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Almaden Times

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A dream come true New service dedicated to providing quality education in the absence of schooling

The idea of tutoring children was initially the dream of a small group of high schoolers. And that's all it was at the time: a dream.

However, once school closures were announced for the San Jose Unified School District, an opportunity arose. From this opportunity arose the manifestation of that dream, a program that would become known as Valley Tutoring.

With widespread school shutdowns, the need for education grew tenfold, and with it, the demand for free tutoring services. Capitalizing on this opportunity, a team of five Leland High School students who would form the backbone of Valley Tutoring, Bobak Pourrahimi (Founder), Brian Kim (Co-Founder), Edward Hwang (Director of Operations), Parthiv Seetharaman (Director of Technology), and Dhruv Anish (Director of Public Relations) decided to create Almaden Valley Tutoring. In addition to these five students, the team would introduce Sparsh Garg (Director of Advertising), Riya Shukla (Co-Director of Advertising), Dhruva Navin Chander (Director of Tutoring), and additional members who would help the program grow in size and would jump-start the program.

"In the beginning, there was a lot of doubt surrounding whether or not we would have an audience or not. Progress was slow, and we had very few people even aware of our program. But once the ball got rolling, it was like the

See *TUTORING*, page 14



AN INCREASING CONCERN

Balancing public health and economic recovery is tricky

By Lorraine Gabbert
Senior Staff Writer

Balancing public health and a healthy economy during the pandemic is an increasing concern as sheltering in place has continued for more than three months in Santa Clara County.

County and city representatives recently shared their perspectives during an online Almaden Valley Community Association meeting.

"This pandemic is not affecting just our health, but our livelihoods, income, jobs and freedoms," said Johnny Khamis, councilmember, City of San Jose.

On June 5, a county public health order

allowed for the reopening (within guidelines) of outdoor dining, retail in-store shopping, childcare, summer camp and summer school, manufacturing and warehousing, house cleaning, shoe repair, watch repair and pet grooming.

"The concept is small steps at a time because we know that we're having significant risks added to the community by opening up and relaxing criteria," said Dr. Jeff Smith, county executive officer, County of Santa Clara. "We're very concerned about a second spike coming and potentially coming soon."

As of June 22, there have been 3,606
See *RECOVERY*, page 16

Top, left: "We're very concerned about a second spike coming and potentially coming soon," said Dr. Jeff Smith, county executive officer, County of Santa Clara. Below, left: "Decisions made to protect people have consequences," said Victor Farlie, senior executive analyst, Office for Economic Development, City of San Jose.

Protests in Almaden support solidarity, equality and justice for all

Racial harassment incidents in U.S.A and Almaden spark outrage among residents

By Aroshi Ghosh
Special to the Times

More than 175 peaceful protestors assembled at Leland High School (on the corner of Camden and Via Valiente) at 10 a.m., June 13 expressing their feelings and horrified shock of George Floyd's death.

A local resident, Rajni Navin Chander, coordinated the protest to support the #blacklivesmatter movement. Members of the Gen Z joined in as well with enthusiasm and many familiar faces of Leland students were seen in the crowd.

Once assembled, the voices of

face-masked Almaden residents ranging in age from eight to more than 70 years old shouted slogans which reverberated throughout the neighborhood while marching the five mile route to join the frustrated voices of millions of people of color across the country and around the world.

What prompted some protesters to express their feelings Saturday morning was a post on Nextdoor.com summarizing an incident of racial harassment of a mixed race family in Almaden. Many residents were outraged and flocked to the comments section in a show of support for the family. The combination of the racial incident in Almaden and Floyd's murder as well as other incidents of police brutality against people of color

See *PROTESTS*, page 2



An Almaden #BlackLivesMatter march was held on June 13.
Photo by Ashit Tandon

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Times **Community**



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GALLEGOS, PARENT



Local residents gather for a Black Lives Matter march at Leland High School on the morning of June 13. Photo by Ashit Tandon

Protests

Continued from page 1

seemed to have hit a nerve.

The slogans spanned the spectrum:

"One race, human race"

"Black Lives Matter"

"Racism is the pandemic"

"No one is free until we are all free"

"Together we are stronger"

"Silence is violence"

"No justice, no peace"

Many protestors said they wanted to participate because of the systemic racism that seems to have permeated our society. For this quiet, tech suburbia, this moment seemed like a wake-up call to challenge the status quo and enable diverse voices to be heard.

When the protests first started in Minnesota, no one thought that people in the affluent Almaden community would care and most believed that the rage would die down after a few days of rioting and looting. No one could have imagined that #blacklivesmatter would impact the people here where the percentage of African Americans is less than .05 percent.

Yet, despite their divergent political beliefs, people in Almaden came together to support the protest against racism. According to the organizers' post on Facebook, "folks from as far as Fremont and LA had joined this show of strength and not one person had dropped off despite some suffering physical adversities. A few bystanders also joined the protest along with some furry friends and the majority of traffic (cars, bicyclists,

walkers) showed signs of support." There was some opposition by people who shouted obscenities and held up white power symbols; but they were in a minority.

Since the point of the protest was to show solidarity and educate our neighbors by providing a glimpse of the real faces that felt impacted, it was considered a major success. In many ways, the protest was an affirmation of our common humanity - that we had not forgotten our values and principles.

For most Americans, this is a pivotal moment in history. The unfolding events are inspiring reform. Many realize that the racial injustices highlighted by recent events are not just a "Black" problem or a "poverty" problem. Silence is betrayal; a betrayal of common humanity, our community and history.

The residents of Almaden realized that if today we cannot bring ourselves to show support for people who are attacked, victimized, and killed, no one will show support for us when we face similar attacks. When we do not oppose racism, we are culpable. By overlooking or justifying incidents of racism, we are quietly condoning it.

Cynicism often makes people wonder. Why are we protesting when Floyd's murderers have already been charged? Many naysayers claim that the protestors do not really know what they want.

We understand that for change to happen, we must lay out the change we want. We can't just say "Stop being racist." Rather we need to identify an effective plan to stop racism and "aspirations have to be translated into specific laws and institutional practices."



Protesters held up signs with numerous slogans at an Almaden Black Lives Matter march held on June 13. The slogans spanned the spectrum, including: "Racism is the Pandemic," "Say Their Names," and "Being Black Should Not Be A Crime in America." Photo by Ashit Tandon



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San José Unified to continue to offer free and reduced-price meals school year 2020-2021

San Jose Unified School District announces its policy to serve nutritious meals every school day under the National School Lunch Program, School Breakfast Program, and CACFP Afterschool Supper and Snack Program.

Effective July 1, 2020 through June 30, 2021, children are eligible for free or reduced-price meals if the household income is less than or equal to the federal guidelines.

Households do not need to turn in an application when the household receives a notification letter saying that all children automatically qualify for free meals when any household member receives benefits from CalFresh, CalWORKs, or FDPIR.

Children who meet the definition of foster, homeless, migrant, or run-away, and children enrolled in their school's Head Start program are eligible for free meals. Contact school officials if any child in the household is not on the notification letter. The household must let school officials know if they do not want to receive free or reduced-price meals.

Applications will be sent to the household with a letter about the free and reduced-price meal program. Households that want to apply for meal benefits, must fill out one application for all children in the household and give it to the nutrition office at 855 Lenzen Avenue, San Jose, CA 95126.

For a simple and secure method to apply, use the online application at <https://nutrition.sjUSD.org/fma>. Contact Student Nutrition at 408-535-6021 for help filling out the application. The school will let the family know if the application is approved or denied for free or reduced-price meals.

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Valley Currents

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

'It feels like Christmas': Santa Clara County malls finally reopen

By Lorraine Gabbert

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

After three months of closure during the coronavirus pandemic, Westfield shopping centers in Santa Clara County, including Oakridge and Valley Fair, reopened for business Monday, June 15.

"Westfield is excited to open our doors again... as we begin our initial recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic," said Leah Heil, vice president of shopping center management.

Anticipation ran through the crowd of customers waiting for the Westfield Oakridge doors to open at 11 a.m. Smiling Westfield employees greeted them. Posted safety guidelines included mandatory face masks. T Keys were on sale that can open doors and press keypads without finger contact, with a portion of the profits going to No Kid Hungry, which provides meals for children in need.

Additional Westfield safety practices include increased frequency of cleaning, limited number of customers entering and in lines, social distancing and additional hand sanitizer stations. Most fitting rooms are closed, and some retailers decided not to permit clothing returns.

"We have been working closely with our retailers to welcome back guests and are excited to come together as a community again," said Julian Esposito, Westfield Oakridge general manager.

"We understand the entire shopping experience is going to be a bit different than what we're used to," he continued, "and together we're doing our best to ensure the best experience possible in a healthy, clean and safe environment for customers as we reopen our doors."

Customers strolled through the uncrowded corridors, delighting in their new-found freedom.

"It feels like it's Christmas," said customer Janice Fontanetti, who was shopping with her dog, Dolly. "I want to cry."

Fontanetti said it felt good to be walking the halls again and said she appreciated Westfield's safety precautions.

Customer Mikaela Lin said it was nice getting out after being inside for so long, but said it felt different walking around and seeing everyone wearing masks.

Although the Apple store, Macy's, Old Navy and Papaya were open on Monday, most stores, including Forever 21, GameStop, H&M, Loft and Nordstrom Rack plan to open Thursday.

Esposito said the mall is opening in phases to give retailers time to reconfigure their stores to meet social distancing guidelines, train employees in safety measures and bring in the latest inventory.

During the initial reopening period, the centers will be open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Monday through Saturday, and noon to 6 p.m. on Sunday.

Sean Kang, district manager of De Masqe, said he struggled financially and missed working during the closure, so he is grateful the women's



Westfield shopping centers reopened Monday, June 15 including Westfield Valley Fair and Westfield Oakridge. Photos by Lorraine Gabbert.

clothing store has re-opened. All 11 employees are back to work.

The store is limiting customers to 15 at a time and is not accepting clothing returns. Hand sanitizer is available on a table by the door.

"People need to socialize," Kang said. "I hope everyone enjoys shopping."

Customer Arlene Regalado said it "felt good and a little scary," to be shopping again, although it was difficult not being able to try on clothes.

"We're social distancing and doing what we have to do to keep safe," Regalado said.

Kristen Garcia, who shopped at clothing stores Jenn and Papaya, said she was excited to shop again but disappointed all the stores weren't open. She said she plans to return on Thursday.

Jenn employees spent the weekend cleaning and moving clothes in and out of storage. The store limited its customers to 10 at a time.

Garcia said she was searching for the perfect top.

"It's my birthday coming up, so I need a nice new shirt to go out with," she said.

She had faith in the safety measures in place.

"I think if everyone stays socially distanced and follows common sense, everything will be OK,"



Sean Kang, district manager, De Masqe, said he is grateful the women's clothing store is open as he struggled financially and missed working.

Garcia said.

Papaya manager Young Kin said that reopening was a challenge. Last week she prepared the store for opening, cleaning and setting up the clothing displays.

"It's kind of scary, but also a relief to open," Kin said watching customers slowly trickle in.

Kin chose to open Monday — instead of Thursday — to recoup sales lost during the shutdown. As she helped check out shoppers, she kept an eye on the door to limit 45 customers at a time.

Although the reopening of local malls is a start towards normalization, safety remains paramount, managers said.

Although primarily outdoor shopping venues like Santana Row and Stanford Shopping Center were previously cleared to reopen, San Jose malls like Eastridge Center, Westfield Oakridge Mall and Westfield Valley Fair had remained closed since March.

The state's guidelines for shopping centers requires physical distancing, the universal use of face coverings, frequent opportunities for hand washing and prevention training.

Eastridge Center is now set to open 11 a.m. Wednesday. The delayed opening allowed employees time to meet the state's guidelines, according to Ashley Alexander, a publicist with NINICO Communications.

To keep people safe, nano septic skins — a material that automatically disinfects itself after each touch — will be installed at high touch points of the mall, such as door handles. Elevators will be limited to one person and three people can be six feet apart on escalators.

While operating under shorter hours, there will be a "golden hour" set aside for high-risk groups, such as seniors and those with weak immune systems to go shopping.

For those who wish to stay out of the building, stores will have assigned curbside pick-up areas for customers.

Employees will wear masks and gloves and workers' body temperatures will be checked. Additionally, a dedicated staff will continuously sanitize common areas around the center.

Reporter Katie Lauer contributed to this report.

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Times **Community**



11 year-old Almaden resident raises money for firefighters responding to recent fires

Almaden resident, 11-year-old Anjika Bansal, recently helped raise more than \$1,000 to thank all the Fire Fighters who responded to the recent fires in Almaden Valley at San Jose Fire Station No. 22 on Bose Lane.

Anjika and her neighbors were inspired by the response of multiple fire and police agencies to the recent fires that torched the Almaden Valley on June 4th, the Colleen Fire.

The money raised is being generously donated to the Fire Associates of Silicon Valley FASCV. The organization is a local group of dedicated volunteers that pro-

vides rehab and canteen support during major emergencies and pre-planned events. They have been proudly serving all Public Safety Agencies in Santa Clara County for more than 50 years.

Anjika and her mom said, "We would like to share our gratitude to all fire fighters who saved many lives on Thursday June 4th, 2020. The fire fighters did a terrific job for many long hours by saving so many lives. We have friends, family and neighbors who came forward and joined me to show our gratitude to San Jose fire fighters. With the help of so many friends, neighbors, we have collected a pool of donations."



Gavin Newsom signs law ordering mail-in ballots for November election

Gov. Gavin Newsom signed a law on June 18 requiring elections officials to mail a ballot to every registered, active voter in the state ahead of the November election.

Lawmakers passed the legislation to ensure that voters don't have to go to a polling place while the novel coronavirus is spreading at the objection of Republicans who believe the measure is "overreach."

"No one should have to risk their health — and possibly their life — to exercise their constitutional right to vote," bill co-author Assemblyman Marc Berman, D-Palo Alto, said in a release. "In the midst of a deadly

health pandemic, giving all California voters the opportunity to vote from the safety of their own home is the responsible thing to do."

A majority of Californians already vote largely by mail. In the last primary election, some 78 percent of active registered voters received a ballot in their mailbox. The concept has the support of more than 70 percent of likely voters, according to a recent poll from the Public Policy Institute of California.

In a tweet last month, President Donald Trump criticized an expanded vote-by-mail proposal as an unnecessary vulnerability to foreign interference and spread a sparsely supported claim that it's ripe for fraud.

Polling stations will still be open across California for the Nov. 3 general election.



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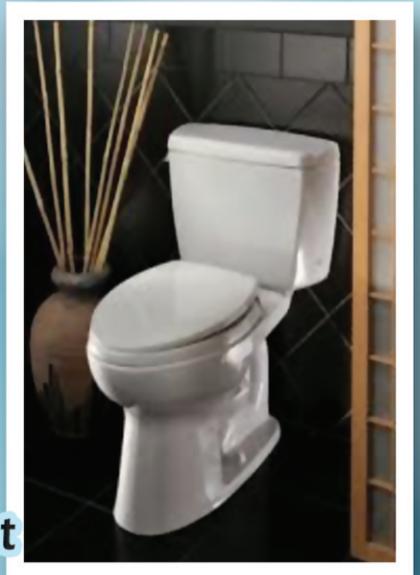
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Times **Community**



San Jose Dance Theatre gets ready for 2020-2021 season

Artistic Director - Linda Hurkmans, has announced San Jose Dance Theatre's (SJDT) 20/21 season "In Motion."

Beginning the year with the 55th production of The Nutcracker, SJDT will continue to delight audiences with the addition of the professional company lifting the production to new heights. Accompanied by the Cambrian Symphony for the seventh year, conducted by Scott Krjjen, this year's production will again bring Christmas cheer to San Jose. SJDT is the Resident Ballet Company of the 2600 seat Center for Performing Arts in downtown San Jose.

San Jose Dance Theatre will then push the limits of movement with its new Contemporary Production Innovations. Hurkmans invites leading contemporary choreographers to develop new and exciting works for the company. Choreographers include local emerging creators and SJDT's newest addition to the team - Michael Pappalardo. Pappalardo joins the organization after a successful choreographic career in Australia and Asia. He is excited to choreograph his first work on SJDT.

A bold new production will grace the stage for San Jose Dance Theatre's third production, as Hurkmans takes on Sleeping Beauty. A loved classic, this full length ballet will feature Hurkmans' unique choreographic style and story telling ability. With all new sets and costumes, this production will set a new standard for ballet in San Jose.

San Jose Dance Theatre has grown significantly over the past six years and both Hurkmans and the board of directors have worked tirelessly to build up to this exciting season. With the engagement of the organizations new Ballet Mistress - Mariana Zschoerper and Michael Pappalardo, this team will pioneer both classical and contemporary dance across the San Francisco Bay Area.

"San Jose Dance Theatre continues to grow and adding two new productions for the San Francisco Bay Area is a natural progression for the organization. Having a great team and new company at Linda's side to support this growth, I can see an exciting future of dance for San Jose." Pappalardo said.

See DANCE, page 10



Leland Junior raises awareness, funds

Aroshi Ghosh, a junior at Leland High School, created a series of original posters to raise money for the #BlackLivesMatter movement with 100 percent of the profit she earns donated to various protestor bailout funds. All posters are 16" by 20" and meant for indoor settings. If you would like to buy or check out this series, contact her through Instagram (@the_wild_green_yoshi) or by text (408-708-8064).

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Times **Community**

Dance

Continued from page 8

The company will also continue its focus on bringing ballet to the community over the next year. SJDT

Continues to deliver its extensive community participation and workshop programs to young dancers and provide performance opportunities. We will be inviting dancers to audition for roles in both The Nutcracker and Sleeping Beauty in

the coming year.

With the continued growth of the organization, new partnerships, larger community engagement, extensive outreach and a commitment to building on classical and contemporary art in 2020/2021,

San Jose Dance Theatre is set to launch into another exciting year.

The Nutcracker

Audiences across San Jose will be swept up in the magic of the season as San Jose Dance Theatre returns to the stage this December

with the 55th annual classic Christmas favorite, The Nutcracker - Performing at The San Jose Center for the Performing Arts. SJDT will entertain communities across the San Francisco Bay Area with this magical Christmas story.

The San Jose Centre for the Performing Arts December 4 - 12, 2020.

Innovations

San Jose Dance Theatre's First Annual choreographic season will break the boundaries of dance and create a new home for dance innovation for the San Francisco Bay Area. Being performed at Hammer 4 - Hammer Theatre Center, this intimate experience will set a new standard for dance in San Jose. Innovations will showcase emerging choreographers from the Bay Area and internationally renowned artists. A creative infusion of dance and movement - for one weekend only.

Hammer 4 - Hammer Theatre Center February 26 - 28, 2021.

Sleeping Beauty

With one prick of her finger, she will sleep for 100 years and awake to true love's first kiss. San Jose Dance Theatre brings the story of Sleeping Beauty to life at the Hammer Theatre Center. The beautiful Princess Aurora is cursed by the evil Carabosse to prick her finger on her 16th birthday and die. Luckily, the powerful Lilac Fairy intervenes and places the kingdom into a one hundred year slumber saving young Aurora. One of ballet's most cherished and favorite stories! Don't miss out on seeing San Jose Dance Theatre's Sleeping Beauty on stage in May of 2021.

The Hammer Theatre Center May 21 - 23, 2021.

For more information, visit: www.sjdt.org.

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Times **Community**

In Memoriam

Robert E. Hall

April 28, 1936 - June 4, 2020

Robert E. Hall, Jr. (Bob) of Almaden Valley passed away peacefully on the evening of Thursday, June 4, 2020.

Bob was born on April 28, 1936, to Robert and Alvina Hall in Sioux City, IA, the oldest of two sons. The family resided in Madison, SD. Bob graduated from the University of South Dakota in 1958 and later went on to earn his MBA from Santa Clara University.

Bob started his career in banking, moving to San Francisco in 1964 to join Crocker National Bank. In the early 1970's, he founded Almaden Oaks Realtors in South San Jose and was a top real estate broker in Silicon Valley over several decades. He also developed the Almaden Valley Professional Center building at 6501 Crown Boulevard.

Bob was very involved in his community of Almaden Valley. He was an active member of the Almaden Golf & Country Club. In addition, Bob taught real estate finance and business courses at the Santa Clara University Graduate School of Business and numerous other local colleges.

As an avid sports fan, Bob enjoyed attending 49ers, Stanford football, Giants and A's games with his children and friends. He also cherished spending time with his family at their summer home in Lake Tahoe. Many special memories were created there with his children.

Bob is survived by his three children,



Robert E. Hall III of San Francisco, Susie Hall Sawyer (Adrian) of Tiburon and Carrie Hall Cooper (Chip) of Larkspur, and three grandchildren, Riley, Drew and Kate. He is also survived by Marna Hall of San Rafael and De Phan of San Jose. Bob is preceded in death by his parents and brother John J. Hall.

A private funeral Mass will be held for Bob on Tuesday, June 16, 2020 at St. Anthony Catholic Church in San Jose. Burial to follow at Gate of Heaven Catholic Cemetery in Los Altos.

The family requests that in lieu of flowers, memorial contributions may be made to Catholic Charities of Santa Clara County (catholiccharitiesscc.org) in Bob's name.

Steven B. Lee

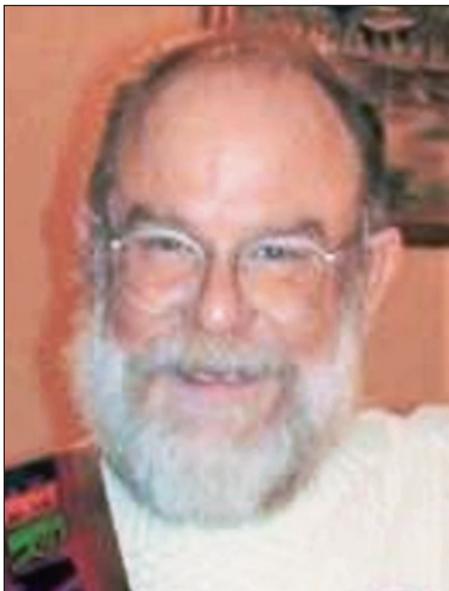
November 28, 1950 - June 8, 2020

Steven Bruce Lee passed away surrounded by family after a hard-fought battle with cancer at age 69.

Steve resided in San Jose for the majority of his life and graduated from Pioneer High School in 1968. He retired from Pacific Bell/SBC after 28 years.

Steve was happiest at Donner Lake where he loved fishing, swimming, hiking, and gambling at the casinos. He always looked forward to his bi-annual fishing trips with his brother, friends and grandson, in addition to summer trips with his family. Steve was a man of habit. You could often find him at the gym, playing the lotto, reading books and the newspaper, listening to audio books, and watching history documentaries. He also enjoyed running and spending time with his grandchildren.

Steve is survived by his devoted wife of 42 years, Linda; loving daughters Andrea Jacobs (CJ), Karen Lee (Daniel Lopez), and Tamsen Scott (Wade); stepson Thomas Phillips; grandchildren Cirion & Anylah Jacobs, and Sedona & Shiloh Scott; sisters



Robin Orsua and Laurie Dominguez; brother Don Lee (Sherrie); and nieces & nephews. Steve was preceded in death by his parents, Richard & Kathleen Lee.

At Steve's request, no services will be held. Donations in his name to the Truckee Donner Land Trust would be lovingly appreciated. To donate, visit: www.truckeedonnerlandtrust.org.

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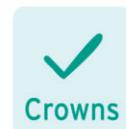
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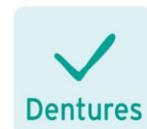
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Times **Community News**

La Playita Mexican Restaurant: An Almaden Valley gem

By **Denelle Fedor**
Special to the Times

Nestled in the corner area of the Redwood Plaza shopping center sits La Playita Mexican Restaurant; an Almaden Valley gem owned and operated by a mother and son team – Rita and Juan Gutierrez.

The Gutierrez Family (Dad - Candelario, Mom- Rita and their three sons – Juan, Hector and Manuel) originally purchased the restaurant – formerly known as La Fonda – from Sal and Judy Gonzales on December 1, 1991. Candelario retired and two of the sons decided to work in private industry in the mid 1990's. Rita and Juan created a loving duo well known in the Almaden Valley – and beyond.

Juan and Rita love the location, and find their landlords –who have been supportive during the COVID Shelter-in-Place - great to work with. They also love their neighbors - Charlie's Cheesecake Works, Imelda's Grooming, Almaden Valley Florist, Super Cleaners, Unicorn Thrift Shop and Round Table Pizza,

among others within the Redwood Plaza. La Playita is also committed to its surrounding community –sponsoring different school teams and groups including baseball, soccer and dance teams over the years.

Rita started working at La Fonda (at its original location on Bascom Avenue) in 1978 and stayed with the restaurant when it found its new and current location in 1983 which is the same year Juan (and his brothers) started working for Sal Gonzales at La Fonda. Juan shared, "I would clear the tables and do the dishes and Sal would leave.25 cents as my tip on the table... I would be so excited!" Juan was also paid \$5 a week. The highlight of working includes working with his brothers and cousins. The boys thoroughly enjoyed being allowed to eat and drink all they wanted.

Beginning in 1983, Rita, still a cook for La Fonda, started incorporating more of her homemade recipes into the La Fonda menu. By 1991, Rita's recipes made up the majority of the menu. It was this year, 1991, that Rita purchased the restaurant and renamed



Rita in the La Playita Kitchen.

it La Playita.

The Gutierrez Family is originally from Colima, Mexico. Rita would often take her children to a park close to their home where they would pass a restaurant called, La Playita. The restaurant was a fancy one with costs higher than Rita and her husband could afford at the time. Rita was pregnant and would often crave Flan, a popular Latin American dessert which La Playita made fresh each day. Rita would ask the owners of La Playita if they would sell her flan to go – selling food "to-go" was not something this high end restaurant did. However, because Rita was pregnant, they made an exception. Rita has such fond memories of their generosity; she decided to name her restaurant La Playita. She also makes her own Flan something La Playita is known for.

The interior decorations of La Playita compliment the good food. Originally, the Gonzales family decorated the restaurant with family heirloom paintings. Unfortunately, in 2010, La Playita was burglarized with the thieves stealing the paintings leaving the

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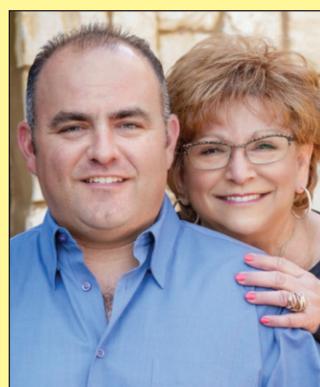


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Times **Community**

La Playita's outdoor dining; and a birthday celebration hosted at the restaurant.

walls bare. When customers began seeing the bare walls, they were worried that Rita and Juan were going to leave. Once the customers learned what happened, that La Playita was burglarized, customers began bringing Rita and Juan items to decorate the restaurant. Before they knew it, the entire interior was transformed with beautiful plates, pictures, dolls and many colorful handmade items. Juan shared, "Our customers made us feel so special; that so many of them would think of us and bring so many beautiful decorations was just amazing - I really can't say enough - we are so blessed to have such thoughtful customers."

Other decorative items that customers see throughout the restaurant are the orchids. Rita loves orchids; in fact she has over 100 orchids in different colors and sizes. Rita shared that in Mexico - orchids are everywhere - along the streets and on the side of trees. Every year she attends various orchid shows.

During the County of Santa Clara Shelter-in-Place, La Playita stopped all on-site dining and was forced to furlough their staff leaving Juan and Rita doing all the work themselves. During this time, the La Playita customers were there to support the restaurant. Many customers would leave large tips - matching the amount of the cost of the meals. Customers named Scott and Alison would come in every week to show support. Another customer, Gary bought \$400 dollars worth of gift cards. And, another customer named Eddy paid for La Playita's produce one week.

La Playita has prevailed. With a beautiful outside dining area already in place, La Playita has already stepped up their Al Fresco dining. They added many of their inside tables to the outside area providing for more outside eating opportunities. Rita's homemade Sangria, chips, salsa, guacamole and a hearty meal are perfect for outside dining.

A cat named Chica

For those customers who have sat outside before, you may remember a very friendly cat named, Chica. Juan took care of her feeding her chicken and then dry food from Costco while customers would bring her wet food. Late last year, Chica hurt her leg. A customer, John, was able to catch her and take her to the vet. Her leg was fixed, but she needed to stay inside. John had wanted a cat, so he kept her. Now Chica is living in a loving home. She is cer-

tainly missed!

Rita and Juan love their work - both could not imagine doing anything else. Juan shared, "Our customers are so nice and we know most of our customers by name." And, knowing our community doesn't start and stop at La Playita, Juan runs into his customers often - wherever he goes, and he loves it.

The warmth that customers experience from patronizing La Playita comes from the fact that Rita absolutely loves creating home cooked meals and serving them to the community. She is awake by 6:00 a.m. and starts her day watering her plants at home. Then, she is at La Playita by 7:30 a.m. to start preparing for making her fresh meals for customers. Juan joins her and greets visitors with a smile as he keeps the restaurant running.

Hours for La Playita are Monday through Saturday 10:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. They are closed on Sundays for now. Don't forget that La Playita makes a great breakfast! Breakfast items include homemade huevos rancheros, chorizo and eggs, breakfast burritos.

Juan shared, "We feel so blessed to have such a great community and customers. Everyday my mom says how lucky we are to be where we are. She loves everyone, when customers ask for anything we do what we can to do what they ask for."

Editor's note: It's great to support our local businesses. The food is the most delicious anywhere and healthy for you too. La Playita Mexican Restaurant is located at: 1169 Redmond Ave., San Jose, CA 95120; Phone: 1-408-997-7201.



Chica, the La Playita cat.

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Free COVID-19 testing available to all Santa Clara county residents

Santa Clara County residents have access to free COVID-19 testing—no need for health insurance, symptoms, or payments.

Residents can access free diagnostic tests throughout the County, including two sites in San José: PAL Stadium and the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds.

Who Should Get Tested?

The County recommends that essential workers interacting regularly with the public (including coworkers) on a monthly basis even if they do not have any symptoms. This applies to any frontline worker, including those who work in healthcare, public safety/emergency response, grocery stores, jails, retail establishments, delivery, transportation, construction, janitorial services, and more. Any person who works in a skilled nursing facility should ideally get tested

every two weeks.

Anyone exposed to or experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, including: Fever, cough, shortness of breath/trouble breathing, chills, night sweats, sore throat, muscle/body aches, loss of taste or smell, headache, confusion, vomiting and diarrhea. Testing for residents without symptoms—especially for those at high risk of infection or exposure—can help diagnose the virus before a person feels unwell or spreads COVID-19 to others.

Testing for residents without symptoms—especially for those at high risk of infection or exposure—can help diagnose the virus before a person feels unwell or spreads COVID-19 to others.

Where Can I Get Tested?

COVID-19 testing sites are available throughout the County at more than 50
See TESTING, next page



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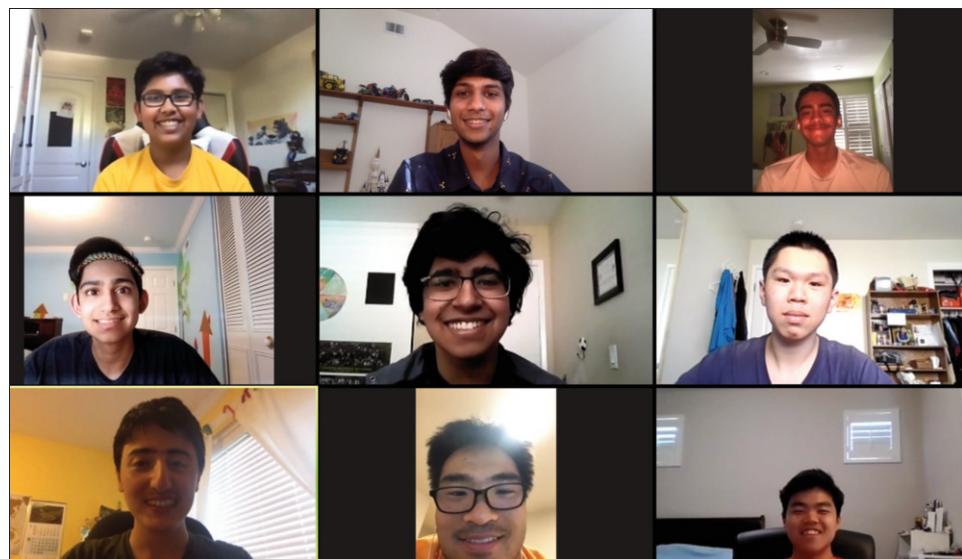
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Valley Tutors Executive Team

Tutoring

Continued from page 1

difference between night and day. We began working four hours a day, pairing new students with our quickly growing group of tutors. It's through the hard work of everyone on our team that our program has grown to be as large as it is today." - Edward Hwang

Now offering free weekly tutoring

Valley Tutoring is a program designed to benefit the community that involves bringing high school tutors who are then assigned to teach students from grades 1-8 in free, personalized, one-on-one sessions. Their program is intended to mimic the lessons that are provided in public schooling, but the personal aspect of individualized sessions combined with the experience that comes with being a student-teacher makes this program both accessible and effective.

Tutors specializing in a variety of subjects—math, science, English, history, music, coding, and even standardized testing—spend an hour or more a week helping these students in any subject of their choosing, an aspect that has contributed to many parents expressing gratitude. One parent was thrilled

with the results of our program, telling the team that they loved how their tutors showed empathy and increased their child's confidence in problem-solving.

"Even though Valley Tutors is run completely by High School students, the sheer professionalism and work ethic is commendable and comparable to that of a much larger, experienced organization" - Sparsh Garg

Over 40 student tutors in place

Currently, Valley Tutoring has quickly grown in just two months, with a tutoring team of more than forty high school students and even more students! Even with the progress they've made so far, they are continuing to find ways to keep serving the community.

"I'm really thankful for the effort that the team has shown since we started the program. The wonderful feedback we've gotten from many of the parents and the comments we've gotten from the tutors have been my motivation to keep working to improve the program. I really hope that Valley Tutoring can continue to support the community in the coming years!" - Bobak Pourrahimi

To learn more about Valley Tutoring, contact them at avalleytutors@gmail.com or visit their website at valleytutors.weebly.com

Times News

Supervisor Cortese proposes “Juneteenth” be designated a County Holiday June 19, 2021

Supervisor Dave Cortese is announcing that he will bring to the County of Santa Clara Board of Supervisors a proposal for the County to declare that “Juneteenth,” which commemorates the end of slavery in the U.S., will be a Countywide holiday beginning on June 19, 2021.

In the wake of national and local protests over the killing of George Floyd and an outcry to rid the country of systemic racism, it is significant that this day be added to the County’s observances that include honoring Martin Luther King Jr., Cesar Chavez and Independence Day.

Supervisor Cortese was asked by local civil rights leaders to initiate the proposal for the County to designate June 19 as a County holiday.

“Juneteenth” is the oldest nationally celebrated commemoration of the ending of slavery in the United States. See *JUNETEENTH*, page 17

Testing

Continued from previous page locations. San José locations are open to residents with appointments Tuesday through Friday.

Andrew Hill High School – Cafeteria, 3200 Senter Rd, SJ, CA (Special hours – 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.)

PAL Stadium, 680 S. 34th St., SJ, CA

SAP Center, 525 W Santa Clara St, SJ, CA (Hours: 1 p.m. - 7 p.m.)

Santa Clara County Fairgrounds, 344 Tully Road, SJ, CA (Hours: 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.)

Santa Clara County Resources: bit.ly/SVSTesting

Hospitals and Clinics: bit.ly/36Gzd3M

Community Sites: bit.ly/2yGXs5g

More information: [SccFreeTest.org](https://www.sccfreetest.org)

To get tested or to learn about new locations that will be coming, visit: [SccFreeTest.org](https://www.sccfreetest.org)

Editor’s note: Everyone who visits SAP for COVID-19 testing will receive a memorabilia item (one each) featuring either the San Jose Sharks or San Jose Barracuda, courtesy of the San Jose Sharks. In addition, one randomly selected person getting tested will receive a free San Jose Sharks hockey jersey. The Silicon Valley Community Foundation is partnering with the County on the event. Druva and Majestic Sales are also donating 500 PPE care packages, with a pair of gloves, a mask, and sanitizing wipes, for the first 500 residents to be tested.

What’s Open?



Subject to social distancing protocols and COVID-19 related safety requirements to protect workers, customers and the community.

Business and Government Agencies	
Already Open	Open June 5, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All healthcare services All essential governmental activities All essential infrastructure, including internet/communications Grocery stores, pharmacies, and similar essential businesses Agencies providing food/shelter/social services Newspapers, television, and radio Gas stations, auto-supply, and auto-repair Bicycle repair and supply shops Banks and related financial institutions Hardware stores Plumbers, electricians, exterminators, and other home repair services Mailing and shipping services 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimum Basic Operations for all businesses, including offices Landscaping and gardening services Most manufacturing Medically necessary pet grooming All retail stores, but for curbside pickup only Real estate agents, escrow agents, notaries, and title companies Plant nurseries and garden centers Laundromats, dry cleaners, and laundry services Restaurants, but only for delivery or carry out Airlines, taxis, rental cars, and rideshare services Home-based care for seniors/children/pets Residential facilities and homeless shelters All businesses that deliver goods to homes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor dining at restaurants In-store shopping at retail and shopping centers All manufacturing, warehousing, and logistics House cleaning and other no-contact in-home services Low contact/no contact service businesses including shoe repair, watch repair, and other similar services Pet grooming and dog walking 	
Education, Childcare, and Children’s Activities	
Already Open	Open June 5, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educational institutions including public and private K-12 schools, colleges, and universities, but only for facilitating distance learning or performing essential functions Childcare establishments for children of workers of allowable businesses in stable groups of 12 Summer camps and other educational or recreational programs for children of workers of allowable businesses in stable groups of 12 Change of groups allowed every <u>four</u> weeks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> All childcare, summer camps, summer school, and all other educational or recreational programs for all children in stable groups up to 12 children Change of group allowed every <u>three</u> weeks
Outdoor Ceremonies, Outdoor Religious Gatherings, and Outdoor Recreation	
Already Open	Open June 5, 2020
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Outdoor recreational activities with members of one’s own household Parks and outdoor recreation areas Outdoor museums, outdoor historical sites, and publicly accessible gardens Car parades 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Small outdoor ceremonies and outdoor religious gatherings in groups no larger than 25 All outdoor recreational activities that do not involve physical contact, with social distancing and with up to one other household, including hiking, tennis, Frisbee and golf Outdoor swimming pools Camping Drive-in theaters and other automobile-based gatherings

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 - Learning Options—4849 Pearl Ave
 - Los Alamitos—6130 Silberman Dr
 - Ohlone—850 N. 2nd St
 - Pioneer—1290 Blossom Hill Rd
 - River Glen—1088 Broadway Ave
 - Schallenberger—1280 Koch Ln
 - Trace—651 Dana Ave
 - WG Elem—1425 Lincoln Ave

- Allen—820 Steinbeck Dr
- Bachrodt—102 Sonora Ave
- Canoas—880 Wren Dr
- Galarza—1610 Bird Ave
- Gunderson—622 Gaundabert Ln
- Horace Mann—55 N. 7th St
- Lincoln—555 Dana Ave
- Lowell—625 S. 7th St
- Olinder—890 E. William St
- Reed—1524 Jacob Ave
- San Jose High—275 N. 24th St
- Terrell—3925 Pearl Ave
- Washington—100 Oak St
- WG High—2001 Cottle Ave

- Almaden—1295 Dentwood Dr
- Booksin—1590 Dry Creek Rd
- Carson—4245 Meg Dr
- Gardner—502 Illinois Ave
- Hacienda—1290 Kimberly Dr
- John Muir—1260 Branham Ln

Free breakfasts and lunches provided in partnership by the City of San José and the San José Unified School District

You can support student nutrition by making a tax-deductible donation towards student meals at: www.sjUSD.org/your-resources/student-nutrition-services/

Coping with Stress During COVID-19



✓ TAKE BREAKS



✓ FOCUS ON YOUR HOBBIES



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✓ CALL FRIENDS AND FAMILY

✓ GET PLENTY OF SLEEP

✓ CHOOSE HEALTHY FOODS



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24/7 Suicide and Crisis Hotline: (855) 278-4204
Crisis Text Line: Text RENEW to 741741

Recovery

Continued from page 1

reported cases of COVID-19, including 154 related deaths, in the county, according to Santa Clara County Public Health (about 2,350 of these cases occurred in San Jose). There were 33 reported cases of the coronavirus in Almaden Valley and one resulting death.

"We all know this is a real risky virus," Smith said, "but we also know the economy is really necessary, so we're trying to thread the needle and get the appropriate balance between protecting lives and health, but also protecting the economy, well-being and peoples' livelihoods."

On June 26, county health officers will decide whether to reopen further based upon five indicators:

Indicator 1: The Total Number of Cases in the Community is Flat or Decreasing, and the Number of Hospitalized Patients with COVID-19 is Flat or Decreasing

Indicator 2: Sufficient Hospital Capacity to Meet the Needs of our Residents

Indicator 3: Sufficient COVID-19 Viral Detection Tests Are Being Conducted Daily

Indicator 4: Sufficient Case Investigation, Contact Tracing, and Isolation Capacity

Indicator 5: A 30-Day Supply of Personal Protective Equipment for all Healthcare Providers

Mike Wasserman, board of supervisors, County of Santa Clara, is in favor of opening all businesses now.

"Besides the fact that we have more domestic violence and suicides going on, there are a ton of people who are unemployed," Wasserman said, "and \$600 a week can't pay for a one-bedroom apartment in Santa Clara County."

In addition, Wasserman said that as federal Pandemic Unemployment Assistance ended on May 31, self-employed people are without funding and the city and county are receiving less funding as sales taxes and hotel transit occupancy taxes are way down.

"A prolonged sheltering in place would only cause harm to our most marginalized communities," said Eddie Truong, director of government and community relations, The Silicon Valley Organization.

Truong said service industry workers, skilled laborers, and event industry personnel are hurting the most from the economic shutdown and would like to see retraining programs to retool displaced workers.

"Government must be visionary when it comes to facilitating economic recovery," he said, "like San Jose Al Fresco (which currently allows restaurants, cafes, salons, gyms and yoga studios to use outdoor public spaces). The city enacted an emergency order to relax regulations...and ease the economic devastation of COVID-19."

Truong said that not knowing when they'd be able to reopen and how to do it safely shuttered many small businesses.

"Anything we can do to streamline information and provide clarity and certainty will help ease the pains from the shutdown,"

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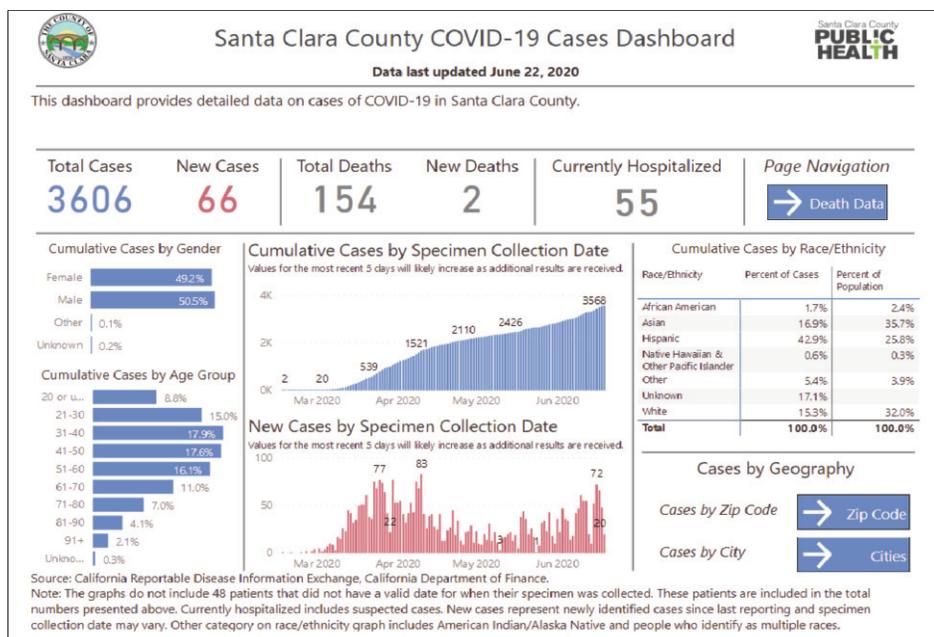
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Want to submit a news item for the Almaden Times?

Press day: July 8, 2020
Deadline: July 5, 2020

Write to editorial@timesmediainc.com

Times **Community**



Santa Clara County provides a coronavirus data dashboard that is updated daily.

Truong said. "We have to figure out ways to live with the virus and to safely operate at the same time."

Sheltering in place due to the coronavirus resulted in about 170,000 jobs lost in the Bay Area.

"Decisions made to protect people have consequences," said Victor Farlie, senior executive analyst, Office for Economic Development, City of San Jose. "The economy has to be supported because it keeps everything we hold dear in Silicon Valley together."

Farlie said the city is tailoring its policies and resources to help those most in need, shifting support to micro-small businesses.

"We need to reopen our economy, but we must do so thoughtfully, strategically and carefully," he said. "We have to come together as a county and city to make the best effect of resources."

Farlie favors the county adoption of an ordinance creating a moratorium on commercial and residential tenant eviction in helping stabilize the economy. However, he said that businesses have to work with their landlords and understand the ordinance calls for rent deferral, not forgiveness.

"We don't want a business to close," he said, "but ... it's better making that decision, no matter how painful, than letting debts accrue and problems become bigger."

Capital finance and loans are available to help small businesses including a federal payroll protection program (applications are due at banks on June 30) and a new Federal Reserve business loan for medium-sized businesses ranging from \$250,000 to \$200 million.

Wasserman said that initial federal fund-



Above: Eddie Truong, director of government and community relations, The Silicon Valley Organization. Below: Mike Wasserman, board of supervisors, County of Santa Clara.

ing was slow in getting through the banks and to small businesses and was prohibitive, becoming a loan rather than a grant if it wasn't used in the time period allotted.

"For businesses not to be earning any money and have to pay back more money is problematic," he said. "Small businesses need financial relief now or they'll go under, and if landlords can't make their mortgage payments ... it's a ripple effect."

He added that due to city and county deficits, small businesses won't be able to rely on them for financial bailouts but will have to look to the federal government.

With an eye to the future, Smith said that businesses will have to be done differently, with employees who can do so continuing to work from home. Other jobs will require behavioral modification or special protections.

"We're flying the plane and rebuilding it at the same time," Smith said. "This is an extremely difficult situation. It's a careful balance we never had to achieve before. The county and city are working hard to make the right decisions."

Please see: www.sccgov.org for coronavirus dashboards.

Juneteenth

Continued from page 15

States. On June 19, 1865, the Union soldiers, led by Major General Gordon Granger, landed at Galveston, Texas, with news that the war had ended and that the enslaved were now free. This was 30 months and 19 days after President Lincoln's Emanci-

pation Proclamation, which had become official on January 1, 1863.

"While slavery was abolished 157 years ago, there is still a lot of work to be done toward overcoming its legacy by ending the violence and injustice against people of color," Cortese said. "Designating 'Juneteenth' as a County holiday would be a way to reflect on how far we've come but also realize how far we have to go."

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