I'm proud of the progress we've made and grateful for the support from my colleagues on the Board, the County staff, the community and our advisory boards as we faced some of the most significant issues in the County's history. But I'm also realizing that 2020 will be my last year as your representative on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. And there is much work yet to be done.

Here are some of the highlights of what we were able to accomplish together and my outlook for the year ahead:

#### **Housing and Homelessness**

Through the efforts of the County's Office of Supportive Housing and our partners, 7,000 homeless people have been housed over the past five years, including 1,602 veterans through the All the Way Home Campaign. Projects funded by Measure A, the voter-approved affordable housing bond, total 21, including three renovation projects. Of the new constructed projects, two have opened and another will open at the end of December. Two more are scheduled to open in 2020.

Also this year, my office sponsored a Community Summit on Homelessness, which drew 250 people, including 60 who were unhoused. A report on what we learned is in the works. Stay tuned for more information.

The Board voted unanimously in March to invest \$40 million over the next five to 10 years in projects that set aside affordable housing units for those with special needs. We approved an initial investment of \$10 million for housing developments for residents with intellectual or developmental disabilities who also have extremely low incomes, typically \$1,000 a month.

My focus for next year will be continuing the progress on new Measure A housing developments and providing temporary housing for those who are forced to live outside. By the last count, there are 7,922 unsheltered men, women and children in the County.

#### **Climate Crisis**

I was honored in September to address the first annual Climate Restoration Forum at the United Nations Headquarters in New York City, calling on local governments to follow the lead of Santa Clara County by declaring a climate emergency and taking action to respond to the environmental crisis. In August, the Board approved my resolution declaring a climate emergency and demanding action to reverse the impacts of global warming.

Last month, the Board approved my initiative to partner with Our City Forest, a local nonprofit, to work with residents and business owners in unincorporated areas of Santa Clara County to plant trees, which remove carbon dioxide from the air and release oxygen into the atmosphere.

In January, we moved forward with the implementation plan for

the Santa Clara Valley Agricultural Plan, which will help the County preserve 12,000 acres from future development, ensuring that the County's vital agricultural economy will continue to grow and thrive. The plan was the winner of the 2019 Innovation in



Green Community Planning Award of Excellence by the American Planning Association.

In 2020, we will continue the County's efforts to implement the goals of the climate emergency declaration, with special attention on the Property Assessed Clean Energy financing program for local property owners to finance renewable energy, energy efficiency and water conservation projects; Silicon Valley Clean Energy that would call for the County to set goals for its buildings and vehicles to be electric.

#### Health

In November, the Board approved a measure I co-sponsored to ban the sale of e-cigarettes and flavored tobacco in unincorporated areas of Santa Clara County to respond to the negative effects on teens and young adults who become addicted to nicotine. Retail-

ers with existing permits will be allowed to sell tobacco products only until July 1, 2020. The ordinance will be final after a vote by the Board at our December 17 meeting.

I also supported the County's purchase of two hospitals and a clinic, saving 450 hospital beds and two emergency rooms from closing. These facilities are continuing to provide critical health and emergency care to residents in San Jose, Gilroy and Morgan Hill.

My office's annual Day on the Bay Multicultural Festival provided free flu shots and health screenings and connected visitors to Alviso Marina County Park to vital services, and the free Downtown Health Fair served uninsured, low-income and homeless residents.

#### **Public Safety**

An ordinance that I proposed on safe storage of firearms in homes will return to the Board on December 17 for final approval. The ordinance requires safe storage of firearms in homes in certain zoning districts in Santa Clara County in an effort to reduce accidents, suicides, acts of violence using firearms and preventing thefts and illicit resale of stolen firearms or their use in crimes, while still allowing flexibility for hunters and sports events and in rural areas.

This idea came out of the Community Summit on Firearms Safety that my office held in 2018, along with a new program we launched in May with the Sheriff's Office that allows owners of unwanted guns to turn them 24/7 into the Sheriff's Office without having to wait for a gun buy-back event.

The County has also been able to improve its technology to fight wildfires with a grant from the state. Within 15 minutes, the MOSES system can provide cell service or wi-fi to thousands of customers -- residents and emergency personnel. And because it's towable, it can be set up even in remote areas.

#### Youth

In November, I urgently called for administration to provide alternative options to admitting abused and neglected children to the County's Receiving, Assessment and Intake Center while they await temporary homes. We need to get back to the County's absolute commitment of placing youth in foster homes within 24 hours of being removed from places where they have been traumatized.

Also, this year, I proposed – and the Board approved -- a pilot program to provide cash stipends to help 18- to 21-year-old foster youth navigate economic hardships and create pathways to success. Those leaving the Foster Care system are among the most vulnerable in the County. The pilot will be the first in the nation to target this vulnerable population with universal basic income assistance.

#### Seniors

Thousands of seniors and people with disabilities who own property are eligible for parcel tax exemptions on their property tax bills and do not know it, and those who do often find the exemption applications process challenging and over burdensome. At my request, the Board approved in June, an outreach plan that would help fill in those information gaps and make the process more transparent.

Our special hearing for seniors in September identified the gaps in services for the County's older residents, including elder abuse, frauds, scams, volunteerism and employment, long-term services and support, dementia care, mobility and transportation, housing and physical and mental healthcare. In 2020, we will continue to work on addressing those needs.

#### **Social Justice for Workers**

The County's new Office of Labor Standards Enforcement opened this year with a mission of establishing itself as the primary enforcer and educator of workplace violations. The office, which I initiated, provides outreach, education programs and training sessions in multiple languages to inform employees and businesses about workers' rights and employers' responsibilities.

In October, the Board approved moving forward with the development of a Pay Equity Strategy to more effectively track progress on pay equity in the County workforce and monitor contractors to make sure they are following pay equity guidelines, especially among women.

The Board also approved my referral to move forward with studying the expansion of recruitment and retention efforts for transgender, gender-nonconforming, gender-nonbinary, and gender-diverse employees, applicants and contractors.

If you have any questions or would like more information, please call my office at 408-299-5030 or email me at dave. cortese@bos.sccgov.org.



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you might see on Zillow, Redfin, Trulia and other internet sites.

#### **Times Community News**



### **Community safety** a district priority

**District 8** 

Report

Special to the Times

ur San Jose Police officers are at their most effective when they're working in partnership with our community,

which is why my office regularly organizes community public safety meetings.

I'm hosting a new series of meetings this winter and covering topics ranging from burglary prevention to gang awareness to pedestrian safety. I hope you'll consider attending to help us all create a stronger District 8. The flyer for this event series is published along

with this column, in the newspaper today.

In particular, December brings an increase in package theft and sometimes a rash of home burglaries. These are serious crimes, and it's important that the San Jose Police Department work closely with our community to prevent and respond. That's why as we've expanded the police force by hundreds of officers we've prioritized bringing back the burglary unit and returning to responding to every single home alarm that goes off.

to invite you and your family to attend to our upcoming Package Theft Workshop on December 19th, 2019 from 6:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Evergreen Community

Center, 4860 San Felipe Rd, San Jose, CA 95135. This workshop will provide resources and tips for you and your family to deter burglars and package thieves, review neighborhood-specific crime prevention strategies, and how to engage your neighbors in a neighborhood watch.

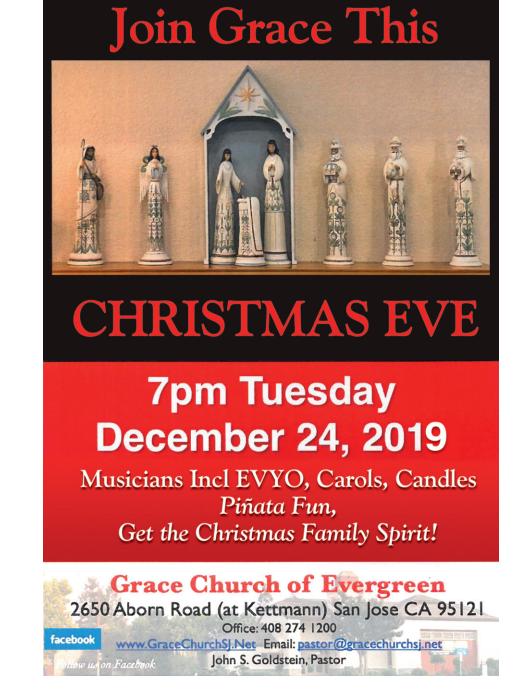
WHAT: Public Safety Series on **Crime Prevention** 

Overview and Package Theft WHEN: Thursday, December

19th, 2019 at 6:00pm to 8:00pm WHERE: Evergreen Community Center, 4860 San Felipe Rd, San Jose, CA 95135

I hope you will join me for this important workshop, so that we may all be more informed about how to keep ourselves, our families, and our community safe.

And please contact my office at 408-535-4908 for more information or to organize a neighborhood watch meeting on your block





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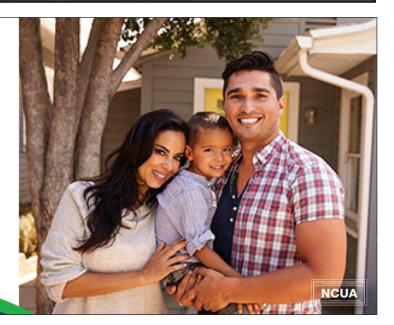












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#### **Times Feature**



Councilwoman **Sylvia Arenas** welcomes the community at the Evergreen Village Sqare Holiday Festivities. *Photo courtesy Steve Natale Photography* 

#### **Holiday**

Continued from page 1

room. It makes it a much more comfortable situation."

The chairs filled up and the kids sat up front on the floor to enjoy the acts. Ooh's and Ahhh's could be heard as each performance was beautifully choreographed to enchant. Magic with Gerald was a hit as he had all the kids laughing at the wonder of disappearing coins and other feats of fun and mystery.

#### The Dancing Christmas Trees

The parents were smiling along and the children were mesmerized at the spinning famous Dancing Christmas Trees. They are in big demand and travel all over the world. You can see them each year at the Macy's Thanksgiving parade and it was a great treat to have them in the Evergreen Village Square Library Community room dancing to the most wonderful holiday music that was sure to make everyone warm and cozy. Each performer wore fluffy red velvet hats

and were elegant in the way they used hand motions while individually spinning, twirling and moving in unison. It was as if the three trees were attached, for their movement across the stage was flawless in nature. Glittering hoops adorned their bright festive costumes and were a feast for the eye to behold. Throughout the performance while dancing they smiled and brought in the holiday spirit for everyone.

After the next acts the puppet people began their presentation and at first they stood in front of the puppet stage and did not hide the strings of their marionettes. They hovered them over the children as they spoke with character voices which caused the suspension of disbelief in the room. The wooden snow queen came alive.

They did not disappoint as their production of "One Wacky Winter" began. Randel the puppet master was humorous and caused both children and adults to laugh when he said things like, "If anyone is not here, raise your hand." Lori helped set the stage literally by saying, "I want all the little

boys and girls who wish to see the puppet show up close to come up front now and scrunch in to watch." They joyfully did this with their parents standing on the sidelines.

Randel began the production with a whimsical flapping bird puppet and said with an enchanting voice, "Close your eyes and imagine, have you got your thoughts, open your eyes now and take your imagination out, now think of how many things you can imagine that we will make happier in this production." Just then the strings on the puppets could no longer be seen because imagination took over.

"We are taking you to Snowy Mountain (this was the art on the stage above the puppets). You will see the Grunch, we call him the Grunch due to copyright restrictions (that got a few laughs as did other fun comments). The Grunch is the meanest and he is the nastiness. The Snow Queen is here and she brings us all the snow each year," stated Randel. As they spoke everyone felt so happy. After the performance Rhonda, the other master puppeteer from Fairyland explained, "It is so much fun to bring the characters to life because we get to watch the children's imagination come alive." Randel said, "We love to bring joy to the children and see them smiling especially during the holiday season!"

Inside the library Councilwoman Arenas' Team helped all with safety information at the craft table. One parent with a six year old stated, "We come to this event each year and we appreciate Councilwoman Arenas help in gathering the community together."

"I had a great time making arts and crafts with our Evergreen families to celebrate the holidays at the Evergreen Village Square Holiday Festival," Arenas said. "What makes Evergreen so special is that it's made up of a tight-knit community of neighbors that can come together for events like these. I'm proud to support another year of the Evergreen Village Square Holiday Festival that helped to bring more joy to our district through family-friendly fun."

As the afternoon went on and the drizzle outside paused, the cozy fun puppet show came to a close. The children were smiling and content from attending the Holiday Festivities Event in the Evergreen Village Square.

Be sure to come next year, your family will love it! "Like" the Evergreen Village Square Facebook page for ongoing information about events at the square!





Clockwise, from above: The Dancing Trees were a big hit; Magic with Gerald was a hit as he had all the kids laughing at the wonder of disappearing coins and other feats of magic; partyers enjoy the festivities; and the puppet show proved popular. *Photo courtesy Steve Natale Photography* 





#### **Times Feature**

## **Evergreen School District School Consolidation Meeting Schedule**

Dec. 19, 2019: Community Information Meeting, 6 p.m., Quimby Oak Gym, 3190 Quimby Rd., San Jose

Jan. 8, 2020: Superintendent's School Consolidation Advisory Committee Meeting

- Public Input Session\* 4-4:30 p.m., ESD Board Room (Educational Services Bldg.), 3188 Quimby Rd., San Jose
- Committee Meeting\*\* 4:30-6 p.m., Quimby Oak Middle School Library, 3190 Quimby Rd., San Jose

#### Jan. 15, 2020: Superintendent's School Consolidation Committee Meeting

- Public Input Session\* 4-4:30 p.m., ESD Board Room (Educational Services Bldg.), 3188 Quimby Rd., San Jose
- Committee Meeting\*\* 4:30-6 p.m., Quimby Oak Middle School Library, 3190 Quimby Rd., San Jose

Jan. 16, 2020: Community Information Meeting, 6 p.m., Quimby Oak Gym, 3190 Quimby Rd., San Jose

Jan. 22, 2020: Superintendent's School Consolidation Advisory Committee Meeting

- Public Input Session\* 4-4:30 p.m., ESD Board Room (Educational Services Bldg.), 3188 Quimby Rd., San Jose
- Committee Meeting\*\* 4:30-6 p.m., Quimby Oak Middle School Library, 3190 Quimby Rd., San Jose. At this meeting, the Committee will determine

which specific school closures/consolidations to recommend to the Superintendent.

Jan. 23, 2020:Superintendent and district office administrators will meet with the staff, community, and families in the morning and evening at affected schools to answer questions and discuss transition plans.

Jan. 24, 2020: Superintendent and district office administrators will meet with the staff, community, and families in the morning and evening at affected schools to answer questions and discuss transition plans.

Jan. 27, 2020: 6 p.m. Board of Trustees Public Hearing, Quimby Oak Middle School Gymnasium, 3190 Quimby Rd. San Jose.

Feb. 3, 2020: 6 p.m. Board of Trustees Public Hearing, Quimby Oak Middle School Gymnasium, 3190 Quimby Rd. San Jose

Feb. 13, 2020: Board of Trustees to take action on school closures/consolidations recommended by the Superintendent's School Consolidation Advisory Committee, 6 p.m. Board Room, 3188 Quimby Road, San Jose.

Feb. 25, 2020: Community Information Meeting, 6 p.m., Quimby Oak Middle School Library, 3190 Quimby Rd., San Iose.

Mar. 25, 2020: Superintendent's School Consolidation Advisory Committee Meeting

- Public Input Session\* 4-4:30 p.m., ESD Board Room (Educational Services Bldg.), 3188 Quimby Rd., San Jose
- Committee Meeting\*\* 4:30-6 p.m., Quimby Oak Middle School Library, 3190 Quimby Rd., San Jose



#### **Speech contest winners announced by Silver Creek Academy**

fyou could plan your next class field trip, where would you go and why?

Evergreen students answered this question at Silver Creek Academy's Eighth Annual Speech Contest held at James Franklin Smith School last month.

"The speech contest was a wonderful event," said Silver Creek Academy founder and teacher Shelley Swircek. "We had more participants than ever before and we met our goal to offer the students an opportunity to challenge them and practice their speaking skills in a positive environment."

The speech competition is just one of several free events Silver Creek Academy offers throughout the year allowing students the opportunity to improve their academic and communication skills.

Founded in 2007, the Academy offers a wide variety of small-group academic courses including writing and grammar, reading comprehension, math, public speaking & debate, and HSPT, ISEE, and SSAT preparation.

Earning the top awards for their outstanding speaking skills were the following students:

#### Grade 1:

1st Aravind Manuguri 2nd Ansh Patel 3rd Natalie Lang **Grade 2:** 

1st Samarth Krishnan 2nd Deetya Agarwal 3rd Akshar Suresh

#### Grade 3:

1st Kaeya Bhide 2nd Sahana Prem 3rd Annabelle Lo **Grade 4:** 

1st Veda Bharath 2nd Niharika Bajpai 3rd Misha Kharya **Grade 5:** 

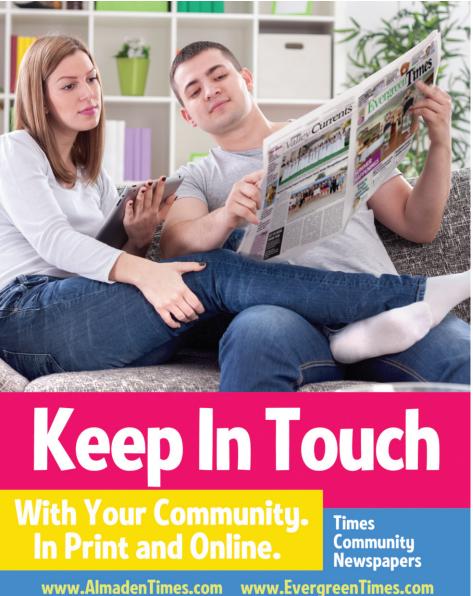
1st Kaitlin Nguyen 2nd Nathan Francis 3rd Aishni Raghuvanshi **Grade 6:** 

1st Laya Krishnan 2nd SriAditi Yellamraju 3rd Celine Tran

For more information about Silver Creek Academy's academic programs and free events, call (408) 839-5905 or SCAASanJose.







Times Feature



Debris clogged drain on Yerba Buena Road.

### Flood culprit: leaves

By Frank Shortt

Times staff writer

eavy winds preceding the latest storms practically denuded all the deciduous trees lining area sidewalks in the Evergreen and other neighborhoods

Most long abiding residents of these communities wondered why the City of San Jose did not send sweepers to clean up the ever deepening piles of leaves and debris. The many sycamore trees along the streets of San Jose have long been notorious for causing backups in storm drains. This brings flooding as encroaching storms dump their moisture on city streets, making no difference where the moisture goes.

After the heavy rains, crews of city workers could be seen cleaning drains that would have probably been clear had the maintenance crews been proactive in preventive maintenance. This is the age old

story of city maintenance crews, "too little too late!"

Is this problem caused by understaffed crews? Is it a problem of financing? Or, could it be poor planning on the part of city leaders? Nevertheless, flooding occurred in many neighborhoods of San Jose that, with a little planning could have been prevented, or at the least, lessened. Local news broadcasts have shown flooding in several areas of San Jose, mostly because of clogged storm drains.

Efforts on the part of maintenance crews are planning to clear all the clogged drains before the next major storm on the horizon. All the past debris, leaves and trash are on the way to the bay, what didn't get caught in the drains!

Could this be fulfilling the old saying, "Closing the barn door after the cows got out?"

For some residents, new efforts are a little too late!



#### Times **News**



#### Rotary's Crab Feed a success

**By Sara Calkins** Rotary Club of San Jose East/Evergreen

he Rotary Club of San Jose East/Evergreen held another successful Crab Feed Fundraiser at the South Bay Yacht Club with a capacity crowd of happy attendees on Dec. 15.

Replete with good food and warm fellowship, those who worked on the event as well as all those who came to support it, left satisfied that everyone participated in improving lives in San Jose and beyond.

Funds raised bring new school backpacks to local children in need, feed families that are un-housed, support student-parents striving to complete their high school educations. Lo-

cal high school students learn community service, compassion and leadership skills at an all expenses paid, week-long camp.

Speakers for our "Lunch and Learn" meetings on the third Thursday of the month are acknowledged for sharing their time and tal-

ent by a club donation to Rotary International's important Polio Plus program. Rotarians have been the network of volunteers throughout the globe who get the precious vaccines distributed to all the world's children. As a founding partner of the Global Polio Eradication Initiative, we've helped to reduce polio cases by more than 99.9 percent. It's crucial to eliminate polio from the last three countries where it remains endemic and to keep other countries polio-free.

There are more projects coming up and another Crab Feed in March. Please check our website for schedules: www.rotarysjee.org. Visitors are always welcome - as are new members!



#### Spreading joy to the community

Millbrook Elementary School students perform Christmas carols for the residents of Sunrise Villa assisted living facility in Evergreen.

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Report



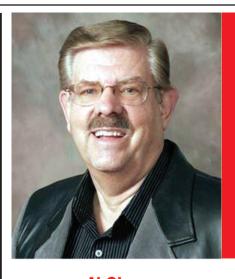
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Times **Advice** 

### Porch pirates strike 26 million Americans yearly

id you know that porch pirates strike more than 26 million Americans each year?

That is an extremely unsettling number and with the holidays approaching package theft is only going to rise.

SafeWise.com took a closer look into where these thieves are striking in order to offer recommendations on ways to combat this threat over the holidays. By comparing FBI Crime Data to Google Trends searches for "missing package" and "stolen package,"SafeWise was able to compare metro area package theft rates for the entire year and compare those rates to holiday-specific rates of theft. Most of the top 10 metros for package theft during the entire year also found their way into the top 10 for the holiday season.

These are the top 10 metros where porch pirates strike most:

- 1. San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose, California
- 2. Salt Lake City, Utah
- 3. Portland, Oregon
- 4. Baltimore, Maryland5. Seattle-Tacoma, Washington
- 6. Chicago, Illinois
- 7. Austin, Texas
- 8. Denver, Colorado
- 9. Los Angeles, California
- 10. Sacramento-Stockton-Modesto, California

The San Francisco-Oakland-San Jose area has the most package theft in the nation for the second year in a row, and a larceny-theft rate of 24.3 incidents per 1,000 people. More than half of the metros where porch pirates strike the most are also high-tech hubs.

#### What to do if you're sure your package is gone

#### 1. File a Police Report

If you seriously suspect something has been stolen from your stoop, call the police. Without witnesses, they won't be able to do much, but they will take note of the incident.

If others in your neighborhood report the same problems, then they'll be more likely to investigate and find the crooks who did it.

Filing a police report can also be useful if you try to make an insurance claim on the missing delivery.

Help stay on top of thefts and other shady activities in your neighborhood with the Ring Neighbors app. Whether you have the Ring Alarm security system or not, the app can still alert you to incidents (like package theft) in your neighborhood.

But it relies on self-reports, so be sure to do your part to help keep your neighbors in the know.

#### 2. Contact the Sender

If the missing package is something you ordered, you want to reach out to the seller and let them know that your package hasn't been delivered.

Some companies will send out a replacement right away, no questions asked.

But not every company will send you a replacement item or refund your money.

Be sure to hold on to any proof you have that can help support your claim.

- If you got a notice of delivery, but the package isn't where they said it was delivered, take a snap of it to include in your report.
- Keep your order confirmation number and any other details that helps the company track down your order.
- Store delivery numbers and information so you can share that with the company and they can reach out to the carrier.

If the stolen package was sent from a friend or relative, let them know it hasn't been delivered. They can reach out to the seller or the carrier to help figure out what happened.

#### 3. Contact Amazon about a stolen package

See PIRATES, next page



#### **Times Local News**

#### **Pirates**

Continued from previous page

Amazon is known for its fast Prime shipping and basically no-questions-asked philosophy. If their tracking shows a package was delivered, but you can't find it, you should be able to get a refund pretty quickly and easily.

After 36 hours have passed since the expected delivery date, you should contact Amazon. If packages are late, they'll usually credit your account for the inconvenience. The company handles all the details with third-party sellers (if not their own services), so you won't need to get involved.

#### **Pro Tip**

If you do a lot of shopping on Amazon, you might want to look into Amazon Lockers. These are secure kiosks where you can send your Amazon packages and pick them up at your convenience. Best of all—using an Amazon Locker is completely free.

#### 4. Contact FedEx about a stolen package

FedEx makes it easy to file lost package claims. If you ordered or shipped something from the US through FedEx, you can file a lost package claim online.

FedEx is also pretty speedy. It normally takes just five to seven business days to resolve a claim.

As the sender, recipient, or third-party, you'll have 60 calendar days to file a claim for damaged or missing contents and up to nine months to file lost item reports. Just make sure you keep any and all packaging or evidence because FedEx might ask to see it

#### 5. Contact UPS about a stolen package

UPS has different policies for lost or stolen packages depending on whether your package was shipped in the US or internationally.

Domestic Shipping: If you order something domestically and it is missing, you can't file a missing package claim until 24 hours after it was supposed to be delivered.

International Shipping: Claims for internationally purchased products are trickier. For these, you won't be able to file a claim, and it could be difficult to get a refund or replacement.

All Claims: Once you file a missing package claim, UPS will investigate. It's really difficult to find out if a package was lost or stolen. Regardless, all missing packages—for whatever reason—are handled this way. If you ordered the product, you should get in contact with the seller, since UPS will issue the refund to them.

#### 6. Contact USPS about a Stolen Package

USPS lost packages can be more challenging than packages lost by other carriers because it's trickier to file a claim with

While its protocol for refunding damaged packages is clear, its process for stolen mail is not. If your package was shipped and delivered by USPS, but it's missing, you'll need to file a claim regardless.

- $\bullet$  Have the tracking number ready
- Be ready to show proof of insurance
- Find proof of the value of the item, if possible

If your package was stolen and there's

evidence, take photos and submit those too.

If your USPS lost package was insured, you should be able to get a refund directly from USPS. If your USPS package was stolen, you should be able to go through the seller to receive a replacement or refund.

#### Prevent package theft

What can you do to Prevent Package Theft (or Track Down Those Porch Pirates!)

#### 1. Catch Them on Video Ring Video Doorbell

If you have a doorbell camera or an outdoor security camera, use it to your benefit. If an expected package is nowhere to be found, watch the footage to see if the carrier dropped off the pack-



age or if someone walked away with it.

If you spot theft, report it to your local police department. Or, if you can prove no one ever showed up at your door, the carrier (if you're the shipper) or shipper (if you're the recipient) will be forced to re-

#### 2. Shine a light on the situation

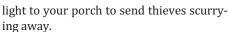
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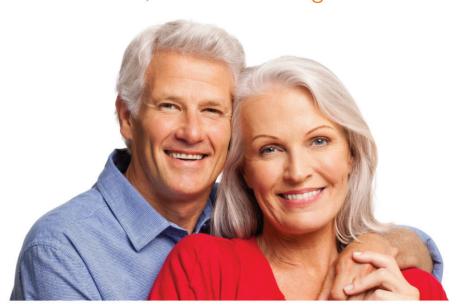
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#### **Times Community**



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I can't tell you how many times we've been asked this question. The easiest way to safeguard your road trip is to let us perform a full safety inspection on your car at least two weeks or so before your trip. Having us take a look at your car the day before your trip is not a good idea! If there's a problem, it could take some time to fix. A big, last-minute repair could really throw a wrench into your vacation plans or force you to delay your trip. Or you may even have to rent a car at the last minute, and that can get expensive! So let us give your car the once-over at least two weeks before your trip. In a safety inspection, we will check everything from fluid levels, belts, and hoses to lights, tires, and brakes (just to name a few) to make sure your car is ready for the road.

No matter how much maintenance you do on a car before a trip, there's no guarantee that you won't have auto troubles out on the road. Having a roadside survival kit at hand and a Roadside Assistance Plan will make an unexpected breakdown a lot less

stressful. Make sure your kit includes (at a minimum) a blanket, a flashlight with fresh batteries, extra batteries and some extra food and water. Keep a copy of your car's warranty, insurance and contact information for your emergency roadside assistance service in the glove box. Whether you have roadside assistance through your car's warranty or insurance or you belong to an auto care club, make sure you have the emergency contact number with you at all times. We recommend keeping these documents in a poly project jacket or a travel organizer for extra protection from accidental spills and damage. Lastly, bring along a spare set of keys to your car and put that spare key in a magnetic car key hider somewhere on your vehicle in case you lose your keys. Few things spoil a family vacation more quickly than car trouble far from home. Following these pretrip maintenance tips will ensure that your car is ready for the long road-trip ahead!

If you're concerned about your vehicle for whatever reason, stop by at: 3519 San Felipe Rd, in Evergreen. We'll be happy to assist you. If you have a question regarding your vehicle email us at sosautorepair2004@gmail.com, if your question is published you'll receive a free oil change! Your friends at SOS AUTO REPAIR

SOS Auto Repair is located at: San Felipe Road, San Jose, Ca. 95135: (408) 477-2242



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#### **Times Community**



#### Seva

Continued from page 1 was taking his seven year old son to a tennis tournament, his little son asked him "Dad, what about homeless people? Who will feed

homeless people? Who will feed them today?" His son's words had a powerful impact on Nathan's mind," as stated on their website.

#### What is Community Seva

For six years Community Seva has grown dramatically. It was explained that the word "Seva" means selfless service which is performed with no expectation of any kind of return. They are not a religious or faith-based organization; they welcome all people to volunteer and contribute with their cause. All donation monies are plowed back into what they do for those who face desperate situations in their lives.

#### Nathan Ganeshan founder and president speaks

"In the decade of experience, I have been serving homeless individuals; I have personally had a

chance to talk to so many homeless individuals whose stories have made me choke up. Speaking to them warms my heart and always inspires me to do more," stated Ganeshan.

"A few people who spoke to me at a local shelter told me that they were absolutely tired of eating the sandwiches or rolls or pizza all the time. They told me, 'You guys cook and serve such a variety of nutritious healthy dishes. It is awesome.' One person told me that he has allergies to gluten, and some of them have other dietary needs, so our meals make a big difference to their lives. One of them said, 'Is my Mom here somewhere? and said, only my Mom

can cook food like this' and then he teared up."

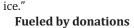
"When we asked a lady living in an encampment, what we could do to help her, she said, 'I need anything you can give me to protect myself.' It took me a minute to realize that she was afraid and felt insecure and vulnerable living on the streets. She continued to say that it was not her choice to live on the streets, she doesn't want to live on the streets, but now that she was there, she wanted to protect herself. Imagine a women sleeping in the dark every night feeling unsafe and afraid!," stated Ganeshan.

Ganeshan continued, "One man I spoke to said he became homeless because he lost his job and he sent his family to stay with his wife's parents so that they did not have to face living on the street. Soon after, his wife ended up divorcing him and he ultimately became homeless. It was not his choice either. Imagine losing your job, then your house and finally your wife! It is so hard to recover

from that. I can share a thousand such stories - experience after experience, but the simple, loud and clear message is that homelessness is not a choice, circumstances and situations make a person become homeless and as responsible citizens of this country, we need to do our part, we need to act with kindness and we need to act with generosity."

#### City commendation awarded by Councilwoman Arenas

"I'm proud to honor Community Seva with this commendation because of their selfless service to our unhoused community across San Jose" remarked Councilwoman Sylvia Arenas. "Volunteers with Community Seva have served over 100,000 meals and I'm grateful to also partner with them to help provide school supplies for our families during National Night Out. This commendation is a testament to the inspiring leadership of Nathan Ganeshan, Community Seva founder, and the countless volunteers that help to build a better San Jose through their serv-



"Community Seva has grown exponentially in the last six years. Look at our trajectory of growth and service. We will beat any Internet startup in the Valley with our numbers; from 100 to 100,000 meals in 6 years. From 1 volunteer to 2,000 volunteers, we have distributed over 6000 backpacks and hygiene kits and our shower service will touch four digits very soon. All these achievements could not be done without all of your support and without the support from the core volunteer team," Ganeshan stated.

#### Showers on wheels

Ganeshan explained some refuse to take a



Nathan Ganeshan, founder of Seva.

shower because they don't have a single change of clothes. "It was very heart breaking to see this. We bought a coat and a pair of pants for a man to change into so that he could finally take a shower. Isn't it hard to imagine owning just a single set of clothes that you wear day after day regardless of sweat or dirt or anything else? We are increasing the frequency of the shower facilities from once a month to 9 times a month - I repeat 9 times a month. This will allow our homeless brothers and sisters to take showers more frequently helping them stay clean and healthy, and maintain hygiene," stated Ganeshan.

**Homeless situation growing** "The homelessness count is in-

creasing year after year, causing even death on the streets. The homeless count is 9000+ right here in Santa Clara county. Just in Santa Clara county alone, more than 100 homeless individuals have died this past year. Community Seva is working to secure a larger commercial kitchen so that we are not dependent on any shelter's facility, so that we can cook and serve more food to the homeless. We are confident of identifying a commercial kitchen very soon and then the kitchen will need to be equipped well to handle the capacity at our end, and to meet the standards of the county's health department," stated Ganeshan.

See next page











#### Times **Community**

#### Panelists enlighten

The event showcased the positive impact created over the past years with the vast network of volunteers, supporters and community members. There were four panelists which included Ganeshan.

#### **Pastor Scott Wagers**

Pastor Wagers is founder and Senior Pastor of CHAM Deliverance Ministry. Their website states, "Silicon Valley has one of the worst homeless problems in the nation. Because of incredibly high rents and very low vacancy, people are becoming homeless who have never been homeless before. We need your help now more than ever to bring necessities to those who are trying to survive life on the streets."

"Thank you for your invitation to speak Brother Nathan," Wagers said. "I've been on the front line for 25 years. The problem is greater now. Thoughts and prayers matter; 6,200 homeless; 10,000 in county; and 158 homeless died some of which we advocated for. The picture is grim but there is hope. How do we make a difference? The front line is where the battle will be won or lost. All people are equal and that includes the houseless. Treat people with absolute dignity and it transforms them. As Martin Luther King said, 'You have to make a human connection."

#### **Individuals donate \$10K**

Up on the screen slides with photos showed what donation monies create. Many in the audience raised their hands to give a donation and placed checks silently in envelopes. Some raised their hands to donate \$10,000 in which all of their donations were assured to go back into serving the less fortunate with no employee earning a wage at Community

#### **Shaunn Carwright**

Carwright who works on rent control, tenant's rights and unhoused issues stated, "The thing I see most at Community Seva is humanity. She explained that Community Seva goes out of its way to make eye contact with everyone and offers smiles of hope. She said, "Empathy is key!" Carwright educated that homeless women can get into use of drugs to stay awake at night to better protect themselves so that they are not abused. "There are a lot of ways homeless women can be intimidated. Once women are addicted its hard for them to get off of it for it is a coping mechanism."

#### Homeless individual speaks of actual experiences

He asked the audience, "What does a houseless person look like?" The answer was given when he said, "I'm just a regular person

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trying to make it day by day, just unhoused so we don't know what a houseless person looks like, they look like you or I." When recalling what it felt like to be homeless he said, "I felt like the world gave up on me and I didn't know where to get help." He painted the truthful picture of what goes on in the lives of the houseless and expressed such experiences can lead to mental breakdowns. Today he's working full time with a union job.

It was explained at the event, homelessness does not belong to a certain group of people instead it transcends race and is a conversation that needs to be had. "You will get to see where your dollar goes when you volunteer with us as the need is local - this seva happens locally. That's the beauty of our organization," stated Gane-

Editor's Note: To learn more about Community Seva and how to donate, visit their website: communityseva.org.

### **Evergreen Business** Round-up

Caspian Mediterranean Restaurant was sold earlier this month to the Ngo family.

The new restaurant is called AK Kitchen featuring Vietnamese food, including PHO. The restaurant is currently in a soft opening offering breakfast, lunch and dinner. The official grand opening is scheduled in January.

The only Mediterranean restaurant in Evergreen, which is operated by the original owners of Caspian, is Sophie's Mediterranean Grill. Sophie's is located at Evergreen Village Square.

Cayda restaurant, which closed last month on White and Aborn Rd., is reportedly being transformed into a Cajun Seafood Restaurant, featuring Jambalaya, shrimp, and lobster. The grand opening is expected in mid-January.

#### **Edible Arrangements closes**

Edible Arrangements, located at Evergreen Village Square has closed. The store was known for its popular and clever arrangements and gift baskets made up of gourmet fresh fruit arrangements, including chocolate dipped strawberries.

The phone number is still working, but customers are reporting that the owners have shut the business down with no explanation. The store opened in October 2006.

If you would like to contribute to the Evergreen Business Roundup, email your news to: editorial@ timesmediainc.com.



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tions, informative lectures, and even an occasional karaoke night--all in a wholesome environment

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2nd Sunday in Worship: Folks Choir and Potluck Sunday. Tuesdays, AA Meetings 8:15 - 9:15 PM. Wednesdays, 9:30 AM,

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in Almaden (ECA), we are iovful followers of Jesus Christ. Through worship, study, fellowship and outreach, we strive to nurture and grow a strong faith community of believers, a family of all ages, where each member feels welcomed. loved, valued and empowered to serve. Children are especially welcomed and cherished as an important part of God's family. All junior high and senior high students are welcome to participate in our Youth Groups. During the school year we have joint Sunday School with our sister church, the Congregational Church of Almaden Valley, UCC. The Episcopal Church in Almaden offers the following regular opportunities for worship: Sunday at 7:30AM and 10:45AM, Holy Communion service. Each Sunday service is followed by a coffee hour for friendship and conversation.



#### **EVERGREEN ISLAMIC**

**CENTER (EIC)** Visit our Web Site at www.eicsanjose.org 2486 Ruby Ave, San Jose, CA 95148. (408) 239-6668 "As-Salaamu-Alaikum," the Arabic greeting meaning "Peace be upon you". Announcement: Evergreen Islamic Center (EIC) will hold its annual fundraising dinner on December 7th. 2019 at Chandni Restaurant located at 5748 Mowry School Rd.. Newark, CA at 5:30 PM. Please purchase ticket online from EIC's website and bring friends & family members to the event. Services: Five daily prayers, Quranic/Islamic studies for all age groups, weekly seminars, presentations and much more. Learn about our weekly

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3636 Gurdwara Ave San Jose, CA 95148 The word Sikh (see-kh) means "disciple" or "student." A Sikh is a practitioner of the faith founded in the 15th century by Guru Nanak in Punjab of old British India. A Guru who is a "teacher" or "enlightener" completes the relationship of teaching and learning. Sikhism is monotheistic and stresses the equality of all men and women. Sikhs believe in three basic principles; meditating on the name of God (praving), earning a living by honest means and sharing the fruits of one's labor with others. Currently there are close to one million Sikhs living in the USA and Canada and 25 million Sikhs living around the world. Sikhism is the 5th largest religion in the world. At the Gurdwara (House of God) in San Jose we welcome all. We pray daily for peace and prosperity for everybody in the world. Come to visit and enjoy Langer (food) in our kitchen

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### Calendar for sale featuring wildlife in Evergreen Valley

The 2020 Calendar featuring wildlife pictures taken by Lou Alexander is now available for \$23.95. About \$5 goes to the Villages Medical Auxiliary. The calendar is on the far right of the first row at www.zazzle.com/store/thevillagesvma There are also some small note cards for sale on the site, all featuring scenes from inside The Villages.





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	Street Address	Price	Bds	Bths	SqFt	Lot Size
	6839 Turturici Court	\$2,360,000	6	5 1	4,884	12,786 Lot SqFt
	4751 San Lucas Way	\$1,860,000	6	4 0	3,518	6,077 Lot SqFt
	5971 Valley Meadow Court	\$1,800,000	4	2 1	2,540	23,225 Lot SqFt
	4287 Littleworth Way	\$1,670,000	4	3 0	2,811	8,028 Lot SqFt
	4577 Encanto Way	\$1,590,000	4	3 0	2,117	6,002 Lot SqFt
	3298 Pappani Way	\$1,525,000	4	2 1	2,143	4,714 Lot SqFt
	4147 Voltaire Street	\$1,500,000	4	3 1	2,730	4,730 Lot SqFt
	3667 Lago De Bracciano Street	\$1,457,000	4	3 0	2,542	4,840 Lot SqFt
	4131 Arezzo Pointe Lane	\$1,440,000	4	3 0	2,757	4,620 Lot SqFt
	354 Aborn Road	\$1,340,000	3	2 0	672	2.62 Acres
	3571 Springbrook Avenue	\$1,300,000	4	3 0	2,442	8,800 Lot SqFt
	5310 Knights Estate	\$1,225,000	3	2 0	1,622	6,034 Lot SqFt
	9057 Village View Loop	\$1,225,000	2	2 1	2,224	2,770 Lot SqFt
١	3107 Oakgate Way	\$1,220,000	4	3 0	2,021	6,132 Lot SqFt
١	2733 Gilham Way	\$1,125,000	4	2 1	1,991	3,238 Lot SqFt
	3216 Vinifera Drive	\$1,095,003	3	2 1	1,626	1,144 Lot SqFt
	3960 Mosher Drive	\$1,060,000	3	2 1	1,485	2,053 Lot SqFt
	3426 Kohler Road	\$990,000	4	2 1	1,973	6,323 Lot SqFt
	2844 Ivy Estates Court	\$984,750	4	2 0	1,680	6,941 Lot SqFt
	8719 McCarty Ranch Drive	\$975,000	2	2 1	2,209	2,718 Lot SqFt

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5903 Gleneagles Circle	\$2,350,000	4	4 1	4,073	11,122 Lot SqFt
1631 Hill Top View Court	\$2,280,000	5	3 1	3,902	11,763 Lot SqFt
1535 Rangewood Drive	\$2,150,000	5	3 1	4,023	8,199 Lot SqFt
5617 Snowdon Place	\$2,100,000	4	3 1	3,429	7,128 Lot SqFt
5647 Snowdon Place	\$1,994,000	4	3 0	2,833	8,446 Lot SqFt
1587 Silver Ranch Lane	\$1,925,000	5	4 0	3,277	5,822 Lot SqFt
1439 Trestlewood Drive	\$1,410,000	4	2 1	2,459	4,801 Lot SqFt
6624 Gravina Loop	\$1,346,000	4	2 1	2,567	15,893 Lot SqFt
6113 Country Club Parkway	\$1,235,000	3	2 0	2,332	2,750 Lot SqFt
724 Sirica Way	\$1,235,000	5	3 1	2,753	11,000 Lot SqFt
1262 Thornbury Lane	\$1,190,000	3	3 0	2,234	5,162 Lot SqFt
2264 Silver Terrace Way	\$945,000	3	3 0	1,803	1,502 Lot SqFt
5857 Marshwell Way	\$900,000	4	2 0	1,355	5,774 Lot SqFt

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from Eddie Oberoi and family!



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