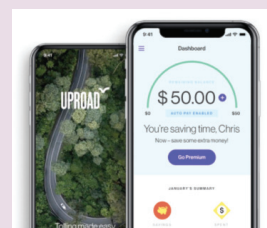


YMCA of Silicon Valley enacts program to provide education support this fall
SEE PAGE 4



Outside space
San Jose to open up use of public parks and plazas for restaurants, gyms and hair salons – **SEE PAGE 4**

New app lets you ditch transponder and use phone to take California toll roads **SEE PAGE 16**



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AUGUST 21 – SEPT. 3, 2020 ■ VOL. 33, NO. 17

BACK TO SCHOOL



Attendance report: 28,000 students attended first day of virtual school in San José Unified

*Superintendent calls on
community to support
families in need*

The San José Unified School District (SJUSD) welcomed its 28,000 students back to school virtually on Wednesday, August 12.

SJUSD was the first in the Bay Area to offer a full school day to students who are distance learning with a reported 93 percent of students connecting online with their classmates and teachers.

During the instructional blocks, teachers provide live instruction, assign work to students, and monitor the class as students work in smaller groups to complete assignments, similar to the in-person classroom.

"We focused all of our resources on getting students connected," said Stephen McMahon, Deputy Superintendent of San José Unified. "Hundreds of employees dedicated themselves to this challenge and while we still have much to do, student attendance on the first day of school validated all that hard work."

Attendance across the school district was similar to a normal school year, but the most vulnerable students had the highest rates of absence. Schools in relatively high-income areas recorded

See ATTENDANCE, page 7

Santa Clara County law makers approve fines for not wearing masks, flouting health order

By Lorraine Gabbert

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

Santa Clara County will begin issuing fines of up to \$500 for not wearing face masks or social distancing in public, the Board of Supervisors decided unanimously Tuesday, July 11.

In an attempt to control the spread of COVID-19 and mitigate its impact, the board adopted an urgency ordinance issuing citations against residents and businesses for violating health code regulations, including not wearing a mask outdoors. The new ordinance will go into effect immediately.

"I'm supporting this because we have something in place we can use now," said Santa Clara County Supervisor Mike Wasserman. "We have so many closed businesses and people out of school and unemployed and headed towards bankruptcy. We can't afford the time to sit down with various groups and negotiate."

Kimberly Meek stepping down from schoolboard

By Lorraine Gabbert

Senior Staff Writer

After serving on the San Jose Unified School District (SJUSD) board for four years, trustee Kimberly Meek will be stepping down at the end of this school year.

Meek, who lives in Almaden and represented Almaden schools, focused on improving student performance.

"I wanted all of our students throughout the district to have an excellent education," Meek said.

Meek said she decided to join the school board because she didn't feel district staff were doing enough to support differentiated learning. She said that this is still an issue, along with retaining quality staff and student enrollment. The school district is down more than 1,000 students in enrollment from last year, which Meek said is a particularly large drop.

Distance learning, which Meek said is "very chaotic" is another challenge. Although students in the southern end of the district had 99%

MASK FINES APPROVED



In this file photo, customers observe social distancing and wear face masks while waiting in front of Bicycle Express. Photo by Tran Nguyen

While county officials for months relied on the "honor system" to enforce the rules, officials said the message was not resonating and violations to the county health order ran rampant. County Executive Jeff Smith warned on Tuesday the state will take negative financial action toward counties that don't actively

enforce local and statewide ordinances.

"We have to come up with an enforcement mechanism in order to avoid losing revenue," Smith said.

Several Bay Area counties, including San Mateo and Contra Costa counties have adopted similar

See MASKS, page 13



Kimberly Meek focused on improving student performance through differentiation of learning.

attendance on Aug. 12, the first day of school, only 66% of students in the northern end attended. Meek said many of their phones were disconnected and it's possible they moved out of the area due to the pandemic and job loss.

Meek said that although distance learning has improved from the spring, there are still problems including students being distracted by other websites and social media.

"The more engaging a teacher can be, the less that's going to happen," she said, "but distance learning is a big shift for students, too. They're going to have to take some responsibility for their learning. It's a new skill."

Meek said she joined the school board to make a real difference. She has three children, currently in 10th, ninth and sixth grades. Two attended Los Alamitos Elementary School and one went to Gardner Academy. In first grade, her oldest child, who was a gifted reader, had some behavioral problems in class. His teacher thought it might be because he finished work

See MEEK, page 20

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Thanksgiving - 11/26/20
Christmas - 12/25/20



COVERING COVID

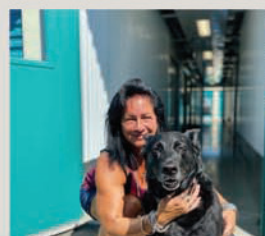
It's August! And we're still rocking our face masks! We need everyone to do their part in slowing the spread of COVID. Face masks are required and social distancing protocols are strictly enforced when customers are visiting the office. This is a team effort, and our only chance to opening safely while protecting the most vulnerable. Our health care workers, families, and our future is counting on you to do your part. Thank you!

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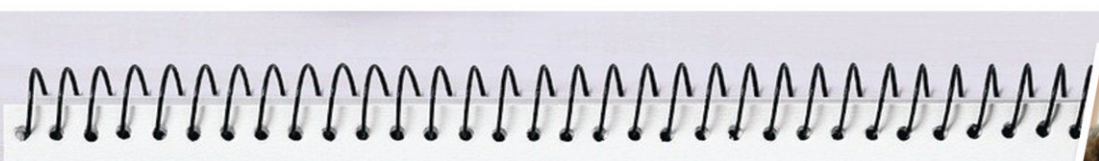


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Back to School Safety Tips



With distance learning, getting kids back to school can have a new set of challenges. We wish you and your family well during this unprecedented time.


Use everyday opportunities to talk to your kids about being online. For example, news stories about cyberbullying or texting while driving can spur a conversation about their experiences and how you expect them to behave.

Clearly communicate your expectations and how they apply in an online context. Sharing your values clearly can help your kids make smarter and more thoughtful decisions when they face tricky situations. For instance, be specific about what's off-limits — and what you consider to be unacceptable behavior.

Resist the urge to rush these conversations with your kids. Most kids need to hear information repeated, in small doses, for it to sink in. If you keep talking with your kids, your patience and persistence will pay off in the long run.

Keep the lines of communication open. Even if you find out your kid has done something inappropriate online, listen and consider their feelings. You may not have all the answers but being honest and receptive can go a long way.

—Tips courtesy [FTC.gov/KidsOnline](https://www.ftc.gov/kidsonline)



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San Jose to open up use of public parks and plazas for restaurants, gyms and hair salons to operate outside

Outdoor spaces are lifesavers for struggling businesses

Outdoor spaces have become a lifesaver for most businesses reeling from the effects of the pandemic.

To help businesses cope, the city of San Jose has announced it's making it easier for business owners to take advantage of the city's public parks, plazas and parking lots.

The San Jose City Council just approved waiving fees and expediting the application process for businesses — including restaurants, hair salons, fitness studios and retail shops — to operate in some of the city's underutilized public outdoor spaces.

Parks or plazas

Businesses may apply to expand their outdoor operations into a nearby public park or plaza, but they must meet certain criteria. Restaurant must be adjacent to the requested park or plaza to be eligible to operate in it. All other businesses, such as hair salons, fitness studios and retail shops, must be within a quarter-mile of the park or plaza.

Parking lots

The first parking lot available for businesses to stake a claim for is on Minnesota Avenue, west of Lincoln Avenue. Any business within a quarter-mile of the parking lot will be eligible for a spot on a first-come, first-serve basis.

City officials stated they are currently identifying additional city parking lots that would be suitable for the new program.

Valley Currents

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

YMCA of Silicon Valley's Super Scholar Program to provide education support this fall

Y program designed to meet the evolving needs of the community during this COVID crisis

This school year, led by committed professional leaders, the Y Learning Labs for Super Scholars provides academic support to youth grades TK – 8 as they maneuver their way through virtual learning.

In years past, the Y has presented academic and recreation focused after school programs at local schools, but the pandemic has presented unprecedented challenges compelling the Y to adjust programming to fit this new learning environment.

The Y Fall Programs have been adapted to ensure that the environment adheres to the strictest COVID-19 regulations from the CDC and local guidance. To meet the needs of our community while youth are distance learning, YMCA sites throughout Silicon Valley will be offering academic support in a safe and socially supportive environment through stable learning groups consisting of no more than 12 youth.

In collaboration with school districts and other community partners, the YMCA provided full-day support for families in need since March. The Y updates practices to fit the current health and safety regulations. The constant focus of the Y's program continues to be fostering friendships, belonging and achievement. The Y is here to support children and parents during these challenging times. We look forward to welcoming you and your child to our community.

"The Y understands this pandemic has added a complexity to the way children experience their education. Y Learning Labs for Super Scholars is a way for children to continue engaging with mentors and other children in a safe learning environment while parents continue to work", says YMCA of Silicon Valley Chief Operating Officer, Mary Haughey.

Sessions are set at three week intervals in accordance to county orders and will run from 8 a.m. -5 p.m. daily at the locations outlined below. The Y Learning Labs for Super Scholars program provides students:

- The necessary support for successful distance learning
- The ability to make friends and feel a sense of belonging
- The comfort of trusted adult relationships
- The ability to explore their interests in a



rich learning environment

- More time to be outside and active
- The Academic and Recreation Centers offered are:

South Valley YMCA – 5632 Santa Teresa Blvd, San Jose, 95123

Sequoia YMCA – 1445 Hudson Street, Redwood City, 94061

East Valley YMCA – 1975 South White Road, San Jose, 95148

Northwest YMCA – 20803 Alves Drive, Cupertino, 95014

Palo Alto Family YMCA – 3412 Ross Road, Palo Alto, 94303

El Camino YMCA – 2400 Grant Road, Moun-

tain View, 94040

YMCA Camp Campbell – 16275 Highway 9 Boulder Creek, Boulder Creek, 95006

As the community navigates this Coronavirus crisis, YMCA of Silicon Valley is more committed than ever to build safer, healthier, and more equitable educational resources for all.

"YMCA of Silicon Valley is ready to be part of a smart, strong, and effective educational support strategy for kids and families this fall," Haughey said.

Anyone interested in learning more about this program can contact YMCA of Silicon Valley's Youth Development at: yafterschool@ymcasv.org

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Times **Community News**

Wave your hand: Santa Clara County to install Touch-Free Crosswalk devices

Soon you'll be able use a crosswalk with a wave of your hand.

To slow the spread of Covid-19, Santa Clara County plans to install 200 touch-free crosswalk signals at 25 expressway intersections with the heaviest foot traffic.

The new devices will allow pedestrians to wave their hands over a motion sensor instead of having to press a button with germs that may spread Covid-19.

There have been many reports that pedestrians have been using their feet to press traffic light buttons which is not sanitary. Until the new sensors are installed, sleeves, napkins or gloves can be used instead of using your hands or feet.

The first touchless sensors were recently installed at South Bascom Avenue and Renova Drive in front of the Santa Clara Valley Medical Center. The rest will start showing up at other locations this fall

as new funding becomes available.

"The intersection in front of Santa Clara Valley Medical Center is the ideal location for the first installation because of the high volume of pedestrian traffic around and near the hospital campus," Santa Clara County Roads and Airports Director Harry Freitas explained in a press release announcing the new technology. "We look forward to adding this new technology to our expressway crosswalks."

County officials say they plan to install more at the following junctures:

- Two Almaden Expressway intersections: Reed Avenue and Cherry Avenue.
- Six Capitol Expressway intersections: Story Road, Senter Road, Silver Creek Road, Vista Park Drive, Seven Trees Boulevard and Snell Avenue.
- Monterey Road and E. San Martin Avenue.



A county worker installs one of the first touchless sensors outside of Valley Med. (Photo courtesy of Santa Clara County)

- Four Lawrence Expressway intersections: Reed Avenue, Homestead Road, Prospect Road and Moorpark Avenue.
- Three San Tomas Expressway intersections: El Camino Real, Stevens Creek Boulevard and Cabrillo Avenue.
- Four Foothill Expressway intersections: Arastradero Road, Main Street, W. Edith Avenue and Magdalena Avenue.
- Two Central Expressway intersections: Castro Street and Rengstorff Avenue.
- Montague Expressway and De La Cruz Boulevard.
- Oregon Expressway and Middlefield Road.

Editor's note: Residents can request a device for other expressway intersections by submitting a service request through www.countyroads.org.

HELPING OTHERS Child Advocates seeks volunteers

Child Advocates of Silicon Valley recruits, trains, and supports Court Appointed Special Advocate volunteers to ensure every foster child in the County's foster care system has a mentor and advocate to help them and a voice reporting directly to the Court.

Studies show foster children with an advocate receive more educational and health services; are more likely to find a safe, permanent home; perform better in school; and spend less time in foster care than children without one.

Volunteer advocates must pass a background check and complete 30 hours of training. If you are interested in having a positive impact on a child that can positively alter their life trajectory, you can get more information by visiting: <https://childadvocatessv.org/volunteer>



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Times **Community News****Attendance***Continued from page 1*

attendance rates as high as 99 percent, whereas schools with a high percentage of students from low-income families had attendance rates as low as 67 percent. Attendance disparities were similarly concerning for homeless youth, foster youth, and students with special needs.

"The COVID-19 pandemic has devastated low-income families in so many ways," said Nancy Albarrán, Superintendent of San José Unified. "Finding ways to support our most at-risk students has been at the forefront of San José Unified's planning since schools first closed in March. With schools closed to all students, we need our community to step up and ensure that all students have the opportunity to learn from a safe and stable home."

Tens of thousands of Chromebooks, iPads, hot-spots, textbooks, and supplies have been safely distributed to students in the SJUSD. Teachers and staff have been provided with dozens of professional development modules on safety protocols used

for distance learning, which are being used to effectively provide instruction to students at home.

San José Unified's Superintendent is calling on our local, state, and federal agencies to provide meaningful support to families suffering the most during this pandemic. "The District can provide each student with computer devices, broadband access, and an online classroom with their classmates and teachers, but we need the community to come together to support the families of our most vulnerable students by providing a safe and stable home environment."

"Distance learning will not be a success if it leaves at-risk students behind," said Superintendent Albarrán. "San José Unified is calling for a community-wide commitment to provide all families with the stability and security necessary to allow students to attend school at home."

Editor's note: Parents and community members are encouraged to check the San José Unified website at www.sjUSD.org for the most current updated information.

Sen. Jim Beall endorses Dave Cortese for State Senate District 15

Beall cites Cortese's values and commitment to strengthening communities

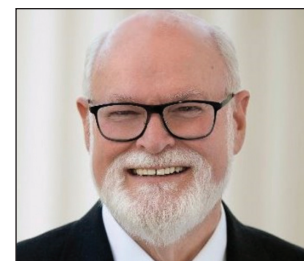
The Dave Cortese for California State Senate campaign announced California State Senator for District 15, Jim Beall, is endorsing Dave Cortese to succeed him in Sacramento.

Cortese, who is currently serving his eighth and final year on the Board of Supervisors, and Ann Ravel, an attorney and former Fair Political Practices Commission chairwoman, received the most votes in the primary race. Cortese received 34 percent of the votes, almost 12 percentage points more than Ravel.

State Senator Beall, who remained neutral in the 2020 primary election, said: "Dave has the qualities and values I believe are impor-

tant in Sacramento. He has a strong work ethic and has spent his entire career advocating on behalf of the residents of our district, especially the most vulnerable among us, which is especially critical in the era of COVID-19. Dave's commitment to equity and justice has shown me that he's serious about restoring critical equal opportunity policies for all our residents."

"I'm honored to have earned the support of Sen. Jim Beall," Cortese said in accepting the endorsement.



State Senate candidate **Dave Cortese** (left) and State Senator **Jim Beall**

"His commitment to public service has made our communities stronger, and I look forward to working as his partner to create new opportunities for all our families."

California's 15th Senate District represents nearly 1

million South Bay residents in Cupertino, Los Gatos, Campbell, Saratoga, Monte Sereno and the San Jose neighborhoods of Willow Glen, Almaden, Evergreen, East San Jose, and downtown.



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DF-CD-NP-Q320

Times **Community News****San José to provide high speed internet access to thousands of students for academic school year***San José partners with AT&T to expand internet connection*

The City of San José will be providing 11,000 high-end hotspots with unlimited 4G LTE data plans to unconnected and under-connected students and residents through a new public-private partnership with AT&T.

"In these challenging times, we are prioritizing getting 8,000 students rapidly connected to the internet -- which will enable them to successfully participate in online learning this coming fall," said Mayor Sam Liccardo. "This innovative public-private partnership between San José and AT&T builds on a history of high-impact collaboration, and I thank AT&T for their continued commitment to helping San José bridge the digital divide, and Jill Bourne, City Librarian and Director of the Digital Inclusion Branch of the Emergency Operations Center, for her critical work in executing this program."

Through this collaboration, the County Office of Education will receive 8,000 hotspots and work with school districts to identify students who need access to broadband connectivity by the start of the 2020/21 academic year. These students will receive an AT&T Unite Express 2 Hotspot, free high-speed inter-

net and unlimited 4G LTE data plans, which would allow up to 15 devices in the household to be connected, so that students can participate in distance learning during the school year.

The Library will also provide residents free access to 3,000 hotspot devices available for check out with their library card for a 90-day period, which can be extended once for an additional 30-days.

The City has also been working with East Side Union High School District (ESUHSD) and the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) on the expansion of the Access East Side Community Wi-Fi Project, which targets the James Lick and Overfelt High School attendance areas, one of the City's districts with the highest need for computer and internet access among its residents. Access to Wi-Fi in the Overfelt attendance area will begin at the start of the academic year.

"The Community Wireless Project is a partnership between the City of San José and East Side Union High School District building one of the nation's first school district-funded municipal Wi-Fi infrastructures, bringing free broadband access to thousands of district families that did not have it before and to tens of thousands of residents in East Side," said Chris Funk, Superintendent of the East Side Union High School District.

The community Wi-Fi partnership with ESUHSD aims to provide digital access to up to 305,790 people who reside in the attendance areas surrounding James Lick, Overfelt, Yerba Buena, Independence, Oak Grove, Andrew Hill, Silver Creek, and Mt. Pleasant High Schools.

To learn more about SJ Access, visit www.sjpl.org/SJAccess.

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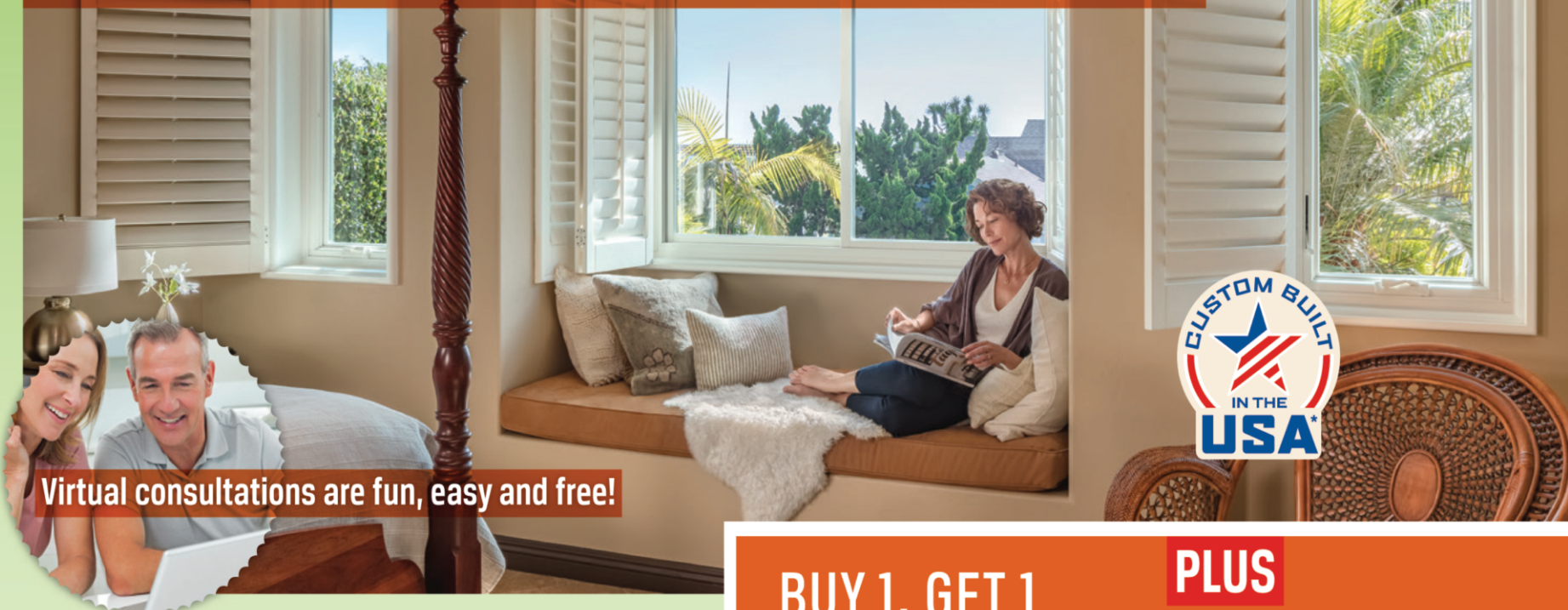
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Times **Community News**

District 10 public safety updates

By **Johnny Khamis***Special to the Times*

We have been experiencing a significant uptick in property crimes like auto theft and auto break-ins in recent weeks, and many of you have written to my office about these crimes.

I have been in touch with our SJPd Southern Division Captain about these incidents and, in addition to letting us know what the SJPd is doing to respond, she has supplied us with some comparative statistics from this year, and, as you can see, the trend is heading upward:

Auto Thefts:

- Feb 23-Mar 22: 97 reported incidents
- Mar 23-Apr 22: 96 reported incidents
- Apr 23-May 22: 130 reported incidents
- May 23-Jun 22: 140 reported incidents
- Jun 23- Jul 22: 156 reported incidents (increase of 59 incidents from Feb-Mar).

Theft from Vehicles (petty & grand theft):

- Feb 23-Mar 22: 88 reported incidents
- Mar 23-Apr 22: 67 reported incidents
- Apr 23-May 22: 112 reported incidents
- May 23-Jun 22: 122 reported incidents
- Jun 23- Jul 22: 116 reported incidents (increase of 28 incidents from Feb-Mar).

How has SJPd been responding to this uptick in property crimes?

For crimes in progress, the SJPd is responding and taking reports.

The SJPd is coordinating with the Burglary Unit, the Burglary Prevention Unit, and the Regional Auto Theft Task Force to see if they can leverage any informants who may help them identify the suspect(s) responsible for these crimes.

The Regional Auto Theft Task Force is very active in the Southern Division making proactive investigations and arrests for stolen vehicles and those responsible for those crimes.

The SJPd has provided some added patrols in the Southern Division in the affected areas.

The SJPd has recently arrested a suspect for smashing car windows and have made a few arrests for subjects who were breaking into cars and others who were responsible for residential burglaries.

What can you do to be a good community partner for the SJPd?

Call 9-1-1 to report crimes in progress or suspicious activity or call 3-1-1 to initiate a crime report for a crime if it is not in progress.

If you have prepared files of video evidence for a crime you've reported, you can call 3-1-1 to create a call for service (CFS) to have someone come collect the evidence. Have the case number available when you call.

If you have security cameras, register them

with the SJPd Camera Registry so that the SJPd can be aware of potential video evidence in the area of where a crime took place. Here is the link: www.sjpd.org/_forms/camera-registrationfaqs.asp

Schedule a virtual Neighborhood Watch with SJPd Crime Prevention for your street, drive, or cul-de-sac.

Background

The SJPd Southern Division, which District 10 is a part of, covers ¼ of the City's land mass - it is the largest of the police divisions, geographically. Captain Washburn who leads the Southern Division is responsible for approximately 275,000 residents. She takes every concern seriously and looks to leverage what resources she has available to respond to crime. While the SJPd's top priority is violent crime, they are also concerned with non-violent crime - which they seek to solve and prevent, with the help of the community. While SJPd staffing has increased from its low point a few years ago, San Jose remains the lowest-staffed big city police department in the United States, in real terms and on a per-capita basis. Oakland and San Francisco have 2X and almost 3X the officers, respectively, as San Jose.

The criminals who are committing car break-ins often commit multiple break-ins in the same night. If police officers are busy responding to 9-1-1 calls, they may not have the

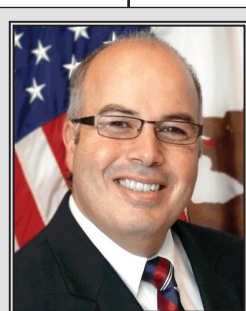
bandwidth during the shift to go out on proactive patrol. Most nights, when many of the car crimes occur, the Midnight Teams go out with minimum staffing of 4-5 officers per team, and since two officers respond, per call, it only takes a couple of calls to keep them from doing the proactive work. This is why it's important that residents are involved in prevention, with cameras, good lighting, keeping valuables out of vehicles, and reporting suspicious activity. Any help we can give to our hard working police officers is greatly appreciated.

The work of our officers can be frustrating, due to the revolving door established by the weakening of penalties that occurred with the passage of criminal justice reforms in Propositions 47 and 57, combined with new, less punitive approaches to crime that the Santa Clara County District Attorney's office has implemented and state requirements to minimize jail populations in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. People arrested for property crimes are often released from jail within hours. If the perpetrators return to commit more crimes, the SJPd will re-arrest them and perhaps it may, at some point, deter them from committing further crimes.

Public Safety-Related Initiative on November Ballot

I encourage you to gather information about Proposition 20 that will be on your ballot this fall. The arguments for and against Proposition 20 will be contained in your ballot guide and online at the Secretary of State's office once they are completed.

For questions, comments, or concerns you may reach my office at 408.535.4910 or district10@sanjoseca.gov.



District 10 Report

Johnny Khamis,
City Councilmember

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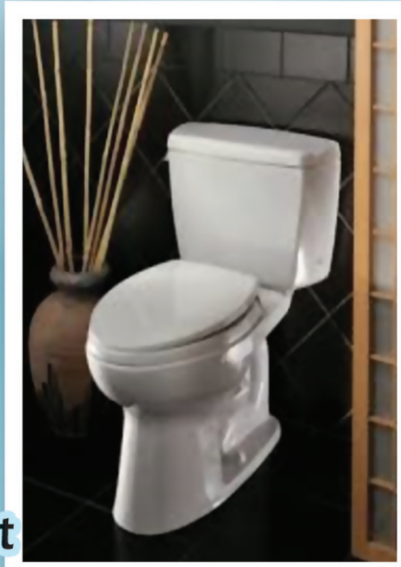
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Times Community News

S.O.S. AUTO REPAIR
'QUICK TIP'
4 reasons why
providing your
own parts will not
save you money

“Can I bring my own parts? I can get the parts cheaper than you can retail them.” We get this question quite often; which makes sense, who doesn’t want to save money. But does it really make sense? Here are 4 reasons why providing your own parts will not save you money:

1. Warranty
When an auto repair facility works on your vehicle they warranty the work, parts and labor. If your part fails you have to return the failed part, purchase a new one, and then you have to pay to have it installed a second time. Also, keep in mind the down-

time during all the chaos. What an inconvenience.

2. Accountability
As professionals, we will not put on parts supplied by customers, as we cannot guarantee and stand behind their performance. It’s just what we do and who we are.

3. Misdiagnosed
Often time’s customers will scan or have their vehicle scanned for diagnostic trouble codes, which without a proper diagnostic can lead them down the wrong path. For example, a code for an oxygen sensor or catalytic converter, those codes don’t always mean those parts need to be replaced and a customer may not know that. So they have the oxygen sensor(s) and catalytic converter replaced (without a diagnostic) and that ends up not being the problem. Now they have these new parts but that didn’t take care of the issue and the check engine light is still on.

4. The WRONG part
Suppose you bought the wrong part or the store gave you the wrong part, either way the part provided is wrong. What a hassle it will be for you to pickup the wrong part, go return the part (hopefully you bought it locally and you don’t have to ship

it out) and then take the correct part to the shop. And that’s on a good day! Imagine the parts store not having it in stock and they have to order it. What a nightmare! Meanwhile, the shop that is working on your car has your vehicle on a lift waiting and you still don’t have a car.

Let’s take a moment to think about this. Would you bring a heart valve to your doctor and ask them to install it? Would you bring your own food to a restaurant and ask them to cook it for you? Then why would you bring your own parts to your local auto repair shop and ask them to install it?

If you’re concerned about your vehicle for whatever reason why not stop by. We’ll be happy to assist you because we like to help. It’s just what we do and who we are.

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!

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SOS Auto Repair is located at: 3519 San Felipe Road, San Jose, Ca. 95135: (408) 477-2242.




District 10 Device
Donation Day

District 10 collected nearly 50 laptops on July 27, along with desktops and printers, that will be now be refurbished by #TechExchange and placed in the hands of students that need them for online distance learning.

Councilmember Johnny Khamis thanked #BoysTeamCharity, The Mayor's Office of Technology and Innovation (#MOTI), the San Jose Public Library (#SJPL), and District 10 interns for making this event a great success.

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Times **Community**

Masks

Continued from page 1

policies to issue fines on health order violators.

Santa Clara County's measure was proposed after an increase in the number of COVID-19 violations, officials said, including failure to wear face coverings and social distancing. County public health leaders say those violations resulted in a recent spike of COVID-19 cases and deaths.

Businesses will also be cited for failing to follow health guidelines under the ordinance.

"Anyone who thinks we don't need more aggressive action should look at the chart showing just how many tests we are or aren't getting," Supervisor Joe Simitian said Tuesday. "Lives are at stake."

As the county last month began loosening its shelter-in-place orders and reopened some businesses, it reported an increase of COVID-19 cases to 10,767 from 7,537 from July 13 to Aug. 2. There have been 12,962 cases, 207 deaths and 180 hospitalizations as of Tuesday, according to Santa Clara County Public Health.

County officials say some businesses are not reporting positive COVID-19 cases, hampering the county's ability to conduct contact tracing. A San José Spotlight report this week revealed more than two dozen businesses have been accused of forcing employees to return to work, despite shelter-in-place orders, ignoring employees who showed symptoms and hiding unsafe work conditions.

"There have been numerous instances of businesses failing to timely report positive cases in their workplaces which undermines the county's ability to effectively carry out contact tracing," according to a staff report.

An East San Jose resident named Veronica said many businesses near her are not in compliance with public health orders and asked who to contact. She was told to call the District Attorney's COVID-19 tip line.

The county also received reports of several large healthcare facilities refusing to provide tests to people at elevated risk of contracting COVID-19, or who have been exposed, officials said. County leaders said the success of the shelter-in-place orders rely on effective enforcement.

Hospital leaders Tuesday expressed concerns about keeping up with testing, especially as supplies run low.

"We're working in good faith to stop this pandemic," said Elizabeth Vilardo, CEO of Palo Alto Medical Foundation. "But we're hampered by a shortage of testing material and the variable sensitivity of tests."

Cindy Chavez, president of the Santa Clara County board of supervisors, said her office has been trying to move health and hospital systems in the county in a positive direction for months. "The partnership we need from 11 hospitals has to be done in a much more urgent, orchestrated, way," Chavez said. "This says the board is serious about testing countywide."

Multiple scientific studies have confirmed that social distancing, facial coverings, robust testing and rapid contact tracing are effective at curbing the spread of the virus.

Under the measure, violators could be

fined \$25 to \$500 and businesses could face penalties ranging from \$250 to \$5,000. The fine amount will depend on the severity of the violation, the gravity of the public health risk exposed and repeat offenses, among other considerations.

Unlike enforcement policies in other Bay Area counties, Santa Clara County lawmakers are proposing a grace period of up to 72 hours that allows an individual to avoid facing fines — subject to the discretion of the enforcement officer — if the violation is corrected. Resisters could be

charged with a misdemeanor and fined up to \$1,000.

"It is the intent of this provision to provide a grace period as the default whenever applicable," the resolution says, "however, all matters relating to grace periods are within the sole discretion of the Enforcement Officer and are not appealable."

Much of the onus to enforce the county health order, including the mandatory face mask requirement, fell on businesses and residents. County leaders had recommended reporting COVID-19 workplace violations

to the Office of Labor Standards Enforcement and other violations to the District Attorney's Office.

Face coverings have become a hotly debated political issue, even in Silicon Valley, with some refusing or forgetting to wear masks. Supervisor Dave Cortese in July described enforcing the rules somewhat of an "honor" system, hoping people would be peer-pressured into doing the right thing.

The county said the fines will fund compliance education and the cost of the Public Health Order Enforcement Program.

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B A C K - T O - S C H O O L**National survey finds 55 percent of parents want their children to learn in person**

With reopening schools being a hotly debated topic and in-person learning essential for letting parents go to work this fall, WalletHub has just released a nationally representative School Reopening Survey.

The new report data reveals that 55 percent of parents want their children to learn in person. Below are highlights of the survey.

- Some parents can't stay home. 32 percent of parents are not able to work remotely.

- Mixed feelings on teacher compensation. Almost 1 in 4 parents think that teachers who work remotely should either get paid less, work longer hours or give up vacation days.

- Fathers want schools to open more. 31 percent more fathers than mothers want schools to reopen for in-person learning.

- Politics impact reopening opinions. Two-thirds of conservative parents favor schools reopening, versus less than half of liberal parents.

Q&A with WalletHub

Are parents able to supervise their kids while working from home if schools hold remote learning?

"A significant share of parents, 32 percent, cannot work remotely. If schools hold remote learning this fall, this may create a difficult situation where some parents will have to choose between leaving their children unsupervised, paying extra for childcare or taking a leave from work," said Jill Gonzalez, WalletHub analyst. "Leaving children home alone might not be especially difficult for high schoolers, but is not an option for young kids."

Do Americans think teachers who work remotely should be penalized?

"Almost 1 in 4 Americans think teachers who work remotely should be penalized by either getting paid less, working longer hours or giving up vacation time," said Jill Gonzalez, WalletHub analyst. "It's up to school districts and states, not teachers, whether schools reopen for in-person learning, so it makes sense that the vast majority of Americans don't think teachers who work remotely should be treated any differently."

Is there a difference between fathers and mothers when it comes to opinions on reopening schools?

"About 31 percent more fathers than mothers want schools to reopen for in-person learning this fall," said Jill Gonzalez, WalletHub analyst. "The divide between fathers and mothers may be partially explained by the fact that women currently make up a smaller percentage of the workforce than men and have been losing their jobs at a greater rate than men during the COVID-19 pandemic. More women than men may be able to at least temporarily supervise children at home."

How do conservatives and liberals differ in their opinions on in-person learning?

"Two-thirds of conservative parents want to have in-person learning this fall, compared to less than half of liberal parents," said Jill Gonzalez, WalletHub analyst. "This political divide lines up with what we see among elected officials. The Trump Administration is highly in favor of reopening schools, while Democrats tend to support extending remote learning until we see further reductions in infections."

For the complete survey results, visit: <https://wallethub.com/blog/school-reopening-survey/78092>

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Report: Most and least equitable school districts in California

With research showing that low-income students will fall behind their wealthy peers if schools operate remotely due to COVID-19, and a renewed focus on racial equality, WalletHub has just released its report on the Most and Least Equitable School Districts in California.

To find out where school funding is distributed most fairly, WalletHub scored the equitability of each school district in California based on two metrics: average household income and expenditures for public elementary and secondary schools per pupil.

In order to rank the states with the most and least equitable school districts, WalletHub first scored 12,919 school districts throughout the U.S. based on two metrics: average household income and expenditures for public elementary and secondary schools per pupil.

Following are the most and least equitable school districts in California.

Most Equitable

1. Los Nietos School District
2. Gen Shafter Elementary School District
3. Browns Elementary School District
4. Pajaro Valley Unified School District
5. Bonita Unified School District
6. Roseville City Elementary School District
7. Tracy Joint Unified School District
8. Anderson Valley Unified School District
9. San Marcos Unified School District
10. Val Verde Unified School District

Least Equitable

910. Death Valley Unified School District
911. Portola Val Elementary School District
912. Panoche Elementary School District
913. Bolinas Stinson Unified School District
914. Hillsborough City School District
915. Ross Elementary School District
916. Woodside Elementary School District
917. Silver Fork Elementary School District
918. Desert Center Unified School District
919. Indian Springs Elementary School District

WalletHub ranked San Jose Unified School District 504. To view the full report, please visit: <https://wallethub.com/edu/most-least-equitable-school-districts-in-california/77056>

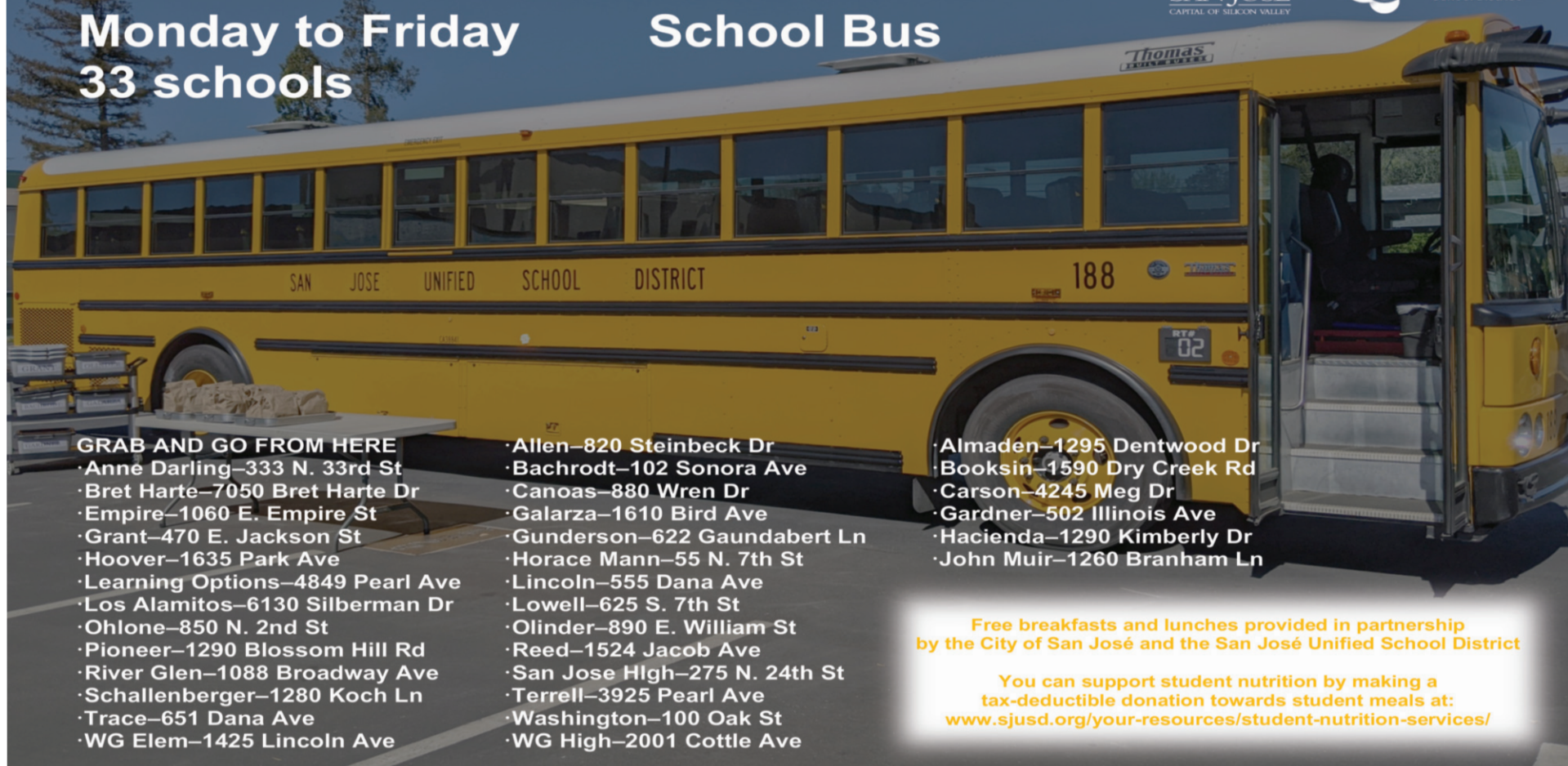
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- Hoover—1635 Park Ave
- Learning Options—4849 Pearl Ave
- Los Alamitos—6130 Silberman Dr
- Ohlone—850 N. 2nd St
- Pioneer—1290 Blossom Hill Rd
- River Glen—1088 Broadway Ave
- Schallenberger—1280 Koch Ln
- Trace—651 Dana Ave
- WG Elem—1425 Lincoln Ave

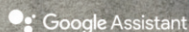
- Allen—820 Steinbeck Dr
- Bachrodt—102 Sonora Ave
- Canoas—880 Wren Dr
- Galarza—1610 Bird Ave
- Gunderson—622 Gaundabert Ln
- Horace Mann—55 N. 7th St
- Lincoln—555 Dana Ave
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- Reed—1524 Jacob Ave
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- Washington—100 Oak St
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✓ FOCUS ON YOUR HOBBIES

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✓ EXERCISE REGULARLY

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✓ CALL FRIENDS AND FAMILY

GET PLENTY OF SLEEP

✓ GET PLENTY OF SLEEP

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Times **Community News**

New app lets you ditch transponder and use phone to take California toll roads

By William Bellou
Publisher

California has given the green light to drivers to pay tolls using a new technology that eliminates the need for a transponder. The technology is a user-friendly app known as Uproad.

Drivers can now use their mobile devices on toll roads and bridges in California, as more people take to the roads versus air due to coronavirus during this busy summer travel season.

Easy to use

Here's how it works: you download the app, sign up for an account and pay as you go or sign up for an optional membership. Subscribers who don't already have a toll payment account will receive toll discounts, so not only does the app save them time, it saves them money.

The next time you take a toll road, you'll get a notification on your phone with the amount of the toll. The total is deducted from your balance on the app or charged to your payment method of choice – credit/debit card, PayPal or Venmo.

Uproad works on 13 toll roads in California including the SR-133 Laguna Freeway, SR-241, SR-261 and SR-73 in Los Angeles and Orange Counties. It also works on the SR-125 Southbay Expressway in San Diego.

Works going over Golden Gate Bridge

In Northern California, it works for many of the bridges including the Antioch Bridge, Benicia Martinez Bridge, Carquinez Bridge, Dumbarton Bridge, Golden Gate Bridge, Richmond San Rafael Bridge, San Francisco Oakland Bay Bridge and San Mateo Hayward Bridge.

The company's goal is to add as many toll roads as possible across the U.S. to its network of supported roads.

"Uproad App is about making tolls simple, said Andrew Peppard, Director of Uproad Operations. "How do we get drivers out there on the roadways and not have to worry about their tolls and that's where we think we can provide that service from a technology point of view."



Board moves toward recognizing 'Juneteenth' as a countywide holiday

The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors moved forward on Tuesday, August 11, to declaring Juneteenth as a Countywide holiday starting next year, joining just a handful of counties across the country to recognize this day.

Supervisor Dave Cortese's proposal was approved unanimously by the Board to commemorate the ending of slavery in the United States 30 months and 19 days after President Lincoln's Emancipation Proclamation on January 1, 1863.

It wasn't until June 19, 1865, that 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.

The vote followed dozens of speakers who asked the Board to approve the proposal and recognize the legacy of injustice against people of color. Supervisors also received many letters and other voices of support from the community.

"Designating Juneteenth as a County holiday will be one of the ways to further correct the inequities of the past and our move toward ending systemic racism," Cortese said. "It is significant that this day be added to the County's holiday observances that include honoring Cesar Chavez, Dr. Martin Luther King, among others."

San Jose Unified School District 2020-2021 Calendar

School Holidays	Starts	Finishes
Fall Break	28 Sep 2020 (Mon)	2 Oct 2020 (Fri)
Thanksgiving Break	26 Nov 2020 (Thu)	27 Nov 2020 (Fri)
Christmas Break	21 Dec 2020 (Mon)	4 Jan 2021 (Mon)
Mid Winter Break	15 Feb 2021 (Mon)	19 Feb 2021 (Fri)
Spring Break	12 Apr 2021 (Mon)	16 Apr 2021 (Fri)
Last Day of School	3 Jun 2021 (Thu)	

Times **Community News**

There are currently two cardrooms in San Jose - Casino M8trix and Bay 101 (pictured).

San Jose City Council approves November 3 ballot measure increasing cardrooms tax

The San Jose City Council voted 10-1 to place a measure on the fall ballot to up taxes on cardrooms, third-party proposition players and expand the number of tables.

If approved by voters, the measure would increase the tax on cardrooms making at least \$10,000 a year from 15 to 16.5 percent starting January 2021.

The city would also impose a tax on third-party proposition player services—also referred to as “props” which act like bankers in various games and operate separately from the cardroom.

The measure would tax props’ monthly providing revenues at varying rates: 5 percent for revenues up to \$25 million, 7.5 percent for revenues between \$25,000,001 and \$30 million and 10 percent for revenues over \$30 million.

The final portion of the measure would be to increase the total number of tables in the city by 30, or 15 per business in the city’s two cardrooms: Bay 101 and Casino M8trix. Altogether, the measure could generate approximately \$15 million a year to support fire protection, disaster preparedness, 911 response, youth programs and homeless residents.

Mayor Sam Liccardo, who cast the sole dissenting vote, said that while he supported the tax increase, he was opposed to expanding the number of tables.

Councilman Johnny Khamis said that while he agreed with Liccardo, “gambling will happen whether it’s legalized or not.”

New provisions expand opportunity for claiming California unemployment benefits

Pandemic Unemployment Assistance expanded in March but many may not have applied nor understand they qualify

You may currently be qualified to receive back monies for unemployment.

Take heed and tell others.

If you are out of work or your hours have been cut back, go to edd.ca.gov.

The pandemic has opened up new additional opportunities for Californians to apply and receive unemployment benefits and extra PANDEMIC MONIES are now included in addition to whatever unemployment benefits one may be getting.

Even if you have not worked for a long time you might find you can now qualify to receive unemployment.

Key oversight people express it is best not to assume and instead apply for unemployment the worst that can happen is you might be denied but also you might be approved.

You might be surprised to find out that after taking a short amount of time in applying on line, you qualify! Don’t assume you do not qualify.

Often people are hesitant to apply but new laws due to the Covid-19 virus have created more opportunity to help those in need. You may be entitled to back benefits too.

California’s Employment Development Department states: The sudden and immense impact of the COVID-19 pandemic is unprecedented. EDD program benefits are available to workers and employers whose earnings are impacted.

The federal CARES Act has added these provisions to expand unemployment benefits so we can help more Californians impacted by COVID-19:

- Pandemic Unemployment Assistance – New program to provide unemployment benefits for people who don’t usually qualify for regular Unemployment Insurance.

- Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation – A 13-week benefit extension for people who have used all benefits available in their regular Unemployment Insurance claim.

- Pandemic Additional Compensation – An additional \$600 federal stimulus payment automatically added to each week of benefits received between March 29 and July 25, 2020. Any unemployment benefits through July 25 will still be eligible for the extra \$600, even if you are paid later.

If you use all your Pandemic Emergency Unemployment Compensation benefits, you may qualify for a FED-ED extension too.

Remember, if you are out of work for any reason and if you do gigs or are also self-employed, you might consider web searching California Unemployment Benefits or go to: edd.ca.gov

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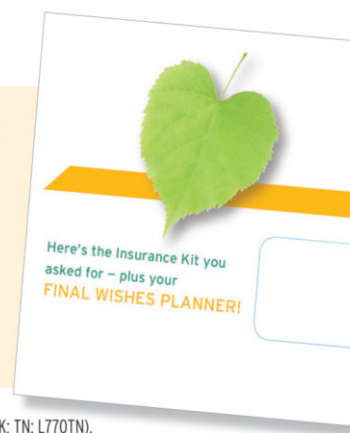
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Father-daughter duo create career development company for young women in technology

‘Everyone is born to do something great.’

By **Sandhya Iyer**
Special to the Times

When Sundar Vanchinathan started his online career development startup, Geek Girl Careers, in 2016, he had, among a ton of research and industry insight, one quote driving him forward: “Everyone is born to do something great. The only question is, what is it?” At the time, his daughter — me, the author — was about to start college, slowly figuring out what kind of career path she wanted to carve out for herself.

But how does any young person figure out what they’re meant to do or what kind of career they want to build? It’s daunting, and nearly impossible without the help of mentors and experience. If students are at a lack for these, they often box themselves into pursuits that society or their parents consider conventionally successful.

It’s hard to define a successful career, but those where people can gain and contribute the most value often lie at the intersection

of their passions, personality and skills, so Vanchinathan built a platform that helped young women find careers in tech that aligned with those traits. He targeted the tech industry specifically because while it’s rapidly growing and undeniably trendy, it has a prominent gender gap and desperately lacks the voices and talents of young women.

Geek Girl Careers is a one-of-a-kind platform that uses a personality assessment — developed by psychologists at Columbia University — network of professional experts, opportunity listings and skill development tools to help young women who are in high school and college discover their ideal career in tech and break down the industry’s gender gap.

The personality assessment takes just two minutes to complete

The personality assessment is deceptively simple, as it only takes two minutes to complete, but is extremely accurate. When I took the assessment as an incoming freshman at Syracuse University, the top two careers the system suggested were public relations and marketing — and that’s the degree I ended up graduating with four years later.

I’d always been passionate about writing



Geek Girls Careers entrepreneurs **Sundar Vanchinathan** and **Sandhya Iyer**.

and meeting new people, but before exploring Geek Girl Careers and talking to mentors in the field, I didn’t realize I could translate those passions to a career beyond journalism. With a degree in PR and marketing, I can work in nearly any industry, even tech — something that’s often overlooked by or not made clear to those students who are in high school or starting college.

Since graduating in May, I’ve taken over Geek Girl Careers as CEO, working to build partnerships and recruit new users and experts to the platform. Our mission — helping young women discover their dream careers in tech — is always relevant, but the

platform is especially valuable in the current state of things, when job opportunities are scarcer and it’s difficult to meet new people and build personal mentoring relationships.

Helping young women find careers where they’ll truly be both happy and successful

Despite the circumstances, we have 300 users and nearly 150 experts on our rapidly growing site, who are all ready to advise our Geek Girls. With every new user, we’re on our way to increasing the diversity and representation in tech, and more importantly, helping young women find careers where they’ll truly be both happy and successful. Everyone has something great to offer — our role here at Geek Girl

Careers is to help young women figure out exactly what that is for them, and how they can make their professional dreams a reality.

About Sandhya Iyer

Sandhya Iyer was born and raised in Evergreen and graduated from Evergreen Valley High School in 2016. She graduated from Syracuse University in May 2020.

Editor’s note: If you’re interested in signing up as a Geek Girl or an expert on the platform, go to geekgirlcareers.com. To stay updated on their events and growth, follow them on Instagram @GeekGirlCareer and LinkedIn @Geek Girl Careers

NEWS AND NOTES

Former San Jose Vice Mayor Rose Herrera endorses Ann Ravel for State Senate

Former San Jose Vice Mayor Rose Herrera announced her endorsement of Ann Ravel’s campaign to become the next State Senator of District 15.

Herrera previously served as Councilmember for District 8 and Vice Mayor of the Bay Area’s largest city, founded the League of California Cities Women’s Caucus and is a veteran of the United States Air Force.

Herrera joins a growing coalition of distinguished leaders and organizations who are supporting Ravel’s bid for State Senate.

“I have known and respected Ann for many years and she is the representative San Jose needs in the State Senate. California must have politically independent and inclusive leaders to lead the fight on critical issues like the economy, healthcare and housing and homelessness,” said Herrera. “If we want a state government that works for all of us, we need Ann Ravel fighting for us in Sacramento.”

“I’m incredibly honored and grateful to be endorsed by Rose, a longtime leader from San Jose’s Evergreen community and outspoken advocate for Evergreen and East San Jose,” said Ravel. “Rose has always worked to be a collaborative leader — building coalitions to get things done — and I look forward to bringing that same spirit to the California legislature.”



Herrera (above) and **Ravel** (below)



California’s State Senate District 15 includes San Jose, Campbell, Cupertino, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno and Saratoga. This is an open seat — current State Senator Jim Beall is termed out in 2020.

Tech Jargon of the Week Internet of Things (IoT)

By **Shubhi Asthana**
Special to the Times

Have you ever stumbled into a conversation where everyone is speaking around this “techie” word — and even after you’ve broken in, it is difficult to understand the unfamiliar jargon and acronyms? Well, there’s no need to sweat it. Let us teach you the meaning of some commonly used tech words:

Internet of Things (IoT)

The Internet today is evolving at a fast pace. With the broadband internet becoming widely available, more devices are being created with Wi-Fi capabilities and sensors built into them. Technology costs are coming down and smartphone apps penetration is increasing, all creating the perfect scenario for the Internet of Things or simply, “IoT”.

The concept behind IoT is to basically connect any device which performs a function, to the Internet. The device can be any of the household appliances like the coffee maker, fridge, microwave, lamps, or wearable devices, or can even be machines at a factory. IoT build a giant network of these connected devices and forms a relationship using the data that is generated from these devices. Then it uses this relationship to make important decisions or provide recommendations.

ommendations.

So how do you use IoT in your everyday life?

Say, you kept an alarm for 6 AM in the morning. A voice controlled speaker like Amazon Echo wakes you up and tells you the temperature of the day, so you can dress for the office accordingly. Your coffee maker gets the notification that you are getting ready and starts brewing coffee for you. The lamps in your kitchen automatically switch on after sensing your presence. The fridge sensor detects that there is less milk at home, so Amazon Echo automatically orders milk for you and notifies this action to you. While you are leaving for the office, your mobile assistant detects the traffic in the vicinity and tells you the shortest way to reach the office. Wearable devices like Fitbit accumulate your data and tell you how active you have been and how fit you are keeping yourself. It can share this weekly report with you and/or your doctor as you choose.

As we speak, there are thousands of people helping build the world of IoT, as more and more devices are joining the environment. Of all the technology trends in the market, IoT is the one that’s going to give us the most disruption as well as the most opportunity to grow over the next five years.

Do you enjoy reading this column? Send in your comments or feedback to the author at shubhi.saxen@gmail.com. Shubhi Asthana works as a Research Senior Software Engineer at the IBM Almaden Research Center, San Jose.

Times **Community News**

PANDEMIC CASUALTY: **Great America** **to stay closed** **for rest of year**

Official says people with passes can use them in 2021

Great America management has announced the popular theme park will remain shuttered for the rest of the year. But those who bought season passes will be able to use them next year as well.

"Today, California's Great America announced that it would remain closed for the rest of 2020 due to the ongoing challenges related to the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic," Manny Gonzalez, the park's vice president and general manager, posted on the company's website: www.cagreatamerica.com. "The safety of our guests and associates is always our top priority. Although we have done our due diligence in developing a comprehensive safety plan in accordance with industry and public health standards, the continued uncertainty in our region surrounding COVID-19 as well as the diminishing number of calendar days left in the 2020 operating season, has brought us to the difficult decision to keep the park closed for the rest of the year."

"To further show our commitment and appreciation, all 2020 Season passholders will now also receive a Pass Perks Loyalty Reward valid for purchases within the park next season," Gonzales said. "Day tickets sold for the 2020 season will be valid through September 6, 2021 and any Pre-K Passes that were registered or activated in 2020 will be valid through 2021. Affected guests will be receiving an email with relevant details."

The 2021 season passes will be available to purchase beginning on Sept. 8, 2020.

Ann Ravel calls on **Cortese to return** **contributions from** **donor indicted in** **pay-to-play scheme**

State Senate candidate Ann Ravel has called on her opponent, Santa Clara County Supervisor Dave Cortese, to return more than \$4,000 in political donations he has received from attorney Christopher Schumb.

Schumb was among those indicted last week in a corruption probe connected to concealed weapons permits issued by the Santa Clara County Sheriff's office.

According to the indictment announced by District Attorney Jeff Rosen, Schumb faces felony charges including bribery and conspiracy to commit bribery and faces up to four years in prison.

Food-soiled **containers go** **in the garbage**

With a lot of our favorite restaurants open for takeout only, many of us are disposing of more containers than usual.

While we may be changing how we eat out, how we dispose of these containers remains the same: Food and liquid-soiled containers contaminate recycling carts or bins.

It is important to empty and scrape plastic takeout containers and other containers such as pasta jars and yogurt tubs.

If your container is still soiled with food, liquid, or grease after emptying and scraping, place it in the garbage cart or bin.

San Jose Fire Dept. **recruitment test** **deadline Sept. 6**

Department seeking men and women exhibiting leadership and action in crisis situations

The San José Fire Department is currently recruiting firefighters EMTs and firefighter paramedics for the 2021 Firefighter Recruit Academy.

The department is seeking individuals who wish to serve the San José community by taking leadership and action in crisis situations.

Interested applicants should have a high school diploma or equivalent, valid EMT certificate (or be in the process), valid CPAT card/letter (within 6 months of application deadline), and take a written exam through the National Testing Network (NTN) website at www.nationaltestingnetwork.com.

The application deadline is September 6, 2020.

For more information, visit www.sjfd.org.

Alaska Airlines **announces new** **service to** **Washington,** **Oregon & Montana**

Alaska Airlines announced new service to Spokane, Washington, Redmond, Oregon and Missoula, Montana from Mineta San Jose International Airport (SJC) beginning September 2020 and March 2021, respectively.

These daily flights are in addition to Alaska's nonstop service to many non-stop destinations from SJC.

These short haul flights will be operated by Horizon Air utilizing an Embraer E175 aircraft, which seats 76 passengers.

To book a flight to these new destinations from SJC, visit Alaska Airlines.



Four tips for working **from home with your pet**

One of the perks of working from home is more time with your pets. While it can be exciting to have your furry friends by your side all day, it's important to know how to make the day as productive and pleasant as possible for you and your pet.

Mindfully incorporating your pet and his needs into your routine can allow for an efficient and successful workday with your four-legged coworker. "Working from home is a new reality that so many people across the country are adjusting to," said Dave Bradey, vice president of people and organization at Mars Petcare.

"Having the opportunity to spend more time with our pets allows us to strengthen our bonds and enjoy all the mood-boosting, stress-reducing benefits they bring," Bradey said. "Through our Better Cities for Pets™ program, it's our goal to help people enjoy the benefits of a life with pets, even when they're adorably interrupting our work calls."

Consider these tips to help make working from home with your pets as smooth as possible, and visit BetterCitiesForPets.com for more information on keeping pets happy and healthy.

1. Feed and play with your pet before you start your workday. Keeping a schedule is an important step to help ensure the day goes smoothly for both you and your furry friend. Before you start your workday, make sure to find time to feed and play with your pet. Doing these things before you start working can help tire out Fido or Fluffy and

should keep him happy and satisfied, making it less likely that your important call is interrupted.

2. Provide distractions during calls and meetings. It's important to be proactive with your pet's needs during the day, rather than reacting to an interruption, like your pet needing to go outside or have his water bowl refilled. If you have a call or video conference that can't be interrupted, be sure to take care of your pet's needs ahead of time. It also helps to provide some distractions for your pet in advance of the call. Hide treats around your home to create a scavenger hunt or bring out an interactive toy to keep him preoccupied.

3. Reward good behavior. Positive reinforcement is a way to teach your pet good behaviors. It's important to give your pet regular performance reviews by rewarding good behavior and discouraging the bad during the workday. Make sure to let your pet know when he's doing the right thing by giving extra love and treats to encourage him to continue being the good boy that he is.

4. Schedule quality time during the day. Your pet will likely be just as excited as you to spend some extra time together. Make sure to schedule breaks during the day to give your pet all your attention. Whether it's a quick walk, some designated play time or fetch in the yard, quality time can be a mood booster for both you and your pet and will make sure he feels the love. (Family Features)

Times Feature

Meek

Continued from page 1

quickly and was bored. Although Meek researched ways to support him, she said she didn't find much as there wasn't funding for gifted students. By the time her youngest started school, she had learned about charter schools and the school district's Two-Way Bilingual Immersion (TWBI) education program, in which students develop dual language proficiency in both English and Spanish.

They found five schools that had it (Bachrodt Academy, Gardner Academy, River Glen, Trace and Willow Glen) and chose Gardner Academy. However, Meek also learned that only 10% of the Gardner students were proficient in English Language Arts. She said she was shocked and wanted to fight on their behalf. When her son was in kindergarten, she joined the Parent Teacher Organization, but the principals kept changing and she didn't see much improvement. She said that she felt something was wrong at the district level, which prompted her to become a SJUSD trustee.

"All kids should be able to perform," Meek said, "whether lower performing and needing extra support, or higher performing and needing differentiated support."

Meek is aware of the challenges the district faces having to manage three grade levels -- high school, middle and elementary/TK -- as well as socio-economic disparities and a variety of issues. Having to be responsible for making day-to-day decisions, creating a vision, dealing with regulations, food programs, budgets, unions and bargaining units makes it difficult to implement change. "You have to find a way to work within all of these constraints to drive performance improvements in schools," Meek said. "It's probably too much to ask of any school district to have all of these constraints coupled with particularly disadvantaged families who need more supports than we as a society are providing them to make any real meaningful outcome in the near future."

Meek said that part of the problem stems from Sacramento and the federal government making well-intentioned laws but not checking whether they met the mark. If they didn't, rather than adjusting the laws, they just create new ones which address a single aspect at a time.

"After several years, you end up with a patchwork of laws that don't always work together," Meek said, "for instance regarding charter schools which are such an issue in the community."

Meek said the government created charter school laws to help some students perform better and give parents a choice, but charter schools have taken kids away from the public schools, creating financial and union issues resulting in lawsuits.

Meek previously served as president of the SJUSD school board, working closely with the superintendent to set the agenda, making sure board members felt heard and acting as district spokesperson with the press.

Throughout her time serving as trustee, Meek said her priority was always student performance.

"If you're not talking about it, you're not going to shift changes," she said.

Before she joined the board, Meek said the only time the board collectively discussed student performance was when the state released testing results. So, she regularly spoke about high performance to the school board and featured reports on how high performing schools achieved their results.

"It's the board's responsibility to set that direction and we did it," Meek said. "For the last two school years, the priorities have been on subgroups. If we can pull up the data of the lowest performing groups, it will bring up all of the groups in the district."

Meek said the district is looking at the support students receive at home including nutrition, access to books and whether parents read to their children at a young age.

"We have been focused very pointedly on Hispanic males and special education students," Meek said, "So for the last two school years, that has been a regular topic at board meetings and closed sessions. Performance is now a very common vocabulary in the board meetings."

Meek said she is very excited and proudest about that and thinks it will make a difference in the future.

One of the greatest challenges Meek faced while serving on the school board was SJUSD's controversial idea to build affordable teacher housing in Almaden, relocating Leland High School and Bret Harte Middle School. Meek said that when the idea was first raised, she had some concerns but thought it had the potential to be a win-win situation.

"We had the potential for our staff to have a beautiful housing community and students to have a brand-new campus with new state of the art technology and lab rooms," Meek said. "It was about having multiple locations of affordable housing giving employees options to fit their price points."

Meek said that communications were an issue. The board wanted to make sure the community knew what was happening, why it was happening and what could potentially happen.

"We could do things in private or go public not having a lot of information, but trying to be open and transparent," she said. "We chose the latter, but it was difficult for the community to understand, nothing was decided. There wasn't a lot of openness to learn new information or to be patient. There was a real desire to quickly shut that down from some of our community members."

The community expressed concern with the inability of students to walk to their neighborhood schools, taxes and traffic.

Meek said that at the very beginning, she didn't know if it was the best idea, but was open to learning and finding ways to retain staff as "a high-quality teacher is going to make the difference for every single child."

Although there are no term limits for school board members, Meek said she felt it was time to step down.

"I feel like I'm not going to be able to make the difference that I wanted to make in terms of student performance," she said. "There is a tremendous amount of time and emotional energy that goes into it because I'm so passionate on the topic."

The loss of both of her parents in the past four years (she lost her mom in March), the realization that her children are growing up

See MEEK, next page

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Times **Feature**



REPORT

2020's most pet-friendly cities

With National Homeless Animals Day celebrated last week and over 85 million U.S. pet-owning households projected to spend \$99 billion this year, the personal finance website WalletHub today released an in-depth report on 2020's Most Pet-Friendly Cities.

In order to determine where Americans' animal companions can enjoy the best quality of life without breaking the bank, WalletHub compared the creature-friendliness of the 100 largest cities across 25 key metrics. The data set ranges from minimum pet-care provider rate per visit to pet businesses per capita to walkability.

Most Pet-Friendly Cities

- 1. Tampa, FL
- 2. Austin, TX
- 3. Las Vegas, NV
- 4. Orlando, FL

- 5. Seattle, WA
- 6. St. Louis, MO
- 7. Atlanta, GA
- 8. New Orleans, LA
- 9. Birmingham, AL
- 10. San Diego, CA
- Least Pet-Friendly Cities**
- 91. Newark, NJ
- 92. Chula Vista, CA
- 93. Mesa, AZ
- 94. Buffalo, NY
- 95. Laredo, TX
- 96. Bakersfield, CA
- 97. Honolulu, HI
- 98. Santa Ana, CA
- 99. San Bernardino, CA
- 100. Fresno, CA

To view the full report and your city's rank, visit: www.wallethub.com/edu/most-pet-friendly-cities/5562

Meek

Continued from previous page
and turning 50 four years ago has resulted in personal reflection.
"I want the remaining part of my life to be joyous," Meek said. "I cannot say working on the school board has been joyous. I did it because I fundamentally wanted to make a difference, but I feel like I will not in this particular setting. I want to find something where I can make a difference, maybe on a smaller scale. Maybe it's not for 28,000 students. Maybe it's for one or two."
Meek worked for five years on Silicon Valley Leadership Group's foundation board, resigning this summer. Last year,

she joined the board of Hearts and Minds Activity Center, which offers Alzheimer's and Dementia support. As it is also a child-care center, pre-COVID 19, it also offered interaction between children and seniors.
"When my father had Alzheimer's, they gave him hope and friendship and happily listened to his same stories," Meek said.
Meek also enjoys kayaking, gardening and quilting.
She advises the next school board member, likely Almaden resident Wendi Mahaney-Gurahoo, to care about all issues and have a kind of urgent-patience.
"It is a bureaucracy and change is slow," Meek said, "but you can't just wait. You have to make some waves and advocate or it's not going to change."

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We are an Open and Affirming Congregation, and celebrate members of the LGBTQ+ Community. Joy-filled worship every Sunday at 10:00 AM, with communion open to all. Join Pastor Naomi for tea/coffee at Orchard Valley cafe in Campbell during community drop-in office hours from 11 AM to 1 PM on most Tuesdays. Our ministries/activities include:

- Bible study on the second and fourth Wednesday of every month, at 6PM.
- A Food Pantry serving anyone in need—open Tu/Th/ Sa 10:00 AM to Noon.
- Lighted Window Productions featuring uplifting concerts, thought-provoking theater productions, informative lec-

tures, and even an occasional karaoke night—all in a wholesome environment.

Our activities flow from our core values:

- Extravagant Joy
- Passionate Faith
- Loving Respect
- Deep Connectedness
- Intentional Growth
- Shared Laughter

Visit us at our web site at: church@campbellucc.org or better yet, visit us at our worship services on Sundays at 10:00 AM. Coffee, refreshments, and conversation always, right after service.

CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF ALMADEN VALLEY, UCC

6581 Camden Ave., San Jose, CA 95120. Pastor, Rev. Marty Williams, 408 268 0243. www.ccvucc.org. We are a welcoming church with a progressive approach to faith, worship and giving to our local community. We are proud to be UCC, Open and Affirming (O&A) and welcome members of the LGBT community. We support local LifeMoves (formerly InnVision) Shelter Feedings once a month, San Francisco Night Ministry, Second

Harvest Food Bank, Church World Service, and Communities Responding to End Poverty.

Worship Sunday, 9:00 AM followed by fellowship and refreshments. 1st Sunday in Worship: Holy Communion

2nd Sunday in Worship: Folks Choir and Potluck Sunday.

Tuesdays, AA Meetings, 8:15 - 9:15 PM.

Wednesdays, 9:30 AM, Women's Study Group.

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5351 Carter Ave., San Jose 95118
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www.bibleroad.org
We strive to be a group of Christians that love and honor God and Jesus Christ in our daily lives. We assemble each Sunday to encourage each other through singing, studying, praying and sharing in the Lord's supper. Simple—just like what one reads about in the New Testament. Bible class at 9:30 AM
Worship at 10:30 AM
Located in south San Jose near Kooser Rd. and Camden Ave. (behind the Almaden Valley Athletic Club). Come make new Christian friends!

THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ALMADEN

6581 Camden Ave. San Jose, CA 95120. The Rev. Shelley Booth Denney, Rector Phone: 408-268-0243

Web: www.eca-sj.org

At the Episcopal Church in Almaden (ECA), we are joyful 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.



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(408) 239-6668

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Q) What is Islam, who are Muslims, and what is the Quran?

A) Islam is a faith and way of life. It is the last in the line and a continuation of the Abrahamic faiths. People who follow Islam are called Muslims. The Quran is the Divine book that guides all mankind to come closer to their creator. Please visit our website to learn more.

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Telephone: (408) 294-7254 x310. We are a community serving the Christ from the heart of the City, working to know Jesus and make Jesus known by serving, worshipping, and learning together. Worship services are at 10:00 AM at the Horace Mann Community Center (7th and Santa Clara Streets). Worship includes both contemporary and traditional music, a message that is relevant to real life, based in the Bible, and meaningful to people of all ages and backgrounds. We work in our community to provide real assistance and long-term, life-saving solutions: food, housing, counseling, and spiritual direction. Our children's & families' ministries include Sunday classes, outdoor family activities such as bike rides and fishing trips. Come, Make a Difference and feel the difference God can make in your life!

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thepoint.church

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3695 Rose Terrace Cir
San Jose, CA 95148
(408) 270-7646

English Service:
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Spanish Service:
11:00 AM

Cambodian Service:
11:00 AM

Cantonese Service:
11:00 AM

Mandarin Service:
11:00AM

Youth Extreme Point (7th-12th grade):
Every Saturday at 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

SAINT ANTHONY CATHOLIC CHURCH

We invite you to become a part of our hospitable, intimate Catholic parish. We are a caring commu-

nity, promoting spiritual growth, reaching out to people in need and wherever you get to know people by name. We offer children's religious education (CREATE); Youth Ministry (BLAST & X-STATIC); Scripture Study (day & evening); Senior's Group and many other adult ministries as well. Saint Anthony parish is located in Almaden Valley at 20101 McKean Road, San Jose, 95120. Our weekend Masses are at 4 p.m. on Saturday at our historic church at 21800 Bertram Road in New Almaden, CA 95042 and on Sunday at 8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 5:30 p.m. at the McKean Road location. Our Parish Office is open Monday 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. and Tuesday thru Thursday, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 1 - 4 p.m. For more information, stop by the Parish Office or call (408) 997-4800, or visit our website at www.churchstanthony.com. Fr. Larry Hendel, Pastor.



God is One
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SAN JOSE GURDWARA

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 (praying), 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 which is open 365 days of the year and serves complementary vegetarian meals. We also encourage you to enter our history room on site and walk

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www.stfrancisofassisi.com or www.stfranciscatholicpreschool.org
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St. Francis of Assisi Gathering Hall
Sunday 9:00 AM, Sunday 11:00AM, Igbo Mass - Second Sunday of the month 12:30 PM
Mt. Hamilton Grange - 2840 Aborn Road
Sunday 9:30 AM
The Villages Gated Community (Cribari Auditorium) Sunday 8:15 AM
For more information, please call or visit us at the Parish Mission Center open M-F 9:00 AM -12:00 PM; 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM. Come join us and share your presence with us so that together we may grow and share our gifts to help build God's Kingdom!

For Worship listing ads, call 408.483-5458

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- exercise classes for all levels of ability;
- lunches and other social programs

organized and run by members of the Association;

- book clubs, cooking, computer and photography classes;
- trips to local and not so local places of interest such as the Steinbeck Museum in Salinas, Whale Watching in Monterey, casino trips and more.

As a member you're encouraged to help plan these activities and suggest new ones to enjoy. The Senior Association Philanthropy Program set up a process to donate funds to other non-profit organizations that reflect our mission.

Connected

We enjoy meeting new people, making new connections and getting involved. All volunteer opportunities are based on your time and energy commitment. Fees for classes, trips and social events are kept low because of senior volunteer participation and membership strength.

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The Swan has been the #1 Agent in Almaden Valley each year for the last 11 years as measured by Dollars per Agent Per Year. And 2019 was no exception.

She is the only Almaden Valley specialist to have been nationally ranked and recognized twice by The Wall Street Journal/RealTrends for being in the Top 250 Agents in the US. Additionally, Swan is consistently among the Top 100 Agents in the SF Bay Area.

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