

CityTeam San Jose in need of Christmas toys and turkeys
SEE PAGE 4



SVO names interim CEO
Business group blames consulting firm for racist political ad
SEE PAGE 11

Silicon Valley leaders ask for help solving the 'poverty pandemic'
SEE PAGE 9



DEC. 18 - DEC. 31, 2020 ■ VOL. 37, NO. 26

EvergreenTimes

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Evergreen Board of Trustees approves continuing distance learning for remainder of the school year

At a special meeting on December 3, the Evergreen School District Board of Trustees approved continuing distance learning for its TK-8 students and bringing back small stable cohorts for targeted vulnerable and at risk student groups for the 2020-21 school year.

"Our Evergreen schools need to open to students in a way that is not only safe, but also provides students the best approaches to instruction and engagement," said Dr. Flores. "With the Hybrid Learning Model, students would have had reduced live instructional time, reduced social interaction with each other, and, due to strict social distancing, teachers would not have the ability to facilitate effective instruction or projects in the ways they could before the pandemic, but are doing successfully through distance learning."

See *DISTANCE LEARNING*, page 16

ANNUAL GIFT PROGRAM



Sacred Heart volunteers begin assembling 3,500 food boxes which contain 50 pounds of food including veggies, fruit, bread and a turkey.

Sacred Heart Community Service distributing 6000 gift cards to help local youth enjoy this holiday season

On Monday, Dec. 14 Sacred Heart Community Service began distributing gift cards to families in need as part of its annual holiday gift program.

The goal for this year is to distribute 6,271 gift cards to 2400 families over the three days leading up to Christmas Eve.

Families who have already pre-registered will receive a gift bag with a \$50 gift card for each child in their family 17 years of age or younger.

Sacred Heart has made significant changes to this year's holiday gift distribu-

tion program to ensure families can get gifts for the holidays while at the same time keeping our community safe during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Holiday food boxes

On Monday, December 21st Sacred Heart will continue its tradition of distributing holiday food boxes to local families. The goal for this year is to distribute 3,500 food boxes over the three days leading up to Christmas. Each holiday food box contains non-perishable items, vegetables, fruit, bread, and a turkey—

See *SACRED HEART*, page 20

Op Ed: Have a meaningful season of light!

By John Goldstein
Lead Pastor.

Grace Church of Evergreen

It's winter.

We bring out lights to shine in the darkness! It's all part of our religious belief; whether we practice religion or not.

Light and dark are to be taken seriously. Darkness can threaten life. Bad characters in movies are usually in black to imply the power of evil or destruction. Boo to you Darth Vader...!

The Hindu festival of Diwali and the Christian festival of Christmas both tackle the power of darkness that surrounds us in life. Christian and Hindu stories intertwine similar

portrayals of the evil of darkness and the significance of light to us humans.

Diwali is a religious festival that celebrates the victory of the god of

light over the god of darkness. Light displays, social events and food focus on light in contrast to the darkness. The god of light kills the god of darkness in this Hindu

story. Light prevails!!! Thank God. Humans cannot live without light.

Christians draw the same conclusion about the significance of light in their Christmas Story with a twist. The baby Jesus is born in the darkness of 'mid-winter' so the carols sing! The accounts of Jesus' birth story is one of light illuminating in the darkness.

There is no violence in the Christian story. The Christian God of light does not kill the god of darkness. In fact, there is no god of darkness to kill from the Christian perspective. Darkness is not the dominion of any god. It is never destroyed nor

See *LIGHT*, page 2

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Festive Christmas lights abound in Evergreen Valley this year.

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

Times **Community News**

Light

Continued from page 1

killed. Darkness is overcome by turning on the light. It literally disappears when light appears. And we humans play a role of bringing the God of light into the human arenas of darkness. This is not a battle of the gods. It is a challenge for humans to recognize light and to share it. Isn't it refreshing to see light in the midst of darkness?

The Hindu perspective recognizes the violence of our world as depicted in the violence of the gods. The gods kill each other

as humans do. And we give thanks that the good god prevails. May the good god of light always prevail.

The Christmas story focuses on the human desire for life and peace in the world. Angel choirs sing to poor shepherds of 'peace and goodwill'. Divine messengers bring good news of God's human presence among us in spite of the violence within the human experience.

This theme of peace is a thread that begins in the creation stories and is integral to the Christmas story. The God of creation makes everything from chaotic matter and describes it as good when the living spring from it. There are no warring gods to decide who is the most powerful. There is no other power! This creative God is all powerful and yet pacific. And when God determines to create, it is done so without harming or destroying other forces. This sentiment pours out from the globally sung Christmas carol 'Silent Night.' The song is loved by people of many religions:

'All is calm. All is bright. Sleep in heavenly peace.'

The God of light offers light to hope and human possibility.

We are tempted to ignore religious story and adopt a corrupted view where the evil god of the world needs to be killed and destroyed over and over. In such a world, evil has new emissaries every day and they must be weeded out before they take control. Or we live by a corrupted Christian view where the world is darkness and light does not enter. Evil is like the cloud cover that never lifts. We blindly continue in the darkness fighting the conspiracy of darkness. Nothing much we can do! So it implies.

Either corruption encourages us to view others with suspicion. What kind of emissaries are these 'others' I see? They walk the streets and I don't recognize them. They drive in my neighborhood and I don't "recognize the car". I cannot trust them in the darkness of my world.

The world of darkness accepts suffering and death as 'fait accompli'. Darkness seeks to divide us. Warring factions kill on command. Refugees are abandoned on land borders or left to drown in oceans. Resignation is granted to prejudice and hatred of others for race, origin, language, social place. Darkness makes us powerless to foment change, feel safe or that we can intervene. This is the world of darkness which we pop in and out of daily, mentally and spiritually.

I prefer to see light brought into our midst so we can see more clearly. It provides the hope that the world can be transformed. I want to know why my neighbor is so angry and troubled. Doing so would help me understand why I am angry also. I am part of the transformation from darkness into light. One can never see darkness. One can only recognize the dark life when light overcomes it. May we see light dissipate the darkness!

Silent night, holy night

Son of God, oh, love's pure light

Radiant beams from Thy holy face

With the dawn of redeeming grace

Jesus, Lord at Thy birth

Have a meaningful season of light and a blessed Christmas!



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Times **Community News****Matsumoto Fantasy of Lights Drive Thru Park holiday treat**

Tom Matsumoto's Fantasy of Lights Drive Thru Park has welcomed several hundred visitors since opening on Dec. 14.

The event includes a beautiful 20ft. LED tree and a 120ft. light tunnel. There are nine trees decorated by each Matsumoto Elementary School grade level. The 20 ft. tree will be auctioned off to raise money for the school.

We have been working hard to put everything together. The event will be open Dec 14-Dec 18 from 4:30-6:30 p.m.

Guests will have the opportunity to drive through our Fantasy of Lights Park and see a whimsical display of lights, Holiday decorations, and decorated trees with a donation of \$10.

These are fresh cut 6-7ft Douglas Fir trees. Tickets can be purchased here: <https://bit.ly/2020tmFOL>



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Peace, Joy & Health in
however you may celebrate
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Photo: Dec. 2019

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'Christmas Outdoor Spectacular' opens as a drive-in event at Cathedral of Faith

Cathedral of Faith is currently hosting a free Christmas Outdoor Spectacular drive-in experience featuring an exciting animated presentation and lights.

Every Friday-Sunday in December, the Spectacular will also feature live performances, free hot chocolate, and more!

Animated characters Snowball and Flurry star in this outdoor extravaganza as they prepare for the Prince's arrival.

Cathedral of Faith's World of Arts ministry will perform a theatrical presentation to welcome the Prince. With a free animated show, live dance, and hot chocolate, this Spectacular is a great experience for the entire family.

The Spectacular event doesn't require a reservation; it is first-come first serve. In accordance with COVID protocol compliance, there will be limited viewing on-site which allows for approximately 50 cars per show.

Guests can listen to the show either by tuning into FM 93.1 on their radios or by listening to it through the outdoor speakers.

Monday-Thursday: 6 p.m., 6:30 p.m., 7 p.m., 7:30 p.m., 8 p.m., 8:30 p.m.; Friday-Sunday: 6 p.m., 7 p.m., 8 p.m., includes live performances and free hot chocolate. For more information, visit cathedraloffaith.org or contact the Church Office at (408) 267-4691.

Editor's note: No Shows December 25, December 24 shows 6pm, 6:30 p.m., and 7 p.m. Show schedule subject to change due to weather. Cathedral of Faith is located at 2315 Canoas Garden Avenue, San Jose (located at the corner of Highway 87 and Curtner Ave.) To experience the show, guests should enter at the second driveway on Masonic Avenue.

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Valley Currents

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

CityTeam in need of Christmas toys and turkeys

CityTeam has had an extreme decrease in the number of toy and turkey donations this year because of the pandemic.

Thousands of toys and food boxes with turkeys were distributed in 2019 at multiple sites, this year plans have changed. now there are only enough toys for one site and chickens will be substituted for turkeys.

With the Bay Area's shelter-in-place orders intact people are just not leaving their homes to shop at all because of the uptick in covid-19 cases.

Cityteam San Jose brings immediate help and lasting solutions to thousands of men, women, and children struggling with food insecurity, homelessness, domestic violence, and other life disabling circumstances and behaviors," said John Scott, Executive Director CityTeam San Jose. "Whether it is through our many neighborhood food pantries, the hot meals served fresh every day of the week, our numerous transitional housing programs with supportive services, or spiritual care programs, CityTeam equips and mobilizes thousands of volunteers each year to lovingly care for our neighbors in need."

CityTeam encourages donors to purchase toys and turkeys online and have them delivered directly to their center so there is minimal handling involved. The mobile food pantries will be distributing Christmas toys and food boxes through Wednes-



CityTeam equips and mobilizes thousands of volunteers each year to lovingly care for our neighbors in need."

—John Scott, Executive Director CityTeam San Jose

day, December 23.

Toys and turkeys can be sent or dropped off at CityTeam located at 1297 North 13th Street, San Jose, CA 95112. Donation hours:

Tuesday –Friday, 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. and 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. Saturday 1 p.m. – 3 p.m. Additional food needs can be found at www.cityteam.org

Evergreen School District swears in Andrade, Welch to Board of Education December 11

Corpus to serve as Board President

Patricia (Patti) Andrade and Leila Welch were sworn in as trustees of the Evergreen School District Board of Education at its meeting on December 11.

Andrade was elected by voters in November to the board seat being vacated by outgoing board member Bonnie Mace, who decided not to run for re-election after serving 12 years on the board, and Welch was re-elected after serving four years in her first term as a trustee. Mace was honored for her service at the December 3rd board meeting.

Andrade, who has three sons, joins the board as a long-time ac-

tive parent volunteer in Evergreen schools, including volunteering at Clark and Quimby Oak, as PTA leader, and she also worked as a substitute teacher at ESD.

"I am honored to serve the Evergreen community as a member of the Evergreen School Board. I look forward to being part of an amazing district that puts our students first," Andrade said.

Welch is a long-time educator who previously served as Assistant Principal at Quimby Oak, Principal at Holly Oak, Millbrook and Matsumoto. Before joining Evergreen School District, she worked at Franklin McKinley School District. Welch just completed her year as board presi-

dent.

"I am grateful to the Evergreen community for allowing me to continue to serve as part of the Board of Trustees. Student success continues to be the center of our work and what we will always strive for," Welch said.

The board also voted for the following board members to serve in its rotating leadership roles:

Chris Corpus - President
Leila Welch - President Pro Tempore

Marisa Hanson - Clerk
More information about the Evergreen Board of Trustees and upcoming meetings can be found on the district's website at www.eesd.org.



L: **Bonnie Mace**, Outgoing Board Member. R: **Patti Andrade**, Incoming Board Member



L: **Leila Welch**, Re-elected Board Member, R: **Chris Corpus**, Board President

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Times **Community News****Underserved youth participate in 13th Annual Shop with a Cop Heroes and Helpers Holiday shopping spree**

The 13th Annual Shop with a Cop Heroes and Helpers Holiday shopping spree for underserved youth was held on Dec. 12 at the San Jose Elk's Lodge in San Jose.

For the past 13 years, the Shop with a Cop Foundation Silicon Valley hosts over 200 underserved children for a holiday shopping spree with local Bay Area police officers.

For many of the children, this special opportunity becomes the only holiday experience they will have. More than two hundred third grade students from Santee Elementary School, Los Arboles Elementary, McKinley Elementary, Gardner Academy and Adelante II Academy in San Jose participated at this year's event. Additional children participating have experienced a traumatic crisis from the loss of a parent, domestic violence, parent incarcerated, and other recent tragedies. Parents were also given gift cards to purchase needed grocery items.

"Our Annual Heroes & Helpers events pair public safety officials with community youth for holiday shopping sprees at our stores," said a Target representative. "Through our 2017 program, we donated more than \$150,000 to agencies in approximately 200 communities across the U.S."

Due to COVID-19, the program this year was been modified with safety precautions in mind, including no contact. Parents drove up to pick up their gifts. The business com-



munity stepped up and purchased all the gifts online from the child's wish list. Uniformed police officers and community volunteers distributed the bags of gifts. Each child was allotted a \$125.00 Target gift card to shop for gifts for their family members and for themselves.

Target's Heroes and Helpers was founded to help less fortunate children purchase gifts for their families and themselves. This program is co-sponsored by local, state and federal law enforcement agencies nationwide during the holiday shopping spree events. The overall theme is to foster strong relationships between youth and police officers in order to change perceptions that young children might have toward the police so we may have a safer community to-

morrow.

Target Corporation has had a longstanding commitment to building strong, healthy and safe communities, which include partnerships with law enforcement. This community giving and service event is one way Target gives five percent of its profits—which today equals more than \$4 million per week—to communities.

Funding for Shop with a Cop was provided by a grant from Target Corporation, San Jose Police Foundation, Bank of America, Chevron, Coldwell Banker Real Estate, Mil-

pitass POA, SCCCPOA, SC Juvenile probation officers, Councilwoman Dev Davis, Councilman Raul Perez, Santa Clara County Assoc. of Realtors, Intero, Coldwell Banker, Coastal Lumber, Physicians Medical Urgent Care, local businesses, and many individual donations.

People wishing to make a donation so more children may participate, can mail them to: P.O. Box 8003, San Jose, CA 95155. Checks made payable to Shop with a Cop Foundation SV or at www.shopwithacopsv.org via Pay Pal or Venmo@SWAC-SV.

Observed self-administered COVID-19 testing at San Jose drop-in location*Fairgrounds site now operating 7 days a week*

COVID-19 testing at the County of Santa Clara drop-in testing site at Emmanuel Baptist Church in San Jose is now being done via an observed self-administered nasal swab – a testing method that has proven simple and successful in other communities and has the potential to increase the number of people getting tested.

"This is an easy and accurate self-administered test that is successfully used throughout the country," said Dr. Marty

Fenstersheib, COVID-19 Testing Officer for the County of Santa Clara. "People who come to this site for a test will be shown a video demonstrating the process and our staff will observe the sample collection to ensure it is done correctly. Our nurses will still be on hand to help children, seniors, and others who need assistance."

In addition, COVID-19 testing hours have been expanded at the Santa Clara County Fairgrounds mass-testing facility, which will begin operating seven days a week with extra hours from 7 a.m. to 6:30 p.m. during the peak mid-week period -- increasing testing capacity to 5,000 on those days.

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Silicon Valley leaders ask for help solving the 'poverty pandemic'

By Lorraine Gabbert

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

Santa Clara County elected officials, business and faith leaders are asking the community to help low-income people hit hardest by the pandemic.

Through the new United Against the Poverty Pandemic coalition, formed during the pandemic by Brett Bymaster, executive director of Healing Grove Health Center, the group is working to find solutions for low-income families struggling with job loss and paying rent.

The coalition, which includes the city of San Jose, Health Grove Health Center, Cathedral of Faith, work2future, Westgate Church, Cicuro and CityTeam, announced a goal of raising \$1 million in private funds before Jan. 31 for rent relief and to fund a work program.

Mayor Sam Liccardo said Dec. 7 there is a growing divide between those who are able to survive living in Silicon Valley and those who are struggling to keep their heads above water.

"This pandemic has widened that chasm and government can't do it alone," he said.

According to Liccardo, the city's food distribution operations have handed out more than 2.5 million meals a week to families in need and committed more than \$22 million in federal funding for struggling families through the Silicon Valley Strong Initiative.

However, the mayor said this is just a drop in the bucket of what is needed.

Santa Clara County Supervisor Susan Ellenberg said local governments should extend loans to small businesses and provide financial support to low-income communities asked to stay home from work, especially those who test positive for COVID-19.

Ellenberg said she and Supervisor Cindy Chavez will propose extending and improving the isolation quarantine support program, which offers motel rooms for people who test positive for COVID-19 and cannot safely isolate at home, in addition to providing groceries, cleaning supplies, rent and other financial support.

She also recommends expanding partnerships with community-based organizations to support struggling residents and businesses.

Bymaster said a recent phone survey showed more than 14,600 county families, including 30,000 children, are at risk of becoming homeless when the state's eviction moratorium expires Jan. 31.

"We expect a wave of homelessness when the eviction moratorium expires," he said. "But we have the resources in Santa Clara County to do something about this. Let's



Homeless residents line up during a food and clothing drive at St. James Park in downtown San Jose. File photo.

unite together to make a difference."

The United Against the Poverty Pandemic coalition has provided more than 450,000 pounds of food to those who lost their jobs due to COVID-19 and \$900,000 in financial aid through private donations and partnering with nonprofits. Now it's working to provide \$1.7 million in financial aid, employment and food aid by Dec. 31.

COVID-19 has especially affected low-income communities. At the Healing Grove clinic, Bymaster said the positivity rate among low-income Latinos was 28%, compared with the county average of 4.7%. The clinic has provided about 2,500 COVID-19 tests for low income-patients and treated

900 clients for COVID-19.

Councilmember Maya Esparza, who represents the hardest hit ZIP codes in the county, said COVID-19's resulting economic hardships hit low-income minority communities the hardest, in addition to disproportionately infecting and killing more Latinos.

"People are getting sick and dying at much higher rates than the rest of the city and county," Esparza said.

COVID-19 also stripped low-income jobs in hospitality, construction, services, trade and

transportation. Bymaster said people working in these sectors saw their average annual income drop from \$27,566 a year to \$11,402 after the pandemic.

According to the coalition, about 36,200 Santa Clara County households have unpaid rent debt totaling \$117 million. This debt could be erased, he said, if the 160,000 families in Santa Clara County who earn more than \$200,000 a year donated \$730 each.

"Each of us has a role to play. I hope you will be with us pushing together against this poverty pandemic," Liccardo said.

To help the coalition, visit: <https://povertypanemic.org>

BAY AREA CHURCHES RELEASE FIRST-EVER MUSIC COLLABORATION FOR CHRISTMAS

65+ CHURCHES SPREADING HOPE DURING COVID-LOCKDOWN, RAISING MONEY FOR THE HOMELESS AND THE HUNGRY



THE BAY AREA BLESSING | CHRISTMAS

As the pandemic surged in May 2020, worship and faith leaders from 60+ churches across the San Francisco Bay Area came together to sing a blessing of unity and hope for everyone living our communities and city. This trend of churches, who once operated separately, coming together to spread hope did not disappoint. "The Bay Area Blessing" reached over 1 million people in over 60 countries.

The Bay Area Blessing | Christmas is a much anticipated sequel where over 100 faith leaders from 65+ churches sing a beautiful rendition of *Silent Night / O Come Let Us Adore Him*. We hope to fill people's homes and hearts with a message of unity, hope and cheer during this holiday season.

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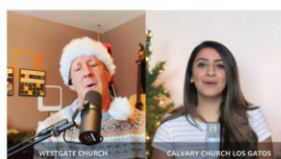
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TESTIMONIALS

"This is the most beautiful thing I've seen in a long, long time. Made me weep."
- Ceci J.

"One of the most uplifting things in the world is to see/hear diverse peoples (ages, genders, nationalities) praising the God that created them. Thank you for this beautiful effort of united hearts and minds."
- Cheryl J.

"Diverse yet united. What a sight to witness!! All different churches, different races, different age groups united as one in worship. In a time when our country is so divided."
- Yat S.



THE BAY AREA BLESSING WILL BE RAISING MONEY THROUGH THIS PROJECT TO SUPPORT TWO LOCAL CHARITIES: HOMEFIRST SERVICES, WORKING TO END HOMELESSNESS, AND SECOND HARVEST FOOD BANK. WE WANT TO BRING A CHRISTMAS MIRACLE AND BE A BLESSING TO THOSE IN NEED THROUGHOUT OUR AREA.



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New Ballet's The San Jose Nutcracker: Home for the Holidays will be presented virtually in partnership with Hammer Theatre Center December 12-31. Pictured: Clara (**Mesa Burdick**) climbs into the swan boat as the flower fairies (New Ballet company artists) look on. Photo credit: Bari Lee

The San Jose Nutcracker: Home for the Holidays begins streaming

Visions of sugarplums and Silicon Valley landmarks will dance across the screen this holiday season when New Ballet presents The San Jose Nutcracker: Home for the Holidays, a festive yuletide treat streamed in partnership with Hammer Theatre Center.

A twist on the classic Nutcracker tale, this joyful holiday production called "delightful...as imaginative as it is captivating" by Metro Silicon Valley tells the well-loved story of Clara and the Nutcracker

while incorporating historical references to the heritage that has made Santa Clara the center of innovation it is today.

The stream presented is a recording from a past production of The San Jose Nutcracker, danced live to a full orchestra, at the Hammer. The San Jose Nutcracker: Home for the Holidays is now streaming with on-demand access through December 31.

For tickets (pay-what-you-can), the public may visit the website www.hammertheatre.com.

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Chow and Lindholm of Evergreen Valley awarded Biola's highest scholarships

Chloe Chow and Emily Lindholm (above, L-R) of Evergreen Valley have been awarded Biola University's highest scholarships – the President's or Provost's scholarship – for the 2020/2021 academic year.

Freshmen are eligible for the President's and Provost's scholarship - \$20,000 and \$19,000 per year respectively – if upon entering the university, they meet the requirements of the scholarship.

Chow is studying Communications Sciences Disorders and Lindholm is studying Nursing.

Students are considered for this scholarship upon admission to the university based on the combination of their GPA and SAT, both math and English, scores.

According to Biola's admissions department, recipients of the President's scholarship have a minimum GPA of 3.88 and an SAT composite score of 1340. Recipients of the Provost's scholarship have a minimum GPA of 3.87 and an SAT composite score of 1120. Students must maintain a GPA of 3.2 while taking courses at Biola to receive the scholarship the following year.

Biola University is a nationally ranked Christian university in the heart of Southern California. It was recently recognized as one of the nation's top 10 "up and coming" national universities by the U.S. News & World Report. Founded in 1908, Biola is committed to the mission of biblically centered education, scholarship and service.

Times **Community News**

SVO business group names an interim CEO, blames consulting firm for racist political ad

By William Bellou
Publisher

Silicon Valley Organization (SVO) has named Robert Linscheid as interim CEO after the ouster of its former CEO Matt Mahood following community outrage after a racist image appeared on its website a month ago.

Robert Linscheid, 67, of Danville, will take the helm of San Jose’s largest business organization SVO – previously known as the San Jose Silicon Valley Chamber of Commerce.

Linscheid currently owns the consulting firm Linscheid Enterprises Inc. and previously served as the chairman of the California State University board of trustees and as a special economic adviser to the president of California Polytechnic State University.

"Robert brings a wealth of advocacy, community engagement and strategic planning experience to the role," the SVO board wrote in a statement on its website.

According to his LinkedIn profile, he previously served as chief executive of the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce as well as three smaller Northern California business associations in Chico, Walnut Creek and Antioch. Currently, Linscheid chairs the California State University Board of Trustees, where he has served since 2005. He is the recipient of Rotary District 5160’s Humanitarian of the Year Award.

Linscheid said his first order of business will be “doing a lot of listening” and getting to know the board, staff and community. SVO currently represents about 1,200 business members throughout the greater Silicon Valley that employ 300,000 people.

SVO officials simultaneously released a statement about an investigation into the racist campaign ad. While SVO did not hold anyone directly responsible, it blames its consultant, Storefront Political Media and has severed ties with the consulting group. Katie Scally, an account executive with Storefront, told San José Spotlight on Dec. 9 that the company had no involvement in the campaign image.

SVO announced it will hold listening sessions to “improve its sensitivity” and better engage with the community. In the past few weeks, the group also established a diversity working group of leaders to help guide these changes.

Linscheid said he helped create a diversity and inclusion task force at the San Francisco Chamber of Commerce. “I believe I have the experience the organization needs now.”



Robert Linscheid is the new interim president and CEO of The Silicon Valley Organization. Image courtesy of LinkedIn.

Post Office expands retail hours at Eastridge Mall: Sunday Dec. 20

The Postal Service plans to make it easier for customers to get their holiday packages shipped at Eastridge Mall. The post office will be open for retail service on Sunday, December 20th from 10:30 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

Between now and Christmas, many neighborhoods will also see mail carriers delivering packages on Sunday.

Additionally, USPS.com allows people to print labels, print postage, and call for their carrier to pick up their package from their

home or office without ever going to a Post Office.

The Postal Service recommends customers in the U.S. observe the following mailing and shipping deadlines to ensure that deliveries are made in time for Christmas:

- Important mailing deadlines:
- Military:
Dec. 18 — Military USPS Priority Mail Express service
 - Domestic:
Dec. 18 — First-Class letters and packages
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Dec. 23 — Priority Mail Express

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COMPASS

Times Feature

A look at some fascinating milestones in neuroscience

By Anoohya and Apoorva Panidapu

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.

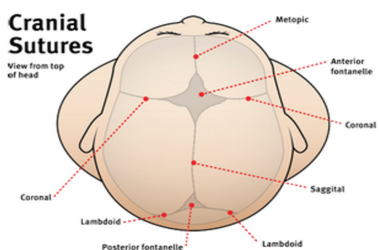
This column will always be written to be fairly accessible, so you don't have to worry about having background knowledge. This week's article was written in collaboration with my sister, Anoohya Panidapu.

This week we'll be talking about some fascinating milestones in neuroscience! Onward!



The Edwin Smith Surgical Papyrus (1700 B.C.)

The first written record about the nervous system and the earliest recorded reference to the brain are found in the Edwin Smith surgical papyrus, from around 1700 BC. It's also the



oldest known surgical treatise and thought to contain an original author's text from around 3000 BC, with commentary added hundreds of years later as notes. It is named after an American Egyptologist named Edwin Smith who had bought the ancient manuscript roll from vandals and made an attempt at translation. In 1930, the English translation of the papyrus was published by Dr. James Breasted.

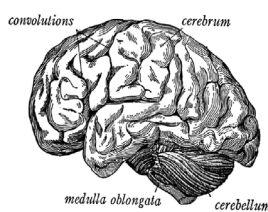
The papyrus contains the first descriptions of the cranial sutures (fiber-like bands of tissue connecting the bones of the skull), the meninges, the brain's external surface, cerebrospinal fluid, and the intracranial pulsations.

An Egyptian physician (possibly Imhotep) wrote descriptions of 48 case histories, a few of which pertain to the nervous system. They are organized with a title, examination, diagnosis and treatment/verdict. If you're interested in taking a look, the cases concerning the nervous system include Case 6 and Case 22.

In ancient Egyptian mummification, the brain would be scooped out through the nostrils and discarded, while the other internal organs were carefully removed and preserved. So while the ancient Egyptians did not consider the brain to be as important, they understood that issues in the brain have various effects on different parts of the body.

Moving on to Greece, let's talk about "the father of medicine," **Hippocrates!**

Hippocrates (460-370 BC) is considered one of the most prominent figures in medicine.



He discussed epilepsy as a disturbance of the brain and stated that the brain is involved in sensation and intelligence. Epilepsy, as we now know, is indeed associated with abnormal electrical activity in the brain. He understood that occurrences in the brain directly affect the state of being, and although he uses the four humors to make his point through example, it's clear that his understanding of the encephalocentric model is much more accurate than the cardiocentric model.

Now that we know the function of the brain is to exert centralized control over the other organs, let's skip forward to the 18th and 19th centuries!

Major Neuroscientists' Contributions

Although many know the polymath **Benjamin Franklin** for the lightning rod, few know about his work with electricity as medical treatment, now called electroconvulsive therapy (ECT).

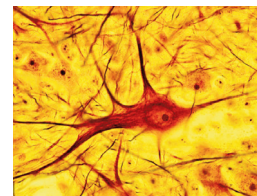
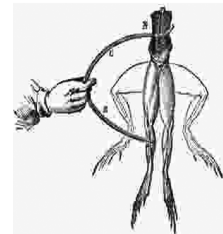
In 1743, he used electricity to treat patients with palsies and paralysis, but none of the positive outcomes remained permanent. One of his first experiments involved him giving electrical shocks in the limbs of paralyzed individuals. ECT is a psychiatric treatment that electrically induces seizures to provide temporary relief from symptoms of certain mental health conditions.

Luigi Galvani was an Italian physician, biologist, and philosopher, known for discovering animal electricity and pioneering bioelectromagnetics. He discovered the muscles of dead frogs' legs twitch when struck by an electrical spark (in 1780).

Legend goes that his assistant touched a frog's exposed sciatic nerve with a metal scalpel that had picked up a charge, and they saw sparks as the dead frog's leg kicked. These studies in biology are called electrophysiology.

Paul Broca was a French physician, surgeon, and anatomist, who laid the foundations of modern neuropsychology and cognitive neuroscience. He proved that different regions in the brain are involved in different cognitive functions. In 1861, he studied a patient, Tan, and his discovery is known as the first definitive localization of a cerebral function, which, in this case, was articulate speech. His patient was unable to utter a phrase or respond to questions, and could only produce the word "tan." After his death, the autopsy showed a lesion on the surface of the left frontal lobe. Later, he had a second patient that also had reduced abilities in speech, and was also found to have a lesion in about the same region as the first patient. That region where the lesions were found is now known as Broca's area, and the inability to produce language is known as Broca's aphasia.

Camillo Golgi is known for his technique, the Golgi stain, for staining neurons by soaking. See GEMS, page 18



Gems in STEM
By Apoorva Panidapu

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Times **Feature****SOS AUTO REPAIR'S 'Quick Tip'****What to look for when buying a used car**

Buying a used car can be a good option when you're looking for a quality vehicle without a high price tag. While a used car can be a sensible option, buyers still need to make smart choices. There's a lot to look for when buying a used vehicle, but here are some ways to help you choose the right car for you.

- **Exterior and Interior**

Inspect the outside and inside of the vehicle. When looking over the exterior, check for scratches, dents, and rust. You probably don't need to be worried about small dings or scratches, but larger areas of damage may be cause for concern. It's also recommended to check that body panels line up evenly, as uneven panels may indicate the vehicle was in an accident but not repaired well. It's also a good idea to open and close the doors, hood, and trunk to see how easily they move. We suggest checking for paint overspray on the inside of the hood, trunk, and doors to be sure the color of the vehicle matches on all parts. If you notice overspray or mismatched paint, that part was likely repaired and repainted.

Inspect the interior by sitting in all the seats and looking for unusual wear and tear in the upholstery. If the interior of the car smells musty, check the carpet and floor mats for signs of a leak or water damage.

- **Test Drive**

Going for a test drive can help you determine the condition of the car and whether or not it's a good fit for you. You may want to turn the key to the "accessory" position before starting the engine. You should make sure all the lights on the dashboard go on. If they do not light up, or stay on when you turn the ignition, make sure the issue is inspected.

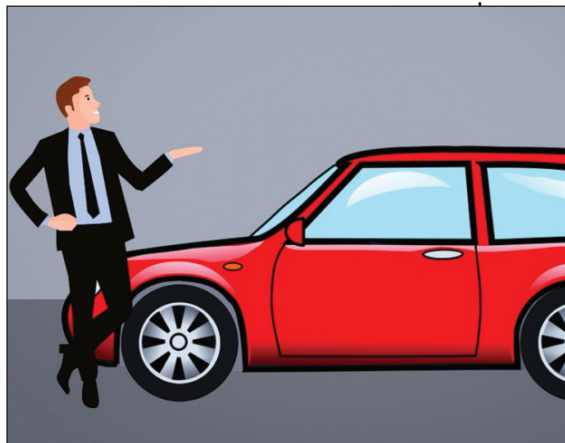
When you start the engine listen for tapping and clicking sounds, which could indicate a problem. While on a test drive, keep your eyes and ears open. We suggest driving the car on different types of roads and at various speeds to see if the transmission shifts smoothly. Make sure to note any unusual engine or brake noises, and whether all of the electronics in the car are working properly. Also, be sure the brakes work properly and do not pull the car to one side.

- **Consider the Mileage**

While you should take a vehicle's mileage into consideration, high mileage isn't necessarily a bad thing, and low mileage doesn't always mean the car is in great shape.

- **What Is Good Mileage for a Used Car?**

There's no simple answer to this question, because the way the car has been maintained and used may be more important than its mileage. It's a good idea to use caution when considering a car with high mileage because certain components and



engine parts simply don't last forever. However, if the owner has kept up with maintenance and taken care of any issues, the car may have a lot of life left in it. How the car was used can make a difference as well. A car with 100,000 miles on mostly highways may be in better shape than a high-mileage car that was used mostly on city roads, which can be harder on a vehicle.

- **Is Low Mileage on a Used Car Better?**

Low-mileage used cars can certainly be appealing, but it doesn't necessarily make them a great deal. Low mileage can certainly mean less wear and tear and longer life. However, if a car is not driven very often the plastic and rubber parts on the vehicle may dry out and get brittle. It's also better for the drivetrain when the vehicle is used consistently. You may end up with a vehicle that needs a lot of repairs and reconditioning, which could cost you more in the long run.

It's smart to check the mileage on a used

vehicle, but keep in mind that how the vehicle has been maintained and used may be more important than what the odometer says.

- **Check for Leaks**

Any car leaking fluids is generally a red flag for a needed repair. Check under the car to see if there's any fluid leaking. Black fluid might be an indicator of leaking oil, while green, yellow, or pink fluid may indicate a coolant leak and reddish fluid could be a leak in the transmission or power-steering.

- **Pre-Purchase Inspection**

It's better to spend \$100-\$500 for a Pre-Purchase Inspection and find out what a vehicle needs and what you're getting yourself into before the purchase. If you spend \$2000, \$4000, or \$10,000 for a used car and then have an inspection done just to find out the vehicle needs hundreds or thousands of dollars' worth in repairs you will not be a happy camper! We may be able to detect issues that you didn't uncover, so consider having the car inspected. If there are some fixable issues uncovered you could also use the inspection report to negotiate the purchase price with the seller.

We hope this has helped you in some way. If you're concerned about your vehicle for any reason or have any questions please stop by. We'll be happy to assist you.

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Times Feature

San Jose City Councilmember Sylvia Arenas tests positive for COVID-19

By Carly Wipf

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

San Jose Councilmember Sylvia Arenas tested positive for COVID-19 Dec. 9 after falling ill during this Tuesday's City Council meeting.

The District 8 representative posted on Facebook this morning that both she and most of her family members contracted the virus and are exhibiting "somewhat mild symptoms compared to others."

"It appears that a member of my small COVID bubble was unknowingly positive when I saw them on Saturday," Arenas wrote. "My family didn't have any further contact with people after Saturday as we adjusted to the stay-at-home county orders."

Her mother-in-law and young daughter, who both live with Arenas, tested negative and are being isolated as much as possible from the rest of the family, she wrote.

"We're grateful to have the resources to do this, and we're mindful of the fact that too many in our community do not have the ability to do so," Arenas added. "I will continue working on the council to make sure



San Jose Councilmember **Sylvia Arenas** is pictured in this file photo.

that others are able to isolate safely when they need to."

Arenas, who said she got the virus even after complying with state mandates, urged others to follow stay-at-home orders as COVID-19 cases continue to rise this winter.

"We appreciate your support while we recover," she wrote. "We pray for those in San Jose who are struggling with both COVID and financial hardship — as these come as a pair all too frequently."

According to Santa Clara County public health data, county hospitals are down to 10% ICU bed availability. There were 76 new COVID-19 hospitalizations as of Dec. 10, three new deaths and 43,001 total cases countywide.



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Times **Feature****Tech Jargon of the Week:**
Quantum ComputingBy **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:

Quantum Computing

Earlier this year, a new article in BBC said that a team combining Microsoft researchers and Niels Bohr Institute academics may have found the key to creating a quantum computer.

If they are right, then Microsoft would leap to the front of a race, that has a tremendous prize – the power to solve problems that are beyond conventional computers. IBM also recently said that it believes quantum computing would go mainstream and predicts that it will change lives everywhere.

So what is Quantum computing and how can it possibly change the technology?

Quantum computing means storing and processing information using individual atoms, ions, electrons or photons. Quantum computers are not intended to replace the classical computers or make them smaller. Rather they work according to principles entirely different than conventional computers, and using those principles, can solve problems whose solution will never be feasible on a conventional computer.

Sounds amazing! But the trouble is that quantum computing is hugely more complex than tra-

ditional computing and operates in the Alice in Wonderland world of quantum physics, where the “classical,” sensible, everyday laws of physics no longer apply.

You see, quantum theory involves atoms and subatomic particles, which do not behave the same way as everything else in the world. The classical laws of physics we take for granted in our everyday world no longer apply to them automatically. However, in 1960s IBM research physicists Rolf Landauer and Charles H Bennett proposed that information is a physical entity that could be manipulated using the laws of quantum physics.

Quantum + Computing = Quantum Computing

Conventional computer use bits to perform work, while quantum computers use quantum bits – known as qubits. To illustrate the difference, imagine a sphere. A bit can be at either of the two poles of the sphere, but a qubit can exist at any point on the sphere. So this means that a computer using qubits can store an enormous amount of information and use less energy in doing so than a classical computer. By entering into this quantum area of computing where the traditional laws of physics no longer apply, we will be able to create processors that are significantly faster (a million or more times) than the ones we use today.

Indeed, if quantum computing arrives in the future, it will change every industry and have a huge impact in the way we do business, perform analytics on data, and predict weather change among others.

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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Times **Local News**

Distance Learning

Continued from page 1

The Board of Trustees voted and approved the following recommendations by Superintendent Dr. Emy Flores:

1. Continuing distance learning for Evergreen School District's elementary and middle school students through the end of the 2020-21 school year.
2. Continuing to evaluate the COVID-19 rates in our district community to determine if conditions significantly improve, and allow for the transition to a learning model for in-person learning, including in-person enrichment, student activities and athletics, during the 2020-21 school year

and in preparation for the 2021-22 school year.

3. Bringing back small stable cohorts of the district's most at-risk and vulnerable student groups for targeted academic and social emotional support and intervention, following all of the recommended guidelines for student and staff safety.

4. Continuing to provide high quality enrichment opportunities and social emotional support for all students in a virtual environment.

Dr. Flores also noted, "Our families have been satisfied with distance learning, and we will continue to provide high quality instruction and enrichment opportunities, as well as social and emotional support so that our students will continue to thrive and en-

joy learning."

BACKGROUND

At the July 15 Board meeting, the Board determined that a full return to school in a Hybrid Model was not in the best interest of our students and staff, and approved for the EESD to reopen schools for the 2020-21 school year in a Distance Learning Model. The Board also approved the Superintendent's plan to re-evaluate the district's ability to keep students and staff healthy and safe at the end of the third week in December to determine whether the Hybrid Learning Model could be implemented in January 2021 upon students' return from Winter break. To accomplish this, the Superintendent reactivated the Superintendent's Teaching & Learning in Safe Environ-

ments Advisory Committee and its subcommittees in October, in order to re-evaluate the District's ability to move to a Hybrid Learning Model.

FACTORS CONSIDERED

The Superintendent's Teaching and Learning in Safe Environment Committee and Subcommittees along with Dr. Flores considered a number of factors regarding the Hybrid Learning Model, including:

- The county's COVID-19 restriction phase and number of COVID-19 cases;
- The availability of teachers and staff to teach in this model from the classroom;
- The implementation of required health and safety measures, which will require reinforcement by teachers, staff and parents;
- Feasibility for facilities to support safe distancing of student cohorts indoors in the classrooms and other areas of campus; frequency of required cleaning in the hybrid schedule; and ability to install required air ventilation by January 2021;
- Impacts on the quality of teaching and learning that may change if the district brings students back to in-person learning in a hybrid learning model;
- Ability to maintain stable cohorts on campus;
- Potential of disruptions to on campus learning due to increases in COVID-19 cases, necessitating a transition back to distance learning for all students;
- Addressing the needs of the district's highest need students and students who are struggling academically;
- Parent preferences to return to hybrid versus continuing distance learning.
- The District's ability to provide in-person learning to students in a way that is not only safe, but also provides students the best approaches to instruction and engagement.

KEY FINDINGS

During the board meeting, the Board of Trustees was presented with information regarding the evaluations and recommendations of the Superintendent's Teaching & Learning in Safe Environments Advisory Committee and its subcommittees. This presentation can be found on district website. Key findings from these subcommittees include:

- The hybrid learning model for the middle schools would be logistically impossible to implement, would not allow for smaller stable learning cohorts, as required by the County Department of Health, and would not ensure the safest teaching and learning environment. Furthermore, the structure of the middle school schedules is not conducive to provide stable cohorts without disrupting the current schedule and the safety guidelines for social distancing and students participating in stable cohorts cannot be met with the current structure.
- The District must consider that many of our families, by the nature of their beliefs and their culture, generally have multiple generations living in one household. Many parents have expressed that their concern is not just for their children, but mostly for their aging parents and great grandparents who also live in their homes;
- Despite the challenges, the parent community has expressed satisfaction with the current Distance Learning model. Parent

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Times Feature

surveys indicated that most would be more comfortable having their child continue to learn in this model, and that students and staff would be safer in this model.

- 17% of district staff have a medical issue that would prevent them from returning to work on-site.

- In order to accommodate a hybrid learning model, due to contractual class sizes, students will likely be transferred to a different class therefore, requiring a transition to a new teacher mid-year;

- There is a shortage of certificated substitutes in Santa Clara County available to teach during an in-person hybrid model, which will create staffing shortages should a teacher need to quarantine;

- Based on the parent survey, 9% (569 students) stated they would not reinforce guidelines set forth by the CPH Department regarding social distancing and wearing masks, creating a risk to students, staff and teachers;

- The impact of hybrid learning models on student learning and achievement is of particular concern. While the district has the utmost confidence in its teachers, and have seen them rise to the occasion and beyond with distance learning, there is little evidence that shows that hybrid learning model would be the best for students, or the safest for the majority of the district's staff and families. Teaching and learning would be different due to social distancing and no mixing of student cohorts. Furthermore, the current rise in COVID cases in Santa Clara County would likely create disruptions to on campus learning, requiring a transition back to distance learning; and

- The District's most vulnerable and at risk students, including English Language Learners, homeless, living in a foster care setting or otherwise at risk have specific needs that require them in-person support and intervention for Distance Learning and have their social and emotional needs met. The current staffing levels allow for meeting these needs through small, stable, and targeted student cohorts that ensure student and staff safety.

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The Evergreen School District's Reopening Goals throughout this whole process have always been to develop a robust teaching and learning plan that addresses: keeping students and employees safe, reopening schools under various circumstances, adapting our learning environment to various circumstances, and creating an equitable learning environment for all students under any circumstance. The Guiding Principles used in this process are:

- Health and Safety: Adhere to public health orders and rely on guidance and recommendations from public health officials.

- Flexibility: Provide reasonable accommodations to individual students, families, and employees in response to



their unique situations.

- Students' Social Emotional Well-being: Support the social and emotional well-being of our students, staff, and community.

- Learning: Provide high-quality instruction aligned with California State Standards.

FACTORS CONSIDERED

- Public Health Risks: To what extent can the health of students, staff, families and the general population be safeguarded while opening schools?

- Impact on Student Learning and Achievement: To what extent do students fall behind when schools are closed? To what extent are inequities exacerbated during school closures?

- Ability to Safeguard Schools: To what extent are we prepared to reopen with the right safety measures in place?

- Flexibility: To what extent are we prepared to offer learning options for students whose families may want 100% online distance learning?

The district will continue to evaluate the COVID-19 rates in the district community to determine if conditions significantly improve, and allow for the transition to a learning model for in-person learning, including in-person enrichment, student activities and athletics, during the 2020-21 school year and in preparation for the 2021-22 school year.

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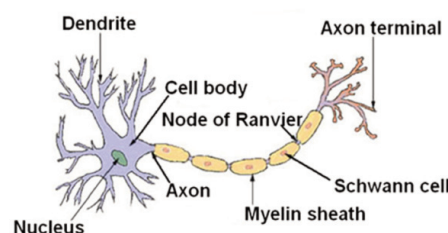
Gems

Continued from page 12

the tissue in various substances, most prominently, silver nitrate. He developed the technique through trial and error.

Santiago Ramon y Cajal was a Spanish doctor that proved that the basic unit of the nervous system is the neuron, instead of one continuous neural net. He improved on the Golgi stain technique and came up with the neuron doctrine. The neuron doctrine is the concept that the nervous system is made up of individual cells called neurons, supported by astro-

Structure of a Typical Neuron



cytes (star-shaped glial cell) and other glial cells.

Golgi and Cajal shared the 1906 Nobel Prize in Physiology/Medicine for their work, even though they completely disagreed about the nervous system. They split into two groups, the reticulists and neuronists. The reticulists, led by Golgi, believed that the nervous system consisted of a network of continuous tissue/reticulum, formed by the fused branches of dendrites and axons. The neuronists opposingly believed that it was made up of neurons.

Today, we know who was right -- Cajal. This is the basic structure of a typical neuron.

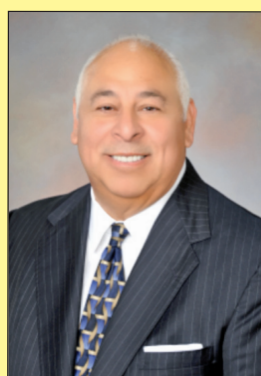
Over 5,500 years, the advancement and development of our understanding of the nervous system has been astounding, but, there's still so much more for us to understand about the nervous system and many essential questions left to answer. I say, braing it on! (...sorry)

Anyways, I hope you enjoyed this article. I want to give a huge thank you to Anoohya for this collaboration. If you found this interesting, make sure to check out the next column! If you have any questions or comments, please email me at apoorvapwrits@gmail.com.

Until next time!

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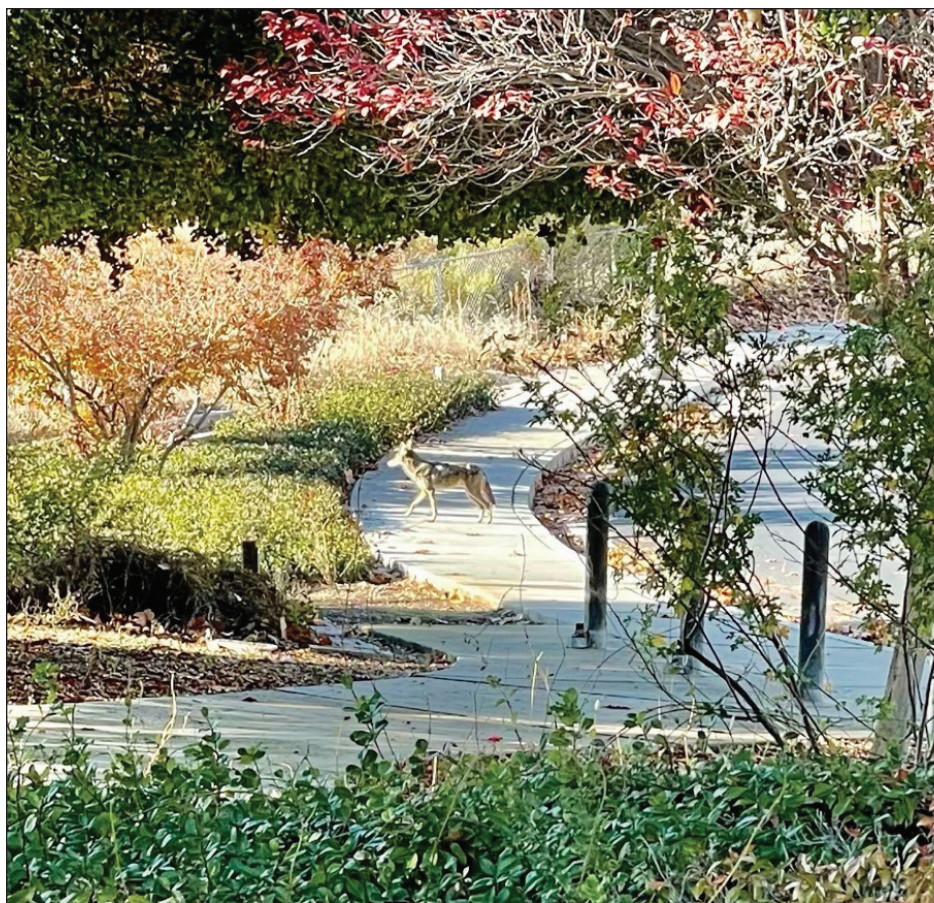
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Times **Community News****Coyote spotted**

A coyote was spotted near Evergreen Valley High School on Dec. 15. Coyotes have been searching for water sources due to a lack of rainfall. The pond across from the Village Square Branch Library is one source of water that coyotes have been visiting.

Photo by Viney Gautam.

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Times **Cover Story**

Sacred Heart

Continued from page 1

roughly 50 pounds of food which is the equivalent of \$100 worth of groceries.

Sacred Heart has made significant changes to this year's holiday food program to ensure families get the food they need while at the same time keeping our community safe during the COVID-19 pandemic. Distribution takes place over three days to decrease the number of people waiting in line. In accordance with the county public health regulations, Sacred Heart members, volunteers, and staff are required to wear masks at all times.

Community members coming to pick up food are advised to please bring something to carry your food and ham/ turkey to your car, bus stop or home. Many people use carts, strollers, rolling luggage, or cloth bags. Due to Covid-19 restrictions we do not have box holding, food sorting or volunteer assistance.

Sacred Heart's holiday program is made possible through the support of individuals in the community and groups including small businesses, faith communities, and schools. There is still a need for do-



A Sacred Heart volunteer assembles gift bags for this year's holiday gift program which runs through Friday, Dec. 18th (9am-4pm).

nated hams and turkeys to help every community member before the holiday. Those interested in supporting Sacred Heart's holiday program can visit www.sacredheartcs.org/holidays to learn how to drop off or to make an online donation.

For those interested in supporting Sacred Heart's holiday program can visit www.sacredheartcs.org/holidays to learn how to make a monetary donation or sign up for a volunteer shift.

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- A Food Pantry serving anyone in need—open Tu/Th/Sa 10:00 AM to Noon.
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www.ccavucc.org.
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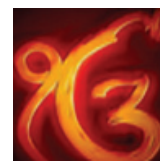
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St. Francis of Assisi Gathering Hall
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