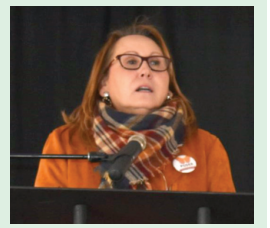


Choral Project and SJSU Jazz bring holiday magic to your home
SEE PAGES 2, 3



Up in the air
County moves forward with airport closure, plans to repurpose land
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South Bay Latinx community pushes Biden administration for immigration reform
SEE PAGE 6



DEC. 4 - DEC. 17, 2020 ■ VOL. 37, NO. 25

Evergreen Times

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COVID-19 RESPONSE

County leaders urge vigilance, strict compliance with health orders

Only 68 Intensive Unit Beds available in county

Santa Clara County leaders are urging members of the public to abide by the State and local health orders and exercise extreme caution as the County continues to see surging COVID-19 case counts and record hospitalizations

"As we head into the holiday season, the way to show family, friends and fellow Santa Clara County residents that you care about them is to not hold large gatherings with them that can easily spread the virus," said Cindy Chavez, President of the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors. "We are reaching a tipping point with COVID-19 numbers and we need to change course now."

Available Intensive Care Unit beds in the county, including Santa
See HEALTH, page 2

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Holly Oak Elementary School students create cardboard cutouts to fill campus with school spirit

Still Together, Safe Together

By Johanna Villareal
Special to the Times

Holly Oak Elementary School custodian, James Herrera is missing the Holly Oak Elementary School students.

"The campus feels empty without them," Herrera said, as he cleaned off surfaces and areas at the school where staff members and teachers still come daily to conduct distance learning.

Herrera, who has worked at Holly Oak for seven years, says that one of his favorite things

about his job has been seeing the K-6 grade students, exchanging high fives, and listening to them across the school campus each day.

When the COVID-19 pandemic closed schools in the Evergreen School District in March 2020, and then the schools opened to distance learning in August, Herrera said that the Holly Oak school campus definitely felt different without the students.

"With our students being on distance learning since March, the campus has been empty," Herrera said. "I know how students miss being in school and many of them have been feeling sad about not seeing their friends. I thought hav-



Holly Oak Custodian **James Herrera** pauses to pose with some of the welcoming cardboard creations.

ing human sized cut-outs would boost the morale of the community when they come by and visit the school. That's when the "Still Together, Safe Together" school wide art project began to take shape."

Similar to the cardboard cut-outs of fans used in the stands at MLB, NFL and NBA games, for the "Still Together, Safe Together" school wide art project, students were asked to use cardboard to
See CUTOUTS, page 20

Drive-thru Christmas in the Park is now open

By William Bellou
Publisher

San Jose's beloved holiday tradition, Christmas in the Park, is now open at its new venue.

Instead of a stroll through downtown's Plaza de Cesar Chavez, Christmas in the Park will instead be a drive-through event at History Park on Senter Road. And — like the annual Fantasy of Lights show at Vasona Park — you have to reserve a day and time to visit in advance.

A change in venue for Christmas in the Park, the first time in its 41-year history, was required because a loss of sponsorship revenue due to the pandemic, not to mention the lost vendor and ride income normally taken in during a normal year.

"People are going to expect to see Christmas in the Park from a car, and I think they're going to be blown away," he said. "They're going to be overwhelmed by how much more there is to see," Minsky said.

As a bonus, the regular Christmas in the Park



A digital rendering of the pixel light Christmas tree. Photo courtesy of Christmas in the Park.

displays, the historic and replica buildings at History Park also will be decorated, along with the illuminated replica of the San Jose Light Tower.

"There will be light tunnels, giant snowflakes and hundreds of decorated trees, with

the whole visit choreographed to music. Santa Claus will be around, too," said Minsky.

Drive-thru pricing

The pricing for Christmas in the Park drive-thru is \$20 per vehicle for standard-sized cars
See DRIVE-THRU, page 2

SEE OUR LISTINGS OF EVERGREEN AREA MEETINGS, PLACES OF WORSHIP AND CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS INSIDE THE BACK COVER

Times **Community News**



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The Choral Project presents Winter's Gifts: Treasures

The Choral Project, the award-winning, Silicon Valley-based choir, will present "Winter's Gifts: Treasures," its annual holiday concert collaboration with the San Jose chamber orchestra on Dec. 19 at 7 p.m.

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, this year's concert will take place virtually.

A time-honored tradition, Winter's Gifts is a celebration of the holiday season as told through the artistry of musicians from The Choral Project and the San Jose Chamber Orchestra. This year's theme is treas-

ures, featuring a socially distant and safely recorded rendition of Ola Gjeilo's "Across the Vast Eternal Sky."

The virtual presentation will also include music from the archives of 16 years of collaboration, celebrating the winter season, Diwali, Hanukkah, and Christmas.

For registration and tickets, visit www.feelitlive.com/experience/music/winter-s-gifts:treasures/concerts

For more information, visit www.choral-project.org.

Health

Continued from page 1

Clara Valley Medical Center and private healthcare providers, now number just 68. Yesterday, on November 24, the County recorded its highest individual new case count for a single day with 512 cases reported and saw its highest number of COVID-19 hospitalizations of 197 patients.

"The ability for our hospitals to care for the most critical patients is a critical concern when dealing with COVID-19," said Dr. Marty Fenstersheib, COVID-19 Testing Officer for the County of Santa Clara. "The more we protect ourselves and our families from COVID-19, the less likely we will

be filling up hospital beds."

With Thanksgiving week kicking off the holiday shopping season, the County is utilizing additional resources to ensure stores follow the current State purple tier guidelines. Currently, grocery stores must limit capacity to 50% and clothing and retail stores (including malls) must limit capacity to 25%. The Santa Clara County Fire Department, which has a traditional role in enforcing capacity issues for fire codes, will provide much needed support to the Business Compliance Unit's efforts.

"Businesses have a legal, ethical, and moral obligation to protect their employees and the public," said Michael Balliet, Director of Community and Business Engagement for the County of Santa Clara.

Drive-thru

Continued from page 1

and trucks up to 8 ft. high (no buses or limos)— from 5 to 10 p.m., and \$10 during "twilight hour" between 4 and 5 p.m. Reservations are in 15-minute windows, with hundreds of cars able to visit in a single day.

There's no option to visit during the day due to the emphasis on illuminated displays.

Understanding not all families can afford

the admission; Minsky said tickets also are being distributed through nonprofit partners including Somos Mayfair and Catholic Charities. You can donate to sponsor another car when purchasing a ticket.

Editor's Note: Do not buy tickets to the event from individuals. Some have discovered they purchased duplicate tickets. Be sure to buy them directly from the official website. Once tickets are purchased, they may not be resold. Visit: www.christmasinthepark.com/p/buytickets

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Times **Community News**

Hammer Theatre brings holiday cheer with 'Cool Yule' with live stream featuring SJSU jazz orchestra Dec. 9

New 'Pay What You Can' promotion is offered

Students of the San Jose State University Jazz Orchestra will celebrate the start of the season with Cool Yule, a live streamed concert from the Hammer Theatre Center featuring the festive sounds of classic holiday songs, with a jazzy twist.

This concert of contemporary jazz will feature two ensembles performing under the direction of Grammy Award-winning baritone saxophonist and composer Aaron Lington, streaming directly from the Hammer via its newly installed high-definition, studio-quality cameras. San Jose will be extra chill this holiday season with this diverse group of SJSU music majors' unique spin on holiday classics, sure to put audiences in a mellow holiday mood. Cool Yule will be live streamed 7:30pm, Wednesday, December 9. For more information or tickets (pay-what-you-can), the public may visit www.hammertheatre.com.

Directed by Dr. Aaron Lington, the San Jose State University Jazz Orchestra provides students with an opportunity to perform traditional and contemporary reper-

toire from an array of composers spanning over 50 years of Jazz history. Activate hails, "SJSU Jazz Orchestra knows a few numbers of their own. This diverse group of music majors is well versed in diverse styles- from classical to Afro-Latin jazz." Students are selected for this ensemble by audition only.

Aaron Lington is a Grammy Award-winning artist and educator. In 2011, he was named the "Jazz Educator of the Year" by the California Music Educators Association. Cadance Magazine declares, "Lington and compatriots come up with a wonderful and totally American jazz sound, [resulting in] a solid mainstream set based on some sweet melodic improvisation."

Owned by the City of San Jose and operated by San Jose State University, the Hammer Theatre Center is a state-of-the-art performance venue located in the heart of downtown San Jose at 101 Paseo De San Antonio, between 2nd and 3rd Streets. The Hammer's latest tech innovations, crowd-funded by the community and installed over the summer, will allow the venue to continue offering its community vibrant productions through streaming now, while large public gatherings are prohibited, as



Cool Yule, a jazz concert featuring SJSU music students performing the festive sounds of classic holiday songs with a jazzy twist, will live stream from the Hammer Theatre Center December 9. *Photo credit: SJSU H&A Marketing.*

well as in the near future, when only smaller groups may be allowed in the audience. It also offers an alternative for the distant future, when public gatherings may once again be prohibited, and/or to provide accessibility to those unable to attend a live event in person. The 528-seat theatre has presented an array of offerings including outstanding professional productions, community-based works, SJSU shows, and concerts, as well as dance, music, talks, film screenings—even live aerial performances with dancers suspended outside, scaling the sides of the iconic blue building. In its

2018-19 season, the Hammer presented nearly 200 events, drawing more than 57,000 audience members. From jazz performances to mariachi extravaganzas, the popular National Geographic Live! speaker series to the acclaimed National Theatre Live film screenings, Cinequest film festival presentations, ballet and modern dance shows, kid-friendly performances, live art and more, the Hammer's mission is to serve the community through artistic and educational programming that express the unique characteristics and diverse cultures of Silicon Valley.



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Mail carriers start their deliveries before the crack of dawn

It's 'Priority Yule' as Post Offices gear up for the holiday rush

No need for alarm. That clatter and rattle some households may hear before the coffee is brewed, as early as 5 a.m., is not Santa getting an early start.

Mail carriers hit the street before the break of dawn in order to get everyone's packages delivered "in the nick of time."

The jingle and jangle so familiar this time of year is part of the hustle and bustle that postal workers experience during the peak holiday rush.

To keep our promise to make it a 'Priority Yule' and deliver the best holiday for everyone, our carriers will be out making early morning deliveries in many communities throughout the Bay-Valley postal district.

As the rush of the Holiday season gains momentum, the Postal Service needs to keep pace with it. When it comes to moving packages during the holiday it is Priority Yule! Whether it's a lump of coal in a sock or a brand-new sled, you can count on the Postal Service to provide the critical lift for Santa!"

The holiday is always about people sending their best in greeting cards and gifts to extended family and friends. Because we will still be affected by the pandemic, it is hard to determine what that best might be, but rest assured we will deliver our best in providing certainty and continuity during the holiday, and that means starting early in the morning.

Valley Currents

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



Reid-Hillview Airport is pictured in this aerial photo. Courtesy of Santa Clara County.

Santa Clara County moves forward with airport closure, plans to repurpose land

By Madelyn Reese

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

Santa Clara County is moving forward with closing the Reid-Hillview Airport in East San Jose, county lawmakers decided Tuesday after hundreds of pleas from the community to use the land for affordable housing and other community needs.

The supervisors voted 4-1 to begin preparing for a potential airport closure and begin the planning process for repurposing the land. Next steps would include more community discussion to identify how to develop the land.

Supervisor Mike Wasserman was the lone dissenting vote. The decision Tuesday opens the door for the county to use the 180 acres of airport land for future housing, recreation areas, community centers, office space, retail space and anything else the community might want.

County supervisors took the first step to close the airport two years ago when they voted to stop accepting Federal Aviation Administration grants for Reid-Hillview.

The county's legal commitments, including the acceptance of previous FAA loans, means it cannot close the airport until 2031. Still, the vote Tuesday gets the ball rolling and the supervisors want to get a head start on planning.

The issue was hotly debated in the days leading up to the board's final vote. Advocates for getting rid of the airport complained about noise and lead pollution. They said the site could be used for affordable housing in the East Side and other community needs.

San Jose Councilmembers Sylvia Arenas, Magdalena Carrasco and Maya Esparza gathered in front of the airport a day before the vote to urge county supervisors to shutter it.

"To continue to support the operation of this airport is to knowingly endanger the development, the health, and the potentially long-lasting and permanent damaging impacts that it has on our children," Carrasco said. "The time is now to close and relocate this airport to another existing location."

A majority of residents spoke in favor of using the land for something other than an airport during nearly four hours of public comment Tuesday.

"The time to close Reid-Hillview Airport has come," said Salvador "Chava" Bustamante, executive director of Latinos United for a New America. "This (airport) is not only an environmental justice issue, but also a huge land use mistake. This 180 acres of publicly owned land could be put to better use."

But some people said the airport serves an

important purpose by absorbing small plane traffic that would otherwise clog the Mineta International Airport. The airport is also used for emergency response, including during the destructive SCU Lightning Complex blaze earlier this year.

An EPA study released earlier this year used Reid-Hillview Airport as a model for other, similarly sized general aviation airports across the country to study lead concentrations in the air at and around these sites.

According to the EPA models, Reid-Hillview contributes to lead levels that exceed the limits set by the National Ambient Air Quality Standard (NAAQS). "Emissions of lead from aircraft operating on leaded aviation gasoline (avgas) are the largest source of lead released into the atmosphere in the US, accounting for 62% of lead (456 tons) in the 2014 National Emissions Inventory (NEI)," the EPA report states.

Some speakers said they had learned to fly at the 80-year-old airport while other speakers were aviation students at San Jose State University and argued there was value in job training programs hosted at Reid-Hillview.

"Reid-Hillview is a critical reliever airport for San Jose International airport," said Supervisor Mike Wasserman. "Reid-Hillview is a critical asset that, once gone, can never be replaced. San Jose International has no capacity to expand, yet our region's population continues to grow," Supervisor Wasserman said. "Let's identify the problems (with the airport) and work to fix them."

Despite the nod to move forward with redeveloping the land, the county must grapple with a lawsuit over the airport closure.

San Jose attorney Jim McManis filed a lawsuit alleging the county's wasted \$400,000 in taxpayer dollars to study alternative uses for the airport property. It also alleges the county has allowed the airport to deteriorate, creating multiple safety hazards, but those who want to see the airport gone are undeterred.

"I understand that others do not want to lose access to their hobby location and other programs, but think of the people who were there before you arrived, and that are there after you leave," said resident Alex Cardenas. "The airport is in a residential area and has a lot of schools, and people deal with the pollution day after day, not just lead pollution from the fuel but noise pollution as well. So why are these minority communities targeted?"

Supervisors plan to take up the topic again early next year, when another report is due back to supervisors on lead levels around the airport site. The board will likely tackle the issue of mitigating lead dangers at the airport before any further development discussion.

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EvergreenTimes

Times Media, Inc. / (408) 494-7000

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Times **Community News**

South Bay Latinx community starts push for immigration reform in Biden administration

By Lorraine Gabbert

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

While President-elect Joe Biden plans how to meet the challenges facing the nation, San Jose's Latinx community is creating a strategy for immigration reform.

The Si Se Puede Collective will be asking local officials to sign a list of demands, which include a pathway to citizenship for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) recipients, ending raids by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), reuniting families of children being held in cages and COVID-19 relief funding.

Camille Llanes-Fontanilla, executive director of SOMOS Mayfair, said the collective is standing with its immigrant community against what she called racist and unjust policies. With a combined budget of more than \$10 million, the collective serves more than 10,000 people in East San Jose.

"Our moment is now to rise up as one community," Llanes-Fontanilla said at a rally at Mexican Heritage Plaza Nov. 13 in announcing the effort. "We will no longer be the drivers of this economy ... while being demeaned, forced into the shadows, separated from our children, living in fear. Together, we demand policies that recognize people as full human



Maritza Maldonado, executive director of Amigos de Guadalupe, speaks at a rally in San Jose Nov. 13, 2020, calling for immigration reform.

Photo by Lorraine Gabbert.

beings with dignity and self-determination."

According to Priya Murthy, policy and advocacy director of Services, Immigrant Rights & Education Network, there are about 23,000 DACA-eligible individuals and more than 134,000 undocumented immigrants in Santa Clara County. On June 18, the U.S. Supreme Court blocked the Trump administration's attempt to end DACA.

DACA grants temporary protection from deportation and authorization for a work permit for undocumented immigrants who were brought to the United States before age 16.

Maritza Maldonado, executive director of Amigos de Guadalupe, said the collective is counting on Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren and other federal officials to support immigration reform.

"Racist policies, attitudes, behavior and oppressive policies need to stop," said Maldonado. "We will not be silent." Maldonado said immigrants faced a host of challenges during the pandemic.

Undocumented people were unable to return home to bury their parents. Some lost jobs of 25 years after contracting COVID-19.

"The climate of our country makes these kinds of abuses of humanity acceptable to our current president and his followers," Maldonado said.

The Si Se Puede Collective is doing grassroots organizing to gather signatures and build a coalition with other nonprofits.

Shane Patrick Connolly, chair of the Santa Clara County Republican Party, said immigration requires safeguards.

"It's crazy to think a president would let people flood in again after we got it under control by Mexico doing some additional work on their borders and having people apply for asylum," Connolly said. "In a COVID-19 world, it's absolutely insane."

However, Lofgren said she agrees with the collective's goals and that Biden is in favor of immigration reform.

"President-elect Biden has indicated he intends to reunite children with parents and stop separating children from their families, pause ICE raids and protect the DREAMers," Lofgren said.

DREAMers, who get their name from the Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors Act, are undocumented immigrants who entered the United States as minors. The act would bestow DREAMers temporary residency, a work permit and future eligibility for citizenship.

Lofgren said some of the collective's demands would require changing laws, which will be influenced by whether Democrats or Republicans control the Senate.

"Right now, the Republicans control the Senate and Mitch McConnell, the majority leader, has shown no willingness to take up the immigration reform bills we have already sent him," Lofgren told San José Spotlight. "The House sent a bill to allow DREAMers to gain legal residence and citizenship more than a year ago, and he has yet to put it up for a vote."

Connolly disagrees with people who share Lofgren's "all or nothing" approach.

"They want everything they want and no compromise," Connolly said. "She wants amnesty for millions, unlimited family reunification... and those are problematic from the conservative perspective."



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Times Feature

American Society of Landscape Architects honors two East Side Union High School District bond construction projects

Two East Side Union High School District bond construction projects were honored at the American Society of Landscape Architects Sierra Chapter Awards on November 12.

Piedmont Hills High School's Science Courtyard and Oak Grove High School's Student Center and Quad earned Awards of Merit for exceptional design. The judges highlighted the projects' welcoming environments and the revitalization of the campuses. Construction for both projects were completed in 2019.

"From beginning to end, these school construction projects succeeded because of the partnership extended by our school site stakeholders and the generous support of our East Side community. Ultimately, these special awards truly belong to them," said J. Manuel Herrera, ESUHSD Board Trustee.

"These projects demonstrate how well-designed environmental aspects impact the day-to-day perceptions, actions, and behaviors of the entire school community," said Julio Lucas, Bond Program Director, Capital Planning & Development. "We continually strive for equitable communities in all of our campuses, in all aspects, and the construction and renovation of our schools is one aspect of this larger endeavor."



Piedmont Hills High School's Science Courtyard and Oak Grove High School's Student Center and Quad earned Awards of Merit for exceptional design.

First U.S. Study Of COVID-19

Plasma transfusions: 76% of patients improve

New research from Houston Methodist has concluded that plasma transfusions from recovered COVID-19 patients are a safe and somewhat effective treatment option for people dealing with coronavirus symptoms.

The study, published in The American Journal of Pathology, shows that out of 25 patients given a transfusion, 19 saw their condition improve and 11 were discharged.

This was the first U.S. convalescent plasma transfusion trial, and participating patients saw no negative or adverse side effects after receiving plasma. Some smaller studies conducted on blood plasma transfusions for COVID-19 patients have all come to similar conclusions.

This treatment approach for viral diseases certainly isn't new; blood transfusions were used in the same way during the Spanish Flu outbreak of 1918, and more recently during the 2003 SARS pandemic, the 2009 influenza H1N1 outbreak, and the 2015 Ebola outbreak in Africa.

All of the plasma transfusions given for this trial were done on an emergency basis for patients in critical condition. With that in mind, the study's authors say much more research is needed before the therapeutic effects of convalescent serum therapy can be determined.



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Times **Community News****TECH JARGON OF THE WEEK:****Digital Natives**

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:

Digital Natives

Have you had a problem distracting your grandkid from watching videos on your phone, and instead focus on the book you were reading to him or her? Are you amazed how the kids today are exposed to

technology like the Internet, computers and mobile devices at a young age? Well, there is a new term coined for these kids, “Digital Natives.”

The term “Digital Natives” was popularized by education consultant Marc Prensky in his 2001 article entitled Digital Natives, Digital Immigrants. In simple terms, digital native describes a generation of children who are born into a completely digital world. This exposure to technology in the early years is believed to give digital natives a greater familiarity in understanding of technology than people who were born before it was widespread.

But young millennials addiction to all things on the web doesn’t necessarily mean they are a digital native. Nor is someone who just so happened to grow up

in the Internet age.

So, what exactly makes someone a “digital native”?

Marc Prensky who also popularized the term “Digital Immigrants” said that these are people who grew up in one digital culture and moved into another. Digital natives are people who grew up in one culture. They don’t have two cultures to compare. One can observe that the people who grew up in the age of wired computers differ from those who grew up with mobile technology. Hence today’s digital natives may not be necessarily tech savvy, but their sense of knowledge of what’s going on both digitally and culturally is what sets them up to be natives.

Many schoolteachers are still digital immigrants – people who were exposed to

technology later in life and teach in the way they were taught. Some people suggest that digital natives need to be taught in a fundamentally different way. These people believe digital natives think differently due to their early exposure to technology and have become accustomed to using technology to solve the repetitive tasks that form the basis of traditional learning.

At the end of the day, a digital native is someone who gets it, for all the good and bad that it offers.

Prensky stresses “millennials should have a responsible sense of how empowered they are. Digital natives can do things that older generations could just never do.”

About the Author

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

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City of San José Department of Transportation awarded grant for bicycle, pedestrian safety education

The City of San José Department of Transportation received a \$110,000 grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety (OTS) that focuses on the safety of bicyclists and pedestrians.

"This grant supports several important components of our Vision Zero traffic safety program," said John Ristow, City of San José Director of Transportation. "With the OTS funding, we are able to better engage residents through neighborhood walk audits and Vision Zero workshops. This results in a stronger, community-focused safety effort."

"Our goal is that education will change poor behaviors and make our roads safer," OTS Director Barbara Rooney said. "This funding will help ensure the safety of those out biking or walking."

• Grant funds will be used for a variety of activities promoting bicyclist and pedestrian safety

• Education workshops geared toward youth and older adults

• Education on the importance of safety equipment that improves visibility such as reflective armbands, bicycle headlights and taillights

• Community walks and bicycle safety courses

• Bicycle helmet inspections

• Distribution of bicycle helmets to those in need following education presentations

Funding for this program was provided by a grant from the California Office of Traffic Safety, through the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration. The grant program runs thru Sept. 30, 2021.

Times **Community News**

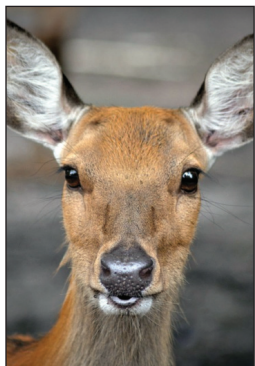
**SOS AUTO REPAIR'S
'QUICK TIP'**

Oh deer!

Some sources say a collision with some sort of wildlife occurs on average every 30-45 minutes. Can you guess who the major culprits are? It just so happens to be those "oh so adorable" Deer.

Fall seems to be when the numbers surge in deer-auto collisions, this is their migration and mating season (October thru December). They seem to wander all over and onto the roads.

A run-in with a deer can be a very uncomfortable situation. Serious injuries to you, your passengers, and the poor deer can be very unpleasant. If there's damage to your vehicle that's a whole different story, damage can be very costly.



So here are some tips in case the situation arises to help reduce damage to you, your car, your passengers, and wildlife of all kinds.

• **BE ALERT**

Keep your eyes on the road at all times. Be on the lookout for Deer crossing signs, but keep in mind just because there isn't a sign doesn't mean there won't be any deer nearby. Look out for their adorable reflective eyes and remember Deer and other animals don't usually travel alone. There might be another animal nearby.

• **HIGH-BEAMS**

If there's no oncoming traffic turn your high-beams on. It will illuminate a much brighter path for you.

• **DAWN & DUSK**

These both seem to be the riskiest times for collisions. Be very cautious when driving at these times.

• **HONK! HONK!**

If you and a deer are having a staring contest, because both of you are as shocked as the other that you've crossed paths try using your horn to scare it off.

• **DON'T SWERVE!**

At least try not to. That may be your first instinct. Brake firmly and try to stay in your lane. Swerving increases the chances of other possible accidents like hitting oncoming traffic, a tree or you losing control of your vehicle just to name a few.

We hope you have a great day today!

If you're concerned about your vehicle for any reason stop by. We'll be happy to assist you.

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Your friends at **SOS AUTO REPAIR** located at 3519 San Felipe Road, San Jose, Ca. 95135: (408) 477-2242.

**PHOTO OP
Tule Elk spotted**

A small herd of Tule Elk were spotted just off Silver Creek Valley Rd. near the Silver Creek Valley Country Club on November 24. Elk herds in Santa Clara Valley were on the decline in the 1800's, but were reintroduced into the County's wilderness areas in 1978 and are now free roaming across our back country.

Photo by Scott Ellner



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Times **Feature**

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It's time for a breakdown (of partitions of numbers)

By **Apoorva Panidapu**
Special to the Times

Hi everyone! As a recap: this column is a place to learn about various STEM topics that I find exciting, and that I hope will excite you too.

This column will always be written to be fairly accessible, so you don't have to worry about not having background knowledge. However, it does occasionally get more advanced towards the end.



Gems in STEM
By Apoorva Panidapu

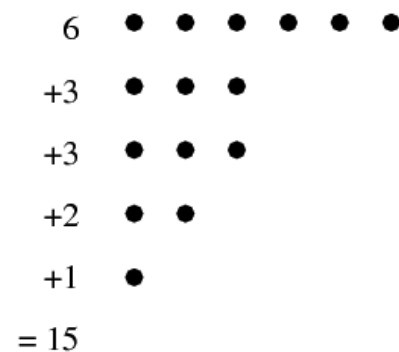
And now it's time for a breakdown... (cue "My Lovin' (You're Never Gonna Get It") by En Vogue).

In particular, a breakdown of numbers! Today we'll be talking about partitions of numbers. At first glance, they're a fairly simple concept: a **partition** of a positive number n is a way to break it up into a sum of positive integers. For example, the partitions of 5 are $1+1+1+1+1$, $2+1+1+1$, $2+2+1$, $3+1+1$, $3+2$, $4+1$, and 5 , for a total of 7 partitions. Note that 5 still counts as a partition of 5. Also, notice the order of the numbers in the sum doesn't matter: $5=2+3$ is considered the same as $5=3+2$, so we don't count it twice.

It can get a little tiring looking at long sums of numbers, so we can instead represent these partitions with fun graphs! The most common types are **Ferrers diagrams** and **Young diagrams**. To be honest, there's not a huge difference between them, unless you're really passionate about distinguishing dots and boxes.

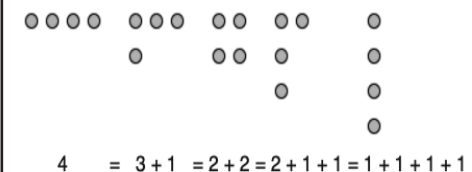
Some brief history: Ferrers diagrams are named after British mathematician Norman Ferrers. You may also be thinking of the fantastic chocolate delight, Ferrero Rocher...okay maybe not, but I am now. However, these are not related (as far as I know), but funnily enough the diagrams look like lines of these heavenly chocolate balls. Per usual, the best way to demonstrate is with a picture (top of next column):

For $n=15$, one partition is $6+3+3+2+1$, which is ordered from the largest to small-

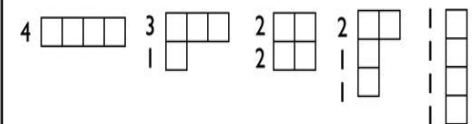


est **parts** (the numbers in the sum). Each row is the size of a part in the partition.

(See what I mean about the Rochers?!) Here's another example- these are all the 5 partitions of the number 4 represented as Ferrers diagrams (image taken from Wikipedia):



Now let's quickly touch on Young diagrams, which work the same way as Ferrers diagrams (at least with the conventions we're using). Young diagrams were named after another British mathematician Alfred Young (the Brits are really killing the partition game!), but uses boxes instead of dots. Here's an example: the same 5 partitions of the number 4 represented as Young diagrams this time:



While this difference seems irrelevant, these Young diagrams can be modified into something called Young tableaux (by filling the currently empty boxes with numbers), which are very significant in the study of symmetric polynomials and group representation theory!

Though they aren't the most complicated, these diagrams are handy, and can really simplify some proofs (and also tie into generating functions quite nicely). I would

See GEMS, next page

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*Enjoy your winnings before the holidays! **Buona Fortuna!***

Study suggests common steroid can reduce coronavirus deaths

Scientists at the University of Oxford said last week that an inexpensive and commonly available drug reduced deaths in patients with severe COVID-19.

The drug, a steroid called dexamethasone, would be the first treatment shown to reduce mortality in the sickest patients. Researches said that had doctors been

using the drug to treat the sickest COVID-19 patients in Britain at the beginning of the pandemic, up to 5,000 deaths could have been prevented.

In severe cases, the virus directly attacks cells lining the patient's airways and lungs due to inflammation. The drug appears to reduce inflammation caused by the immune system, protecting the tissues.

Times **Feature**

That deal on a game console may be a scam

By **Steve McFarland**

President & CEO

Better Business Bureau

With many people shopping for gifts on a budget this holiday season, scammers are taking advantage of the demand for pricey gaming consoles by promoting fake deals on Nintendo Switch, PlayStation 4 PRO, and the new PlayStation 5. Be sure to use caution when buying a console online.

How the Scam Works

You find a popular gaming console for sale online at a reduced price. Hoping to save some money, you research the seller's website and find a few positive reviews. Convinced, you make your purchase via PayPal or another online payment method. You receive an email confirmation with shipping information and a tracking number.

If you receive a package at all from the company, it isn't a gaming console – instead, it is a valueless phone cover or similar small object. Since you technically received a shipment, you will be unable to contest the purchase with the third-party who processed the payment.

Attempts to contact the company are useless. No one answers your phone calls or emails. One consumer who never received any package reported to BBB.org/

ScamTracker: "I attempted to reach out to the email address on their website; however I received an email informing me that it was not a valid email address. I then attempted to call the phone number listed on the website, [which gave me] an automatic message informing me that the number was not valid."

How to avoid online shopping scams

- Research the company you plan to purchase from thoroughly. It's best to purchase items from sellers you already



BBB Report

By Steve McFarland
President & CEO
Better Business Bureau

- have to fill out and hope for a response) and clear return and refund policies as well.

know and trust, but if you decide to purchase from an unfamiliar online store, do your homework first. Read as many customer reviews as you can find, look up the business on org, and do an online search with the company's name followed by the word "scam" to see if you find any complaints. Make sure the company has legitimate customer service contact information (not just a form you

- Avoid impulse buying. Scammers like to draw people in with "flash sales" and "limited time offers" in hopes you will hand over your money on impulse. Resist the urge.

- Don't believe prices that are too good to be true. Before you start shopping, find out the price of the gaming console at a major retailer. You can check prices online to get a general idea of what the console is selling for. Keep that price in mind as you shop and be wary of sellers who offer the product at a steeply discounted price. You could end up spending money on a defective or counterfeit product, or no product at all!

Gems

Continued from previous page

give some examples, but unfortunately this article can only be so long. But look out for a future column that elaborates on this!

Okay, and? Why do we care about partitions? Well, if you must have applications, partitions are used in many, many areas. Of course, they are used in lots of pure math (as mentioned above), like in studying symmetry polynomials. But they're also used in the mathematics of shuffling (which does make some sense as you are breaking apart a fixed number of cards). Perhaps surprisingly, partitions also make an appearance in genetics, like in Ewen's sampling formula, and in statistical mechanics (both classical and quantum)! One major example is the equipartition theorem, which can be thought of as "shuffling energies," which is something you've definitely thought about if you've taken physics. Hence, understanding this partition function is incredibly useful across STEM!

And so it seems we have, in fact, gotten it, a contradiction to En Vogue's anthem! (So we can hold off on a breakdown for now.) In the meantime, I'm going to go make a Ferrers diagram out of Ferrero Rochers now. Until next time!



If you found this interesting, make sure to check out the next column! If you have any questions or comments, please email me at poorvawrites@gmail.com.

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Times **Feature**

San Jose launches 'Cash for Trash'

City partners with Mastercard, Valley Water to engage homeless residents in battle against blight



A pilot program, "Cash for Trash" under the BeautifySJ initiative has been launched that will battle blight in San Jose by incentivizing homeless residents to pick up trash at encampments in exchange for programmable and reloadable cards from Mastercard.

"All too often, we hear people point at the homeless as 'the problem' as they look at the blight, trash, and encampments in our community. I have spoken with many homeless residents who have expressed a desire to be part of the solution. Through "Cash for Trash," we enlist our homeless neighbors in our battle against blight while paving a pathway for future interactions that will open many of our homeless residents to services and assistance," said Mayor Liccardo. "Thanks to Mastercard and to Valley Water for their collaboration in this innovative venture to clean our creeks, streets, and neighborhoods."

"Cash for Trash" will now take place at 40 locations throughout San Jose. Site locations are determined with input from Valley Water. BeautifySJ crews will distribute Cash for Trash bags at each location, redeemable at \$4 per bag. Participants can

turn in up to five bags for a total of \$20 which will be loaded onto a Mastercard City Key card. These debit cards are program-specific cards that Mastercard has enabled maintenance-free, as part of this partnership. Funds can be used to pay for essential items with minor restrictions on items like alcohol and tobacco.

During the first week of the program at two sites, 27 homeless residents enrolled and collected over two tons of trash. San Jose is the first city in the country to launch a program like Cash for Trash, paying homeless residents per bag of trash to be a part of the solution. This innovative program engages with homeless residents, putting them in contact with city staff with the potential to lead to further opportunities to offer needed resources. The program will also help to tackle the exacerbated blight accumulating on streets and in waterways near encampments.

Funding for Cash for Trash is made possible through an allocation of \$50,000 from the City of San Jose designated for trash clean up. In addition, Valley Water partnered to provide a \$180,000 grant (\$60K per year through the year 2023) to the program.



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We all win as a community, when we all help each other.

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Times **Local News**



Corvette Car Club drops off thanksgiving meals to those in need in San Jose

The holiday spirit had some car club members using their prized Corvettes to deliver goodies to people in San Jose this past weekend.

The Vetted Corvette Club of Northern California cruised the streets of San Jose, dropping off Thanksgiving meals to 50 people, many of whom have disabilities and live in care homes.

Members of the club contributed cash to buy food to last beyond the holiday and got some local businesses to donate too, including Mesquite and Oak restaurant.

The Vetted club president, who is an essential worker for the city of San Jose, said this was the club's first Thanksgiving drive, "but it won't be its last."



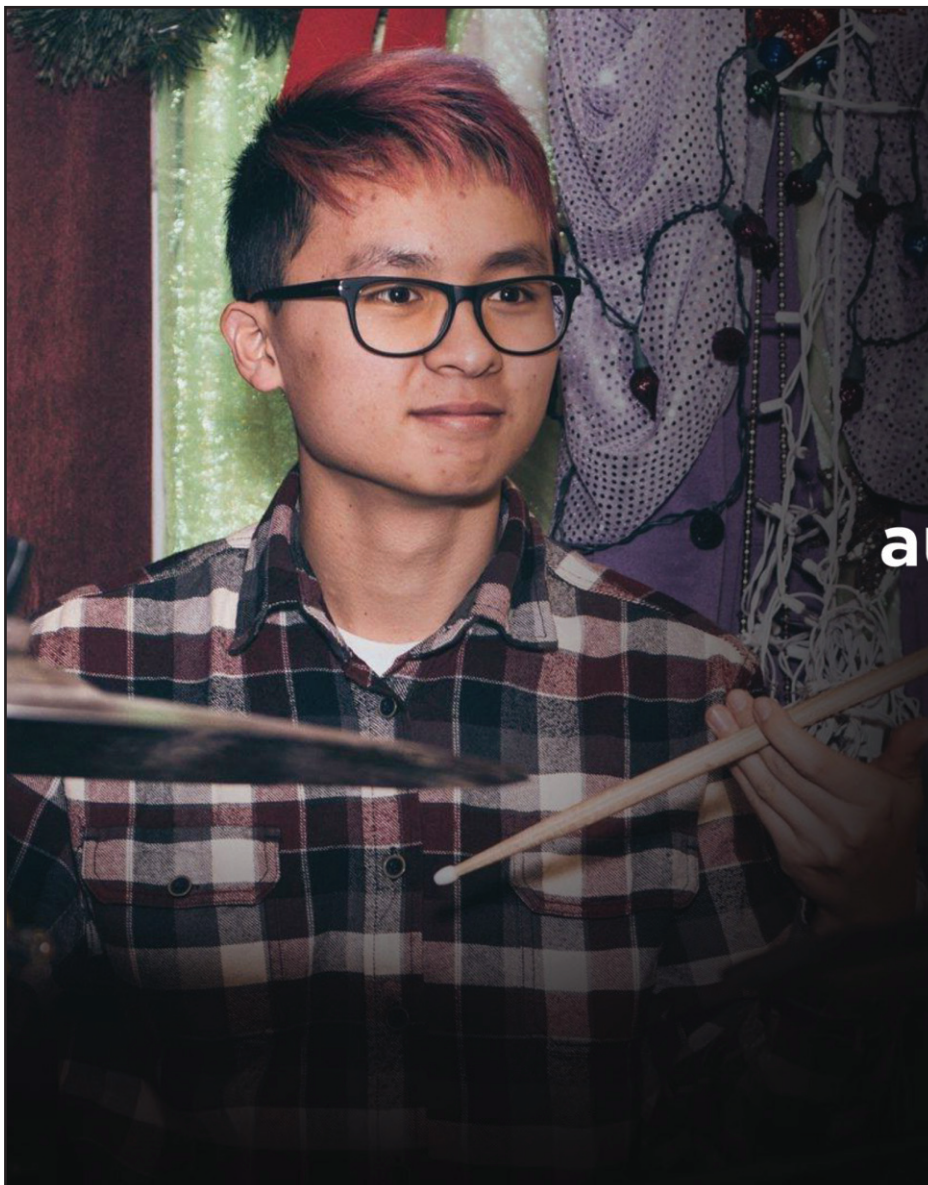
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High school student creates app that predicts allergens

Making a positive impact for allergy sufferers

By **Daisy Zeng**

Special to the Times

A local high school junior has created an app that takes input from users then corroborates data to find allergen patterns.

As the founder of “Allergy Diagnosis for All” (ADFA), Grace Guo has developed an iOS app called MyAllergy.

The app is dedicated to helping patients predict their possible allergens so they

can discuss the results with professional allergists.

Users list the ingredients of all consumed food and drinks and select their symptom level (good, bad, or ok) for that day. MyAllergy compiles all this information, finds patterns, and presents you with a list of possible allergens.

The app has already had positive results in testing. One tester, who contributed the data she had collected for almost an entire year, received results that matched those of her professional allergist.

Two other students, Aditya Murthy

(vice-president) and Daisy Zeng (secretary/treasurer), have joined the effort to make a positive impact on allergy sufferers in our community.

This organization will be hosting a webinar on December 6, 2020, at 4 p.m. (PST). Anyone is welcome to join us by using the information provided below.

Here’s the Zoom link:

<https://zoom.us/j/9492972609?pwd=eHpXeXRxbGF3WVpKZ0NGeGtjS0tPUT09>

You may also find the meeting invitation on our official website allergydiagnosisforall.org on the events page.



Allergy Diagnosis for All (ADFA) founder **Grace Guo**

All contributions made through allergydiagnosisforall.org will go to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology (AAAAI). We appreciate your support. For more information please download the MyAllergy app or send us an email at allergydiagnosisforall@gmail.com.

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Flu shot

Mayor **Sam Liccardo** will cruise the Flu Shot Drive-Thru at Kaiser Permanente to get this year’s vaccine, and encourage residents to also get one. Residents who receive a flu shot this year will help keep hospital beds open as we see an increase in COVID-19 related cases.

Times Feature

USPS expands letter writing holiday tradition after 108 years

Let's face it; this year has been a struggle for so many people in more ways than one.

Thoughts of kids, the holidays and wondering how to provide for them may also be weighing heavily on many. But take heart, Santa and the Postal Service are way ahead of you, and they are here to help.

The USPS Operation Santa program celebrates its 108th year in 2020 by opening up for nationwide participation. Now, more than ever, the program is needed to help less fortunate kids and families during the holidays.

The Postal Service established the USPS Operation Santa program to help those in need at the holidays experience the joy of opening presents — and to create special holiday memories.

Since it began, millions of less fortunate children and their families have been helped by the kindness of others. The program is for every person of every belief, or non-belief. The purpose is to help as many deserving families as possible. And that can only be done if good-hearted adopters step forward.

To participate in the USPS Operation Santa program as a possible recipient of holiday gifts, all you have to do is write a letter, put it in a stamped envelope with a return address, and send it to Santa's official workshop address as seen on the example envelope on this page. Letters will be accepted Nov. 16 – Dec. 15.

Program Details

Hundreds of thousands of letters are written to the USPS Operation Santa program every year in hopes of being adopted by kind and generous people across the country. These letters are opened by Santa's Elves and, for safety reasons, all personally identifiable information of the letter writer is removed (i.e. last names, addresses, ZIP Codes) and uploaded to USPSOperationSanta.com for adoption.

Beginning Dec. 4, letters will be available for nationwide adoption by visiting USPSOperationSanta.com — all from the socially distant safety of your own home. Potential adopters can read the letters and pick one, or more, that they'd like to fulfill. For security reasons, potential adopters must be vetted by going through a short registration and ID verification process before they are allowed to adopt any letter.

Companies also help adopt letters. Every year many companies create teams and adopt several letters; all the better to help grant that special wish to deserving families and kids.

How to Write a Letter

Sending a letter to Santa is easy if you know how. The Postal Service is here to help with guides and tips to help kids write and send their best letters ever. All the informa-

tion you could possibly need to write a letter, address an envelope, put on a stamp and send it on its way can be found on USPSOperationSanta.com.

Full Name
Street Address
City State ZIP Code



Santa Claus
123 Elf Road
North Pole 88888

The only thing the Postal Service can't help with is to tell

USPS Operation Santa History

While the Postal Service began receiving letters to Santa more than 108 years ago, it wasn't until 1912 that Postmaster General Frank Hitchcock authorized local Postmasters to allow postal employees and citizens to respond to them. This became known as Operation Santa.

The complete history can be found online at the Postal Service Holiday Newsroom, which can be found at <https://about.usps.com/holidaynews>, along with additional news and information, including all domestic, international and military mailing and shipping deadlines.

Editor's note: The Postal Service receives no tax dollars for operating expenses and relies on the sale of postage, products and services to fund its operations.

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Times **Community News**

Adopt a youth or family for 'Winter Wonderland'

Each year, United Way Bay Area's community and their Emerging Leaders group host the Winter Wonderland event to bring together local families.

UWBA is working with Emergency Food and Shelter agencies, as well as SparkPoint

Centers to make this a brighter holiday for many families.

Families will come from SparkPoint Napa, SparkPoint Solano, Family Supportive Housing of San Jose, and SparkPoint Fremont (Union City Family Center).

This year's Winter Wonderland will provide over 80 families and 100 youth with gifts from their Wish and Need Lists. Attendees typically experience a magical night filled with music, dinner,



gift-giving, and other fun activities, however, due to the current circumstances, Winter Wonderland 2020 will happen remotely. Please help us provide each youth with \$100 worth of gifts and a basket of food for their

family's holiday celebration.

Learn more about the needs of specific families and children you may wish to sponsor. Registration ends November 27. Learn more by visiting: www.roonga.com/uwbawinterwonderland20

Editor's note: Gifts should be dropped off or mailed by or on December 1st, so there is time for volunteers to wrap the gifts. If you purchase your gifts after December 1st, they ask that you wrap the gift.

EvergreenTimes Real Estate

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Times Cover Story



Cutouts

Continued from page 1
create a life size (or close to) cutout of themselves, that they would then color or paint to reflect what they want their cutout to look like. The cardboard cutouts are placed in various areas where students would normally gather throughout the school campus, from the playgrounds to the amphitheater, in the multipurpose room, as well as the front of the school.

"Even though we are distance learning, we are all Holly Oak Hawks that have outstanding school culture and creative spirit," said Kyle Sanchez, principal of Holly Oak Elementary School.

"Nothing—including this pandemic and distance learning—can keep us apart, and that sentiment is felt by our entire district community. We are blessed by having dedicated staff such as our wonderful custodian James Herrera, who lovingly proposed this wonderful art project in an effort to help our students feel Still Together, Safe Together," said Dr. Emy Flores, Superintendent of Evergreen School District. "We are proud to help each child feel connected to their teachers, friends, and school."

And, until everyone is safely together again on campus, Herrera said that the cutouts will remind him of the spirit, creativity and energy of the students that he will look forward to seeing together again.

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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 produc-


tions, informative lectures, and even an occasional karaoke night—all in a wholesome environment.
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• 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.

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6581 Camden Ave., San Jose, CA 95120. Pastor, Rev. Marty Williams, 408 268 0243.
www.ccavucc.org.
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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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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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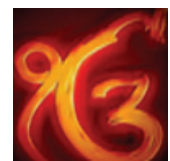
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St. Francis of Assisi Gathering Hall
Sunday 9:00 AM, Sunday 11:00AM, Igbo Mass - Second Sunday of the month 12:30 PM
Mt. Hamilton Grange - 2840 Aborn Road
Sunday 9:30 AM
The Villages Gated Community (Cribari Auditorium) Sunday 8:15 AM
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