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JAN. 8 – JAN. 21, 2021 ■ VOL. 34, NO. 1



District 10 City Councilmember
Matt Mahan

Mayor Liccardo celebrates swearing-in of councilmembers

Mayor Sam Liccardo celebrated the newest members elected to San Jose's City Council.

The new councilmembers, David Cohen (D-4), Matt Mahan (D-10), along with returning Councilmembers Sergio Jimenez (D-2), Dev Davis (D-6), and Sylvia Arenas (D-8) were virtually sworn in during Tuesday's council meeting.

"We celebrate the swearing-in of two of my new colleagues, Councilmembers David Cohen, and Matt Mahan," Liccardo said. "I welcome these two individuals who hail from the private sector but have deep backgrounds and commitment to community service—particularly in educating our youth. Their election has them leaving successful careers behind in tech, which says much about their passion for public service, and their character. I would also like to congratulate my returning colleagues, Sylvia Arenas, Dev Davis, and Sergio Jiménez as they reaffirm their commitment to serving the residents of this city. Amid the unprecedented challenges that local communities face in this difficult moment, we should celebrate those with the courage to step forward, make difficult decisions, push for solutions to vexing problems, and to serve."

Seniors find ways to battle isolation during pandemic

By Lorraine Gabbert
Senior Staff Writer

From hobbies to social media, seniors are finding ways to prevent feeling isolated while sheltering in place during the coronavirus pandemic.

Pre-pandemic, Marilyn Henrickson, (92), regularly went to the library, restaurants and shopping with her daughter. But in the past six-weeks, she's only ventured out once.

To keep busy, Henrickson reads, embroiders kitchen towels and gardens.

"I like being outside and raising flowers," Henrickson said. "It's something I can still do."

Richard (72) and Jeanne (71) Sanders actively participated in trips, events and dinners through the Almaden Senior Association before sheltering in place. Now, association members stay connected online with meetings and classes on Zoom. They also check in on each other through emails and phone calls.



Richard (72) and Jeanne (71) Sanders actively participated in trips, events and dinners through the Almaden Senior Association before sheltering in place. Now, they stay connected online and through phone calls.

Richard, president of Almaden Senior Association, runs board and membership meetings through Zoom.

"Seniors are learning a lot about technology they didn't know before," Richard said. "Thank goodness for Zoom and social media."

Jeanne said being outgoing is an advantage for them and imagines those who aren't are struggling more. Richard said rather than social isolation, they find home confinement difficult. They recently drove to Santa Cruz for a change of scenery and to breathe some fresh sea air.

The couple used to dine out weekly but stopped due to COVID-19. Not being able to attend senior exercise classes at the community center is another loss, they said.

"We were in an exercise class three times a week," Jeanne said. "It got us out of bed and on the road by 7:30 a.m. Now there's no incentive to get up and do anything but drink coffee and read the paper."

Richard said the classes provided socialization in addition to exercise.

See ISOLATION, page 20

High school teens find a solution to inaccessible tutoring and loss of motivation with free virtual childrens' sessions

By William Bellou
Publisher

Three local high school students have always had a passion to aid their community and make it a better place.

As soon as the teens analyzed the ongoing problem of inaccessible education and how distance learning was affecting children's motivation to learn, Aleeza Huraira, Hien Nguyen, and Amrita Raparti knew they had to find a solution. As a result of their findings, "Learn Beyond" became a reality in July 2020.

The three dedicated teens witnessed first-hand that private tutoring and enrichment was inaccessible



to many students due to variables such as cost and location, causing children who are in need of education outside of school potentially not being able to receive it.

The group of teens observed how distance learning due to the pandemic was affecting children's motivation to learn and their mental health. With Covid-19, children were at a greater risk of emotions

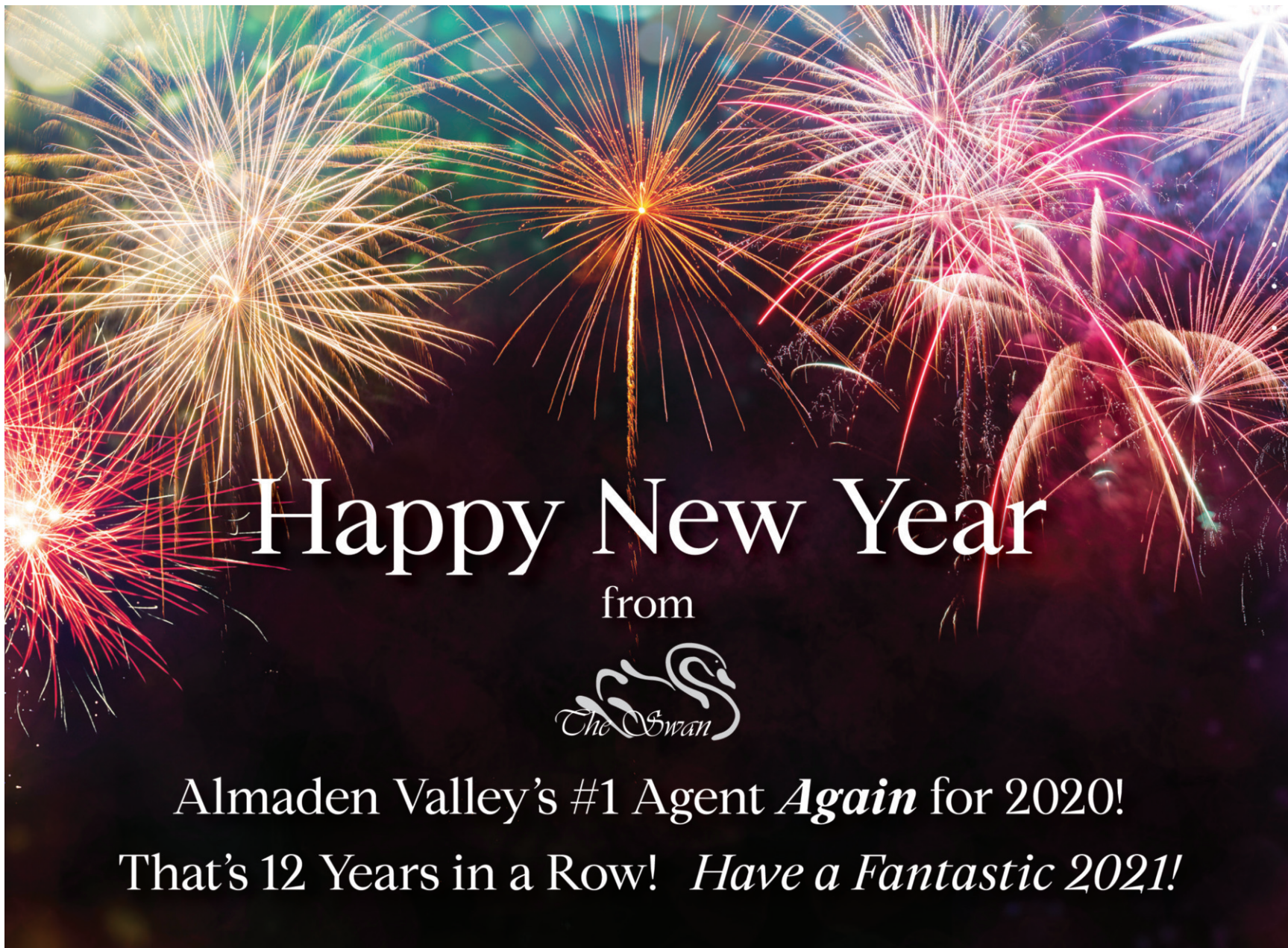
such as anxiety and stress, causing an impact on their education. Aleeza, Hien, and Amrita sought to find a solution to address these problems.

'Learn Beyond' provides live on-line tutoring

To address the education needs of students, the team of teens created "Learn Beyond," a free and virtual weekly session which enriches the lives of children in topics such as math and science, as well as providing tutoring and assistance in homework. The goal of the organization is not only to enhance the children's education, but to inspire the love of learning

See TUTORING, page 20

SEE OUR LISTINGS OF LOCAL REALTORS, CLASSIFIED ADVERTISING AND HOME IMPROVEMENT ADVERTISEMENTS INSIDE THE BACK COVER



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IN MEMORY

Jack Stednitz

Nov. 19, 1931 -

Dec. 7, 2020

President of the Rotary Club of Almaden Valley

Jack Stednitz was born in Lincoln, Nebraska in 1931 and moved to California at age twelve. He attended "Paly" High and then continued on to Cal Berkeley.

Jack graduated from Berkeley and then spent a year in the Army. After returning from overseas, Jack went back to Cal for his Master's Degree.

Jack's first job was with the Arthur Andersen Accounting firm in San Francisco. A few years later Jack and two friends started their own accounting firm, Brooks, Stednitz, and Rhodes in San Jose.

Jack was active in the community, most notably as a lifelong Rotarian. He was President of the Rotary Club of Almaden Valley. Jack was also President of the Santa Clara County Estate Planning Council.

Jack leaves one brother, Leo, his wife Betty, his three children, Ann, Paul, and Alan, plus three grandchildren, Brandon, Emily, and Zachary.

As Zachary would say: "Rest in Peace" Papa.

A family service has been held.

Valley Currents

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

'Cops Care Cancer Foundation' visits Bay Area families and patients

Cops Care Cancer Foundation made home visits to more than 55 Bay Area families and patients (who they call VIPs) and their siblings who receive Christmas presents specifically purchased for them last month.

This event was held in lieu of Fantasy Flight, due to Covid-19. The Cops Care Cancer Foundation was created in 2004.

Patients received arts & crafts supplies, blankets, stuffed animals, a movie themed gift basket with treats, gift cards for Netflix, and a Covid-19 basket containing masks, home cleaning products, and hand sanitizer. The parents received gift cards to Target and Safeway to help them celebrate their holiday without having to worry about money.

All officers, dispatchers, civilian PD employees, and other civilians donate their time. No



one receives a salary, so that allows 100% of donations to go straight to the families and hospitals they support. CCCF's mission is simple: Try to raise as much money as possible for children who are battling cancer. The secondary goal is to help these children be as comfortable

as possible while they are battling their illnesses. This comes in the form of; toys, clothing, school supplies, and recreational therapy trips.

To learn more about Cops Care Cancer Foundation, visit: www.copscarecancerfoundation.com

Grand jury accuses San Jose Unified of misleading public and its own board about lobbying efforts

By Lloyd Alaban
Article courtesy of
San José Spotlight

San Jose's biggest school district left the public and its own governing board in the dark about lobbying activities that were carried out on its behalf — and possibly violated government ethics laws in the process, according to a new Grand Jury Report.

San Jose Unified School District hired a consulting firm to help it with a proposal to build affordable housing for district teachers and employees but didn't disclose to its board or the public that the consulting firm was also lobbying city officials, the Santa Clara County Civil Grand Jury said in a report issued last week. Indeed, district staff members repeatedly denied to the board the consultancy was doing any lobbying for the district, according to the report.

Meanwhile, SJUSD obscured for



San Jose Unified board members discuss sites for affordable housing for teachers during a September 2019 meeting. *File photo.*

the public and its board the lobbying activities another firm it hired was doing at the state level, according to the report. "The vagueness, inaccuracies and lack of transparency surrounding the consultant contracts cause the Grand Jury to further question whether the district was evaluating these con-

tracts for compliance with government ethics laws," the Grand Jury said in its report.

"The Grand Jury is concerned about the district's lack of attention to this responsibility; the consultants' failure to disclose their financial interests; and the fact that the public is unaware that con-

sultants may have disqualifying financial interests in the work they perform for the district." The district declined to immediately comment, saying it would issue a formal response to the report "within the statutory timeframes."

SJUSD denial

SJUSD hired planning firm The Schoennauer Company, LLC, a registered lobbyist, in March 2019 at a rate of \$2,500 a month to help with its affordable housing proposal. At the time, the district was exploring a plan to relocate some of its schools and construct housing on the properties.

The proposal was opposed by many of the neighbors of the schools facing potential closures. Schoennauer helped SJUSD narrow its list of 10 potential sites for the affordable housing development to four. The Grand Jury Report also criticized the district's relationship

See LOBBYING, page 16

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Times **Community News**

How does the 2021 housing market look?

By Neil Collins

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

Nine months ago when our world was turned upside down with a countrywide stay-at-home order, none of us could have predicted the robust housing market we have been experiencing.

Many of us were assuming similar outcomes as we experienced during the last great recession, but plummeting prices and mass foreclosures never materialized. In fact, sale prices for homes increased and so did sales. So what do the experts think the 2021 housing market will look like?

Jordan Levine, the deputy chief economist for the California Association of Realtors (C.A.R.), gave his 2021 forecast earlier this month and expects the housing market to grow at 3.3% for next year with prices increasing by 4.4%.

Most expect interest rates to remain virtually unchanged next year and that the 30-year fixed mortgage rate will hover around 3%. Levine based his forecast on several assumptions including a successful vaccine distribution, improved GDP and foreclosure rates being single digits.

Locally, despite unprecedented pressure on the economy, housing is still likely to be one of the bright spots of the recovery. Realtor.com's housing forecast predicts the San Jose metro market will grow by 10.8% in both sales and price year over year. Lack of inventory continues to be the main factor driving up housing prices.

Dave Walsh, 2021 C.A.R. president and San Jose Compass manager, is predicting a banner year for housing in Santa Clara County, which could see sales rising at 5.4% or more if the inventory is there to support it.

However, Walsh continues to see weakness in the condo market with the latest inventory numbers showing a 50%+ increase over last year.

If the vaccine renews optimism that we are getting closer to moving beyond COVID-19, the increased supply of condos and low interest rates could offer a unique opportunity for first-time buyers in Santa Clara County.

According to Levine's market forecast, "the share of first-time buyers reached the highest level in 10 years this past summer, with nearly two of five homes being sold to buyers who purchased for the first time."

Despite the rosy outlook to the housing market there are still major headwinds.

This pandemic has contributed greatly to the ongoing wealth gap in our community. The "K" shape nature of the economic recovery that we are experiencing is likely to continue into 2021.

The top wage earners in our community have been relatively unaffected as compared to the lower third of wage earners, many of whom have been devastated by reduced

work hours and layoffs.

It is those top wage earners who are continuing to drive the housing market while the rest of the community falls further behind. And for that reason, we need to continue looking for equitable solutions that lift up our entire community.

Neil Collins is CEO of the Santa Clara County Association of Realtors, a trade association representing more than 6,000 real estate professionals in Santa Clara County and surrounding areas. Contact Neil at neil@sccaor.com or follow @neilvcollins on Twitter.



Realtor.com's housing forecast predicts the San Jose metro market will grow by 10.8% in both sales and price year over year. File photo by Carly Wipf.



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COMPASS

Times **Feature**

Mayor Liccardo Delivers 2020 'State of the City'

Mayor Liccardo delivered the State of the City address by video this year on Dec. 23.

At the outset, Liccardo described the "State of the City" bluntly, "Our city is suffering, as it has never suffered before. Between days filled with wildfire smoke, and

nights of civil unrest, weeks of rising hospitalization, and months of unpaid bills, we have been bruised and we have been battered...but we remain unbowed."

Yet Liccardo pointed to the community's character—and specifically residents' faith in themselves and their community—as a source of hope, "San Jose is a resilient city. Boundless hearts and creative spirits have enabled us to endure, to adapt, and to innovate."

Liccardo pointed to several inspiring examples of residents stepping up amid the crisis to lift and support others, to innovate, adapt, and persevere, such as the more



Mayor **Sam Liccardo** delivered the State of the City address by video this year on Dec. 23.

than 3,000 residents who volunteered to help distribute food after the launch of Silicon Valley Strong, a digital resources hub that also facilitated the raising of tens of millions of dollars and provides one-stop information to residents seeking to get or give help.

The mayor noted that these moments of the generosity and resilience of others, "Give us faith in our community. That faith strengthens our resilience in tough times—by forging our commitment to each other, and by emboldening us to adapt, try new methods, and to embrace risk. That is, our common faith...only allows us to not only survive in the moment, but to thrive after the crisis has passed."

Liccardo emphasized ways in which City staff embraced the community's faith, pivoting amid the pandemic to create a "better normal" with innovative solutions to enduring hardships exacerbated by the pandemic, including:

- Bridging the digital divide for more than 100,000 residents with free broadband, helping tens of thousands of students engage in distance learning. In partnership with East Side Union High School District, the City has forged the path to digitally connect more than 300,000 residents, the size of the city of St. Louis, with free broadband by 2022.

- Providing immediate construction of emergency housing sites for more than 300 homeless residents at 1/5 of the cost of typical apartments, built in 4 months instead of the typical 4 years. In combination with other housing solutions such as rented motels and converted shelters, the City and County have worked with non-profit organizations since the pandemic to house more than 4,300 homeless individuals, and enable 1,533 people to obtain permanent housing.

- Managing the distribution of more than 2.5 million meals a week in partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank, and becoming the first city in the nation to propose an eviction moratorium.

In early 2021, after the current COVID-19 surge has abated, Liccardo said he will return with a more traditional articulation of policy proposals for the year ahead, but pointed to some specific efforts in improving police accountability and transparency, and expanding programs that address the intersection of racial, educational, and economic inequity.

In the year ahead, Liccardo declared, "San Jose will continue to adapt, innovate, and lead the way to a 'better normal'—together." Liccardo concluded by describing how history will describe our community's toils through this pandemic, asserting that "It will tell our progeny about our common faith—one that inspired us to overcome our physical separation to act collaboratively, to give boldly, and to adapt courageously."

He concluded, "This is our moment to write a new chapter for our City, to define our generation's special place in history, and to lead a badly ailing nation on a path of healing."



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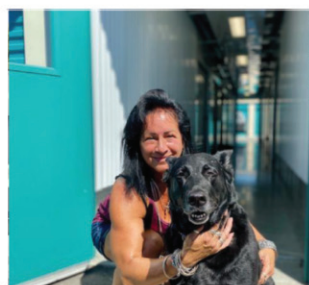


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Lester Scholarships is providing up to \$5,000 for high school seniors and college students

The Linda L. Lester Scholarships, a program of the Santa Clara County Farm Bureau, is providing up to \$5,000 for 2021 recipients in cooperation with American AgCredit.

Scholarships

The scholarships are for local high school seniors and college students who have a cumulative GPA of 3.00 or better and plan to major in agriculture, such as agricultural business, forestry, viticulture, animal science, crop science, environmental science, agricultural engineering, agricultural education, agricultural communications, food science, and others.

Recipients of the scholarship will receive annual payments determined by their length of time remaining in college, up to four years. In order to receive annual payments, recipients must provide transcripts from the previous school year and enrollment verification for the upcoming school year. A GPA of 2.5 must be maintained throughout payment schedule.

Applications include an instruction form, brief list of questions, transcripts, personal statement and two letters of recommendation. Once all applications have been received, students will be contacted by the



Linda L. Lester

Santa Clara County Farm Bureau to set up an interview with the Farm Bureau's scholarship committee. Scholarship recipients will be notified by phone or email following the interviews. Monetary awards will be mailed directly to the recipient's college or university once school begins.

The deadline for submitting applications for the Santa Clara County Farm Bureau Linda L. Lester Scholarships is: Friday, Jan. 29, 2021

Applications are available on the Santa Clara County Farm Bureau website:

www.santaclarafarmbureau.org/news/2021

Update: Anderson Dam water levels drop to 3% capacity

New outlet tunnel construction to begin in 2021

Valley Water has gradually released water from Anderson Reservoir through the existing outlet which began Oct. 1, 2020.

Water levels in Anderson Reservoir have now dropped to 3% of capacity, the lowest level that can be reached through the existing outlet tunnel.

Because of the lack of early-season rain, Anderson reached the 3% level in less than three months. Valley Water may continue to release water from Anderson Reservoir once it begins capturing storm runoff from winter rains.

Valley Water will strive to maintain this 3% level moving forward as the organization works on projects designed to strengthen Anderson Dam.

Valley Water lowered the water levels in Anderson Reservoir in response to an order by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to reduce the risk to the public should Anderson Dam fail during a major earthquake.

Valley Water released water at a rate of about 200-acre feet per day, or 65 million gallons a day.

The next step in the work of the organization at Anderson Dam is to build a 1,700-foot-long tunnel, up to 24-feet in diameter, on the left side of the dam looking towards the reservoir. The new tunnel will increase the amount of water that can be released from Anderson by five times when used in conjunction with the existing outlet, allowing Valley Water to better maintain water levels in the reservoir.

Work on the outlet tunnel is expected to begin in early 2021, and we estimate it will take two to three years to complete.



Anderson Dam photo courtesy ValleyWater.org

Valley Water will begin work on retrofitting the dam embankment and spillway once the tunnel is complete. That effort, known as the Anderson Dam Seismic Retrofit Project, is estimated to start in 2024 and will last about seven years.

Mayor announces launch of #ShopLocalSJ

Silicon Valley Strong campaign activates community to support local businesses during stay-at-home order

Mayor Sam Liccardo announced the launch of #ShopLocalSJ campaign along with other initiatives aimed at helping struggling businesses impacted by the pandemic on Dec. 17. These initiatives include a new fee cap

on app delivery services passed by City Council, a virtual local business directory, and digital resources for small businesses.

"Help for our struggling small businesses can't come soon enough," said Mayor Sam Liccardo. "Shopping local is an important way our community can leverage our collective buying power to keep our neighbors employed in these tough times. Throughout this pandemic, we've seen how San Jose grows stronger when we're pulling together."

As the holidays approach and the current Stay-at-Home order goes into effect region wide, residents are encouraged to stay, and shop local to help financially burdened small businesses. New resources to help with this goal include:

- #ShopLocalSJ, a social media campaign encouraging residents to spend locally during the holiday season to support small businesses and restaurants financially burdened by the pandemic. To join the movement, residents are invited to use #ShopLocalSJ on social media and share photos of their favorite businesses and restaurants;

- Silicon Valley Strong recently launched a regional 'Shop Local' digital directory resource, for small business listings in the area. Community members who are not active on social media can help identify their favorite local businesses by visiting siliconvalleystrong.org/shoplocal and submit the businesses information for the online directory;

- Small businesses that are not digitally active can connect with Get Virtual for resources and guidance to establish their digital presence free of charge. Get Virtual will pair local businesses with college students trained in entrepreneurship, digital marketing, and web development to create an online presence. Businesses can contact 'Get Virtual' by visiting siliconvalleystrong.org/shoplocal and click on "I need help getting my business online";

- On Tuesday, San José' city council unanimously supported Mayor Liccardo and Councilmember Diep's proposal to cap third-party food delivery services fees at 15% per order. The proposal came as a pandemic response to help struggling businesses survive by regulating app-based delivery services from charging fees of up to 30% per order.

Meet your new District 10 team

By Matt Mahan
Special to the Times

In recent weeks I've been focused on hiring my future office staff, who will serve the more than 100,000 residents of District 10. I'm thrilled to announce our incoming team today.

One of the most important lessons I've learned in building, running, and advising companies and nonprofits is that the quality of the team that comes together around an organization's mission is the most crucial success factor. I'm extremely confident that we've assembled a team whose skills, experience, empathy, and desire to serve the public will enable us to do great things for you.

Here is your incoming District 10 team:

Chief of Staff — Matthew Quevedo

As Chief of Staff, Matthew will manage the office team, ensuring that we are focused on our highest priorities — from defeating COVID-19 and increasing public safety to reducing homelessness and ensuring fiscal responsibility — and achieving results for our constituents in these critical areas. Growing up, Matthew's home backed onto the big open

field that we now know as Martial Cottle Park in the northern part of District 10. He attended local public schools, including Hacienda, Castillero, and Pioneer High School. He was a self-described "band kid," playing jazz trumpet and the baritone horn. For the past 4-years, Matthew has worked at the Silicon Valley Leadership Group. As

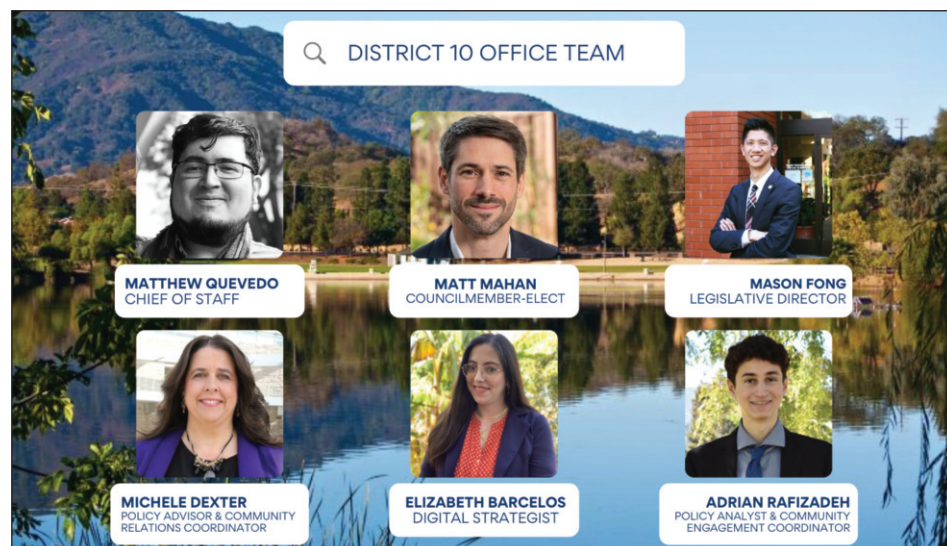
a Director, his focus was on transportation and housing policy along with engagement with the neighborhoods and communities that make up Silicon Valley. Through SVLG, Matthew was instrumental in helping secure billions of dollars for transportation and housing throughout the Bay Area. In this role, he also helped manage the CEO Airport Task Force, commuter shuttle bus policy, the Neighborhoods Leaders Council (NLC), housing project advocacy and built strong relationships with leaders in the public and private

sectors. Matthew also has experience in the nonprofit sector through his work at Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley and has helped lead over 24 different local campaigns. Matthew Quevedo states, "What an honor it is to come back to my home district to help lead the Office of Coun-



District 10 Report

Matt Mahan
Councilmember-elect, District 10



cilmember-Elect Matt Mahan as Chief of Staff. I am excited to give back to the neighborhoods that made me who I am today. I speak on behalf of our team when I say we are eager to get to work for our neighbors throughout District 10."

Legislative Director — Mason Fong

As Legislative Director, Mason will lead the team's policy response to the challenges and opportunities facing our city. He'll seek out solutions that prioritize making local government more transparent, efficient and accountable for delivering results, which are the core values on which I campaigned. Mason brings a wealth of experiences in both governance and public policy to the District 10 team. In 2018, Mason was elected as the youngest and only third Asian-

American Sunnyvale City Councilmember at the age of 27. His previous professional experience includes managing federal and state government affairs and public policy for the Silicon Valley Organization and serving in a variety of policy-oriented roles in the offices of Vice Mayor Chappie Jones, Congressman Ro Khanna, and Congressman Mike Honda. Mason Fong states, "As a former District 10 resident, I am ecstatic to be able to serve District 10 residents and businesses as the Legislative Director for Councilmember-elect Matt Mahan. I am looking forward to improving the quality of life for District 10 and San Jose residents by helping to push through thoughtful and holistic public policy initiatives."

See TEAM, page 11

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Times **Community News****Team***Continued from page 9***Policy Advisor & Community Relations Coordinator — Michele Dexter**

As Policy Advisor and Community Relations Coordinator, Michele will continue the fantastic work she has done during her eight years of service in Councilmember Khamis' office. Michele is known across the district for her pragmatic, hands-on approach to improving our community, ranging from organizing the community for volunteer events to bringing people together to plan for disaster response. In fact, across the thousands of doors I knocked on during the campaign, Michele's name came up again and again! Michele is the third generation in her family to be born in San José. She grew up in Cambrian Park and Willow Glen and has lived in Almaden since 1998. She has a family history of business, entrepreneurship, and community involvement that goes all the way back to her great-grandmother's three hotel businesses in downtown San José.

Michele co-founded an IT services business in 2002 with her husband Rick and managed operations, while at the same time raising their two sons. Michele is CERT trained, has a ham radio license and makes the best lemon cookies in Almaden. Michele Dexter states, "Serving District 10 these past eight years has been a privilege. I'm excited to be able to continue and looking forward to working with our new team!"

Digital Strategist — Elizabeth Barcelos

As Digital Strategist, Elizabeth will lead our efforts to use technology to inform and empower residents with the information they need to navigate City Hall, understand how their city government is performing, and advocate for their priorities and values. Her deep experience with digital communications is all the more valuable now, as COVID-19 has forced most of us to rely on digital tools to stay connected and engaged. Elizabeth grew up in East San José, the oldest daughter of Portuguese immigrants. Her digital communications experience started with running SJSU Quidditch's social media accounts. She later went on to work in content creation and journalism before spending the past two years as a social media manager at Gold and Hammes, Attorneys. There, Elizabeth spearheaded Student Debt Bomb, an advocacy project in collaboration with the National Association of Consumer Bankruptcy Attorneys. Most recently, Elizabeth was Social Media Director for Jake Tonkel's District 6 City Council campaign, a hands-on lesson in learning to communicate with a district in spite of the limitations of a pandemic. Elizabeth got married over Zoom this fall, so pandemic communications are a professional and personal interest. While she's called a handful of San José neighborhoods home — including The Woods apartments here in District 10. Barcelos states, "As a lifelong San Jose resident, I'm excited to give back to the city that has molded me into who I am today. I'm looking forward to bringing my digital communications expertise to the District 10 office. It's important to keep residents involved and in touch with their local government as we live through these socially distanced times and work on building a better San Jose."

Digital Strategist Elizabeth Barcelos got married over Zoom this fall, so pandemic communications are a professional and personal interest.

Policy Analyst & Community Engagement Coordinator — Adrian Rafizadeh

As Policy Analyst and Community Engagement Coordinator, Adrian will wear multiple important hats, including conducting policy research and writing, building relationships with community groups and other stakeholders, overseeing our constituent feedback management system, and managing our office interns. Adrian has lived in District 10 for 17 years and has long been passionate about serving his community. As a son of Iranian immigrants, he is a proud first-generation American. Adrian is a recent graduate of Leland High School and is deferring his admission to the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania until September 2021 to work in the District 10 office. I'm grateful and fortunate that Adrian is choosing to spend his "gap year" serving our community in this way. Adrian has worked in Councilmember Johnny Khamis' office for the past two years, first as an intern, and later as a member of his staff. He has also served as the Vice-Chair of the District 10 Youth Advisory Council and continues to serve on the board of the Almaden Valley Community Association. Adrian has spent the past few months working diligently to ensure continuity and a smooth transition as Councilmember Khamis and his team pass the torch to our team. Adrian Rafizadeh states, "I couldn't have asked for a better place to grow up – and to continue growing in – than San Jose's District 10. I'm beyond excited to get to work making my community and home a better place as a member of Councilmember-Elect Mahan's staff."

Survey to address your needs

As our team comes into office January 1st and begins working to serve you, we would benefit from hearing your latest priorities, questions, and ideas. We've put together a short and confidential survey to gather 1) your high-level priorities for the City, and 2) specific ideas and issues relevant to your immediate neighborhood that our office may be able to help address. I'd appreciate it if you would take 5 minutes to complete our survey here: <https://bit.ly/d10survey>

As always, it's a pleasure to hear your feedback. I am looking forward to working with our new District 10 team to represent and serve you in the years ahead! Councilmember-elect, San José District 10; matt@mahan-forsanjos.com, 408-891-9708

Matt is Councilmember-elect for San José District 10, which includes Almaden Valley and Blossom Valley. Matt took office January 1st and uses this blog to share what he's learning about a variety of local issues and his take on those issues.

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Times Community News

Pre-Flight COVID-19 testing now available at Mineta San José International Airport

Onsite, drive-thru COVID-19 testing is now available for passengers flying from Mineta San José International Airport (SJC). The testing program is now offered daily by appointment from 7:30 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. for travelers flying on Alaska Airlines and Hawaiian Airlines, with plans to expand the program

to all travelers.

Carbon Health, the technology-enabled healthcare provider, currently administers fast turnaround PCR testing exclusively to Alaska Airlines passengers, with plans to open testing to all travelers next week. Travelers testing to fly with Alaska Airlines must show their flight itinerary and pay \$170.

All testing is done in compliance with the State of Hawaii's Safe Travels Program, and test results are expected by 2:00 p.m. the following day. Test results are shared in a pre-filled form in passengers' Carbon Health accounts for easy upload to the Hawaii Gov-

ernment site.

"With the aviation and travel industries still significantly impacted by the pandemic, SJC is pleased to add pre-flight COVID-19 testing to the list of safety measures undertaken at our airport," said John Aitken, Director of Aviation at Mineta San Jose International Airport. "While we look forward to the return of the record-breaking traffic we experienced just last year, we are committed to getting there safely. Our promise is to continue working hard to maintain a safe and sanitized environment for those utilizing our facilities."



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Santa Clara County looking for its first youth poet laureate

By Madelyn Reese

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

In a time when the world is more difficult to make sense of than ever, Santa Clara County is opening the floor to local teens to make their meaning through poetry.

For the first time, the county will choose its own youth poet laureate. The idea by Santa Clara County's own poet laureate Janice Lobo Sapigao is to select a candidate to "represent and elevate youth voices from all over the county," according to the program description.

Candidates must be 13 to 18 years old, live in Santa Clara County and can't be enrolled in college throughout the term, which spans for one year starting in June. Citizenship is not required.

"My goal as poet laureate was not only to start this program," Sapigao said. "I want this program to continue past my tenure and I hope that someone will take it on and people will decide it's necessary for the county."

Sapigao said the program is important because society needs to do more to amplify youth voices.

"We live in an anti-youth society," Sapigao said. "They're told their voice will be heard only when they turn 18 and can vote."

Furthermore, Sapigao said, youth are economically disempowered because they can't work until their later teens.

"There's a sense that adults and politicians and rich people think youth will not take

care of them when, in fact, it's often the adults that don't take care of the young people," said Sapigao.

Poetry often can serve as an entryway to get young people involved politically and within their communities, she said. It also gives them a sense of agency that's otherwise hard to come by. Sapigao will mentor the chosen youth poet throughout the tenure, providing support and instruction.

Organizers of the competition want as many people to apply as possible, whether or not someone thinks they're "good enough." Six judges (Sapigao will not be one) will choose the finalist based on literary excellence, civic engagement and commitment to poetry as a craft.

Santa Clara County public libraries are helping administer the program by providing platforms to host events, as well as promoting it across social media.

"We're very excited about the program, and I think it's a great opportunity for teens to participate in a contest that will help them develop their language skills and help them express themselves, especially now when it's so difficult to do so," said Steve Fitzgerald, library services manager for the Santa



Janice Sapigao (center), poet laureate for Santa Clara County, is seen with students from Kababayan Learning Community at Skyline College. Photo courtesy of Janice Sapigao

Clara County Library District.

The program is funded through the year with money from Sapigao's own earnings through an Academy of American Poets fellowship that also funds her appointment as poet laureate in Santa Clara County.

An approximate \$15,000 budget includes paying judges, running workshops and hopefully paying the young laureate.

Fitzgerald said the library district is lucky to have Sapigao leading this project, which is important for the community.

"It's also an opportunity for teens to practice an art form that's been around for a long time and recognize that there are other things out there other than science and math," Fitzgerald said. "Language is important and this gives them an opportunity to fool around with a medium they might not otherwise have a chance to."

The deadline to apply is Feb. 26, 2021.

Contact Madelyn Reese at reese.madelyn@gmail.com or follow her @MadelynGreese.



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Times **Community News**

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Team Terrabats was formed to bring together kids of all ages who are eager to seek out knowledge and thrive in a stem environment.

First Tech Challenge Team Terrabats journey through STEM

Evergreen neighborhood students from different schools and grades won the most prestigious Inspire award in the FTC program, part of FIRST's robotics competitions, remote qualifier hosted by Google. More information about FIRST programs can be found at www.firstinspires.org.

Team Terrabats was formed to bring together kids of all ages who are eager to seek out knowledge and thrive in a stem environment. Team Terrabats, which was founded in 2017, actively promotes STEM in their local community irrespective of socio-economic status as a self-motivated, self-funded group of students. The team is proud to be able to provide out of box solutions for team management during the current pandemic while still keeping the passion for the latest robotic technology alive by inspiring others to join hands in their journey. One parent shared with the team coach "This team is an oasis in the current times and it has allowed my son to feel he is part of something valuable. I am so proud of him."

Although the team was second in their Robot score, reaching the highest possible score for regionals remains as their primary goal. The team has won various awards in past – Design, Control, Motivate, Connect, finalist, and second Inspire, but this year due to team resilience and passion, they won their first Inspire Award. Inspire Award is awarded to the team who embrace all aspects of FTC challenge and inspiration to other teams, acting with Gracious Professionalism™ both on and off the playing field. In April 2021, Terrabats is working hard to score as high as possible in the robot game and excel in all aspects of FTC in the NorCal Regionals and win a spot to the world event.

The team's adult coaches Vishakha Mujoo and Rajani Sankarappan have been instrumental in guiding the team through the years and have been a support system the team's youth require.

Terrabats has grown and evolved and the team's growth and dedication has been able to overcome many hurdles with resilience. The team works with local libraries, Stem for Kids, YMCA, and other local organizations to run ongoing stem based classes. The team prides itself in their motto "3T's, Inspire, Influence, and Impact."

The team captains Pratik Lokesh and Shuhul Mujoo, 4-year veterans, are strong pillars who have the years of experience and have a never-ending thirst to spread knowledge and motivate others to learn. They are the engine that keeps the team running and motivated in the current pandemic.

The captains together with the team have learned many things over the course of four years.

Computer Aided Design is inspiring

"Through hard work, anything is possible

and all of us believe Terrabats will succeed," Lokesh said. "My FTC journey has taught me many things, engineering, teamwork, and most importantly patience. Early on I would create a design only for it to be rendered completely useless by a simple flaw and I would give up. This inspired me to self-learn CAD and now I design and prototype for hours on end with nothing in sight but our goal. FTC isn't just a side hobby; it's a passion that drives me to learn valuable life skills."

"Programming was always an interest, nothing more. Just something I wanted to pursue but never had the motivation or reason to," Mujoo said. "Ever since I joined FTC the possibilities of programming skyrocketed for me. Every year's new challenge has given the opportunity to create smarter and efficient robots with new methods implemented."

Aahan P, Akhil A, Ananya R, Ananya M, Gayatri J, and Nithin L, are members who have joined and each team member actively contributes in various aspects of FTC which includes Design, Programming, Outreach, Fundraising, and Documentation. Every year TerraBats begins recruiting in April and training starts for interested team members before the year's challenge is released. New recruits included; Anjali R, Arnav P, Dhruva C, Harnoor S, Snehil V, and Vasudha K, who actively participated in the team's events and training in all aspects of FTC.

To spread, motivation, and inspire the team, they continuously participate and organize events and classes. Groups including the Bay Area Science festival, Maker's fair, local schools, and Terrabats organized prominent events for the team to participate in each year; but this year due to Covid-19, organizing the events has been a challenge. Hence, the team organized many online events to keep spirits high and the light of knowledge burning, such as Spookathon and Stem Lab.

Events such as our STEM Lab have allowed students to show their creativity and learn something new. Event's lead Ananya said, "This year organizing events was harder than ever, to engage kids virtually is a known difficulty many people face. But through activities and more, I know for sure we can inspire and influence as we did before!"

Mentoring other First teams is another way the team influences young minds. Over the course they have mentored and helped form various FLL Jr, FLL, and FTC teams. EN Lead Gayatri says, "Working with young kids has been an enlightening experience."

The team will thrive to spread knowledge in their community and will continue to mentor many more Jr FLL, FLL, and FTC teams.

If you are interested in learning more about Terrabats and how you can get mentored, send an email to: terrabats14525@gmail.com.

EVC partners with student-led nonprofit to deliver needed food and hygiene kits to students

Evergreen Valley College (EVC) hosted its final drive-thru food distribution of 2020 on Dec. 18.

Basic needs and food insecurity has been a critical need for EVC students. Prior to the pandemic, EVC, in partnership with Second Harvest Food Bank, New Seasons Market, and Fresh & Natural, had distributed nearly 20,000 pounds of food to EVC students from September 2019-March 2020 through its permanent food pantry on campus.

When COVID-19 hit and the shelter in place began, EVC had to be creative and pivot while still supporting the students in need, especially as the need increased. So, EVC began delivering bi-monthly drive-thru food distributions where students



EVC student and Hope Hearted Co-founder, Quynh Nguyen with EVC President Tammeil Gilkerson

stay in their cars and volunteers place the food into their trunk. Since June of 2020, EVC has served over 10,000 individuals and distributed over 125,000 pounds of food.

What made the final distribution of 2020 unique is that EVC partnered with a nonprofit, co-created by an EVC student, to deliver hygiene kits in addition to food.

Bay Area has third largest population of homeless in U.S.A

Quynh Nguyen was born and raised in San José and is in her 2nd year at EVC. Quynh and three friends, who she met volunteering at O'Connor Hospital, established a 501c3 nonprofit called Hope Hearted to address the issue of those who are unhoused in San José/Bay Area, which has the third largest

population of homelessness in the United States.

They decided to establish a 501c3 nonprofit called Hope Hearted and formed partnerships with local shelters, built a team of 150 volunteers, started reaching out for donations of money and supplies, and began putting together care packages filled with soaps, deodorants, masks, hand sanitizers, shampoos, and more. Hope Hearted has now distributed over 2,500 care packages, including about 400 that were distributed to EVC students, along with the food and groceries...

"It's been an eye-opening experience packaging and distributing the kits to the unhoused and low income experience. Being able to help my community college, however, probably means the most to me," Quynh said. "It's the community closest to me that I truly want to make an impact on and give back to. We are all students at Evergreen Valley College despite our racial, social, and economic background, and I want to be able to provide and help my peers any way possible amidst these chaotic times."

For more info on food distributions at EVC, visit: <http://bit.ly/evcfoodinfo>. For more info on Hope Hearted, visit <https://www.hopeheartedvolunteers.org>

Op Ed: Small businesses need better support during COVID-19 crisis

An insightful look at a small business owner's experience

By Shannon Adams
Special to the Times

The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors voted to explore a \$100 million financial assistance package to help small businesses impacted by COVID-19. The County Administration is debating eligibility criteria and parameters of the financial assistance package. At this time, I would like to offer some insight into why this process is so important for our local businesses and why it is of the utmost importance that the County be thoughtful in how it determines eligibility. Here is the story of my own small business:

1. Urban Body San Jose received assistance from the Paycheck Protection Program (PPP), which made us ineligible for many other grants. We received it early on when requirements included the funding be spent in 8 weeks, a line item which was later changed to 24 weeks. In the end, this was major part of the reason the PPP did not help our business at all. Due to federal restrictions, the money only covered payroll for 8 weeks, an action that did nothing to contribute to keeping our business afloat. By the time mistakes were realized and significant changes were made to the PPP, it was too late for those of us who applied early and now we are left with no assistance. Receiving PPP should not disqualify businesses.

2. We were also not eligible for specific San Jose grants because of our personal household income. While myself and my business partner have been working overtime to stay afloat, due to PPP restrictions, we were only able to pay our employees and as owners, were not able to pay ourselves. In fact, neither of us have received any compensation since March. Because the income of our

spouses (NOT us) was more than \$75K annually, our small business is not eligible for financial help locally, simply because we cannot prove what monthly expenses are personal. Especially in Silicon Valley, where cost of living is obscene, this doesn't even consider

that most households need a dual income to survive. We are basically asking small business owners to use personal money to prop up their businesses. But how can we do that

"Due to federal restrictions, the PPP money only covered payroll for 8 weeks, an action that did nothing to contribute to keeping our business afloat."

when we aren't making any money? As a small business with many employees, in the middle of the Bay Area, having a personal income over \$75K doesn't mean we can support an entire business. It's ridiculous and discouraging and puts us at risk of

closing permanently. Personal income should not determine eligibility.

3. Our landlord refuses to work with us. Is there any way to create incentives or finan-

cial assistance to motivate landlords to help tenants? The only offer from our landlord was rent deferment, which would put us thousands and thousands of dollars in debt. How is that helping? How can a small business pay that back and make up for what they have lost and figure out rent? Small businesses cannot afford to take on debt right now. Period. And for many of us, our personal assets, our homes, are on the line if we can't pay. It is completely unacceptable in the middle of a pandemic. Right now, small business owners already worry about just being able to put food on their table. So, it has come to this. Since we cannot afford to hire an attorney and our landlord is not responding to us after multiple attempts, we are at a standstill. We have tried to negotiate out of the lease. We have asked to make the lease available for sublet. I have done everything I can to figure out a way for us to stay in business and it feels impossible. We have a \$1200 rent increase starting January 1. Yes, \$1200. And I have no idea how we are going to come up with those dollars. Landlords should not be allowed to take advantage of small businesses during the pandemic.

Something needs to change. Our situation is not unique. Small businesses need help. More information needs to be considered when discussing eligibility for these grants. We all know winter will be tough on small businesses and that COVID-19 isn't going away. I'm not sure who decided on eligibility previously, but they did the city and small businesses a true disservice and that is one of the reasons why so many of us are going out of business. We hear all the talk about supporting small businesses, but now it's time for the County to do more than talk the talk.

Shannon Adams is founder and co-owner of Urban Body San Jose.



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Times Feature		
Date (2019)	Meeting Type/Participants	Meeting Subject
September 4	Unscheduled meeting with City planning director	General Plan policies to allow teacher housing on Public/Quasi-Public land.
October 4	Unscheduled phone call with City mayor; email or letter with City land use director and City chief operating officer	General Plan policies and entitlements to allow teacher housing on Public/Quasi-Public lands.
October 9	Email or letter with City land use director and City chief operating officer	General Plan policies and entitlements to allow teacher housing on Public/Quasi-Public lands.
October 15	Unscheduled phone call with City chief operating officer	General Plan policies and entitlements to allow teacher housing on Public/Quasi-Public and other District lands.
October 17	Email or letter with City land use director and City chief operating officer	General Plan policies and entitlements to allow teacher housing on Public/Quasi-Public and other District lands.
October 25	Scheduled meeting with City mayor and City director of land use	General Plan policies and entitlements to allow teacher housing on Public/Quasi-Public and other District lands.

A table displaying Schoennauer’s lobbying activity for the district. Source: Santa Clara County Grand Jury.

Lobbying

Continued from page 1

with a second housing consultant who worked with Schoennauer, Snider Consulting. The agreement with Snider was characterized by a trustee as “very vague about what was to be done.”

From nearly the beginning, opponents criticized the district’s move to hire Schoennauer and questioned the work it was doing for the district. Under questioning from the board, district staff members denied Schoennauer was lobbying for the district.

In fact, though, Schoennauer partner Erik Schoennauer repeatedly met or spoke with city officials, including Mayor Sam Liccardo and Kelly Kline, the city director of land use, about SJUSD’s proposal, according to lobbyist reports filed with the city that were cited in the Grand Jury report. “The district repeatedly denied in public meetings that the consultant was lobbying on its behalf despite clear documentation to the contrary,” the grand jury said in its report. “These actions adversely tainted the public contracting process by misleading the board charged with approving the use of public funds for the consultant’s hiring.”

Even if district officials didn’t direct Schoennauer’s lobbying effort, they had little excuse to not be aware of it, the grand jury said in its report. Invoices submitted by the consulting firm to the district explicitly stated that it was performing “political lobbying services” for the district, according to the report.

“I don’t see what the concern is about having a dialogue with the city of San Jose,” said Erik Schoennauer of the Schoennauer Company. “Ultimately, any teacher housing project has to be approved by the city. So certainly it makes sense to check in with the mayor and others in the city to ensure that the direction the district may head in is consistent with the policies and the visions the city has. We should be having more communication, not less.”

Schoennauer said all meetings between city officials and him were lobbying only in

the city’s definition of the word. The city defines lobbying as “influencing or attempting to influence a city official or city official-elect with regard to a legislative or administrative action of the city or redevelopment agency” according to its lobbying ordinance. “Any communication with a city official is lobbying. Their definition is very simple and very clear,” Schoennauer said. “That’s why our firm included the communications about San Jose Unified in our lobbyist reports to the city. But everyone needs to decide what their definition is of lobbying.”

He added the meetings were to ensure the district and the city were working well together to construct new housing for teachers. Despite that, when Schoennauer’s contract came up for an extension, district staff declined to correct their previous statements and inform SJUSD’s board about Schoennauer’s lobbying effort, according to the report. Instead, district staff appeared to intentionally obfuscate the work Schoennauer was doing for SJUSD, the Grand Jury said.

“In response to public comment and a trustee’s request for an update on the consultant’s work, staff provided detail at great length on the consultant’s activities that sound like lobbying without actually using the word ‘lobbying,’” the Grand Jury said in the report.

With the affordable housing project, SJUSD is seeking to provide homes for its educators and staff in one of the most expensive housing markets in the nation. Some teachers within the district have told the board in meetings that they are having extreme difficulty paying rent in the area where they teach. But the project has garnered considerable pushback from some affluent residents concerned it would decrease property values, increase traffic and endanger pedestrians in the area.

No disclosure forms

While it’s legal for the district to lobby city officials, that activity by consultants such as Schoennauer can trigger state financial disclosure requirements that seek to prevent conflicts of interest. Under state law,

Continued, next page

Times **Feature**

government bodies are supposed to file a document — Form 805 — with the Fair Political Practices Commission to identify outside consultants who are helping them make governmental decisions. After an agency files a Form 805, the consultants mentioned in it are required to file their own, separate financial disclosure forms.

But the district hasn't filed a single Form 805 in the past three years, according to the report. And despite doing extensive work on behalf of SJUSD, including lobbying, neither Schoennauer nor Snider filed the financial disclosure forms, the Grand Jury reported.

"Without this information, the board and public may not be able to identify areas in which the consultants are potentially prohibited from participating due to their financial interests," the Grand Jury said in the report. Indeed, the Grand Jury identified one such potentially disqualifying conflict of interest. One of the four sites now being considered for affordable housing is yards away from a house owned by Kelly Snider of Snider Consulting. Snider is also a district parent. Although the district knew about the conflict, it didn't disclose it to the public or its board, determining that it didn't need to.

"The school district's attorney reviewed my contract and all the payments (related to the project) were sent to my house," Snider told San José Spotlight. "My address is public. I have a business license with the city of San Jose at this address. So this is not a conflict in any way. All of the business I do is out of my own home." Snider did not believe her property constituted a conflict of interest, and denied doing any lobbying.

"I did no lobbying, and no one I worked with did any lobbying," she said. "I am not aware of any lobbying, including the collaboration I did with the other consultants who were working on the project." Essentially, the district chose to avoid the issue rather than being transparent about it, the Grand Jury said. And by doing so, it could have violated state ethics laws.

"While the ultimate resolution of alleged state ethics law violations rests with other public bodies, the Grand Jury's investigation found deficiencies in the district's process for identifying consultants who are required to file public statements of economic interests," the Grand Jury said.

Lack of transparency

The Grand Jury also found problems with SJUSD's lobbying at the state level. Last year, the district hired Ball/Frost Group, LLC to represent it in Sacramento, according to the report. But the contract it signed with Ball/Frost isn't readily available to the public, and the district didn't clearly and fully disclose the work Ball/Frost was doing on its behalf, the report found. Ball/Frost was not immediately available for comment.

"Nothing is remotely transparent about the state lobbying contracts," the Grand Jury said in the report.

The Grand Jury issued four recommendations. It asked the district to be more transparent and accurate in communicating with the public, to revise its contracting procedures to make sure lobbyists are more clearly identified when they work with the district, to clearly place any lobbying business on its agenda and to have a better method to inform contractors of their obligations to disclose information, including information that should be sent to the FPPC.

Civil Grand Juries are responsible for examining the administration of county services, hearing citizen complaints from county officials and serving as a financial watchdog for public funds, among other duties. They generally release reports on their findings several times a year.

SJUSD educates approximately 30,000 students from kindergarten through 12th grade and employs more than 3,000 teachers and staff. Its boundaries stretch from north of downtown San Jose to Almaden Valley.

Contact Lloyd Alaban at lloyd.b.alaban@gmail.com or follow @lloydalaban on Twitter.

San José Unified welcomes a new Board of Education member

Wendi Mahaney-Gurahoo joins the Board of Education as the trustee for Area 5

San José Unified School District has a new board member.

Wendi Mahaney-Gurahoo has joined the District's Board of Education after bidding a fond farewell to former board member Kimberly Meek at a Special Session meeting on Tuesday, Dec. 15.

"I want to thank board member Meek for her service and dedication to our students and employees," said Superintendent Nancy Albarrán. "We are grateful to have worked alongside board member Meek for the past four years, and we look forward to working



with board member Mahaney-Gurahoo as we continue to move our district forward."

Mahaney-Gurahoo took the oath of office at the Special Session, along with Carla Collins, who was elected to a four-year term, and Teresa Castellanos, who was re-elected to a new four-year term.

The Board of Education also elected new officers at the December 15 meeting. Board member Brian Wheatley is the new Board President, and board member Collins is the new Board Vice President.

The San José Unified Board of Education members by area are as follows:

- Area 1: Teresa Castellanos
- Area 2: José Magaña
- Area 3: Carla Collins
- Area 4: Brian Wheatley
- Area 5: Wendi Mahaney-Gurahoo

The San José Unified Board of Education next meets on January 14, 2021. All board meetings are accessible to the public online. See more information visit: go.sjUSD.org/board.

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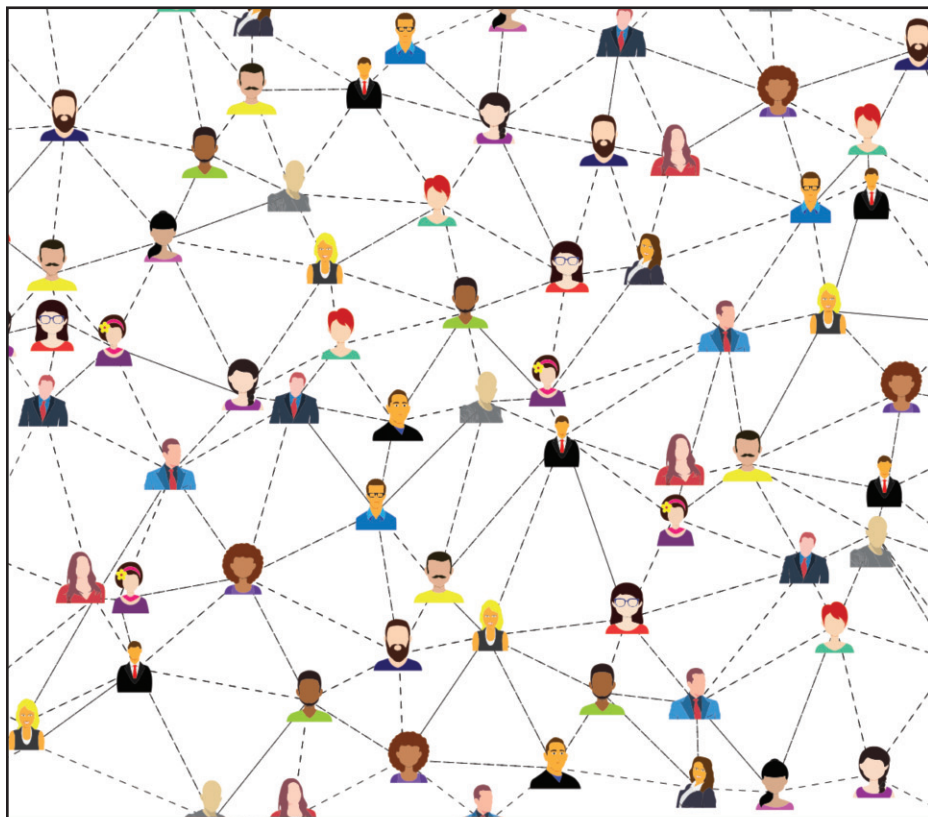


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Marilyn Henrickson (92) fills her days with gardening.

Isolation

Continued from page 1

"It was enough to keep us moving as seniors and keep our muscles toned," he said. "We can feel the difference."

Although they miss seeing their children and grandchildren due to the pandemic, they said they feel lucky to have each other.

"We purposely isolate ourselves because of the threat," Richard said, "but having each other makes it a lot better."

Janet Haver (76) said it's hard not being able to see friends in person, but she stays connected online, leading a current events class through Almaden Senior Association, meeting with her walking group and enjoying happy hour with friends.

To stay safe from COVID-19, Haver limits her outings to going to the supermarket and doctor's office.

"We are in that age group where we have to be careful," Haver said, "and I have some underlying conditions."

According to an AARP Foundation and United Health Foundation study, the coronavirus pandemic has increased feelings of social isolation, loneliness, and anxiety among people aged 50 or older.

The study said the health risks of prolonged isolation on people with infrequent social contact are equivalent to smoking 15 cigarettes a day, hitting women and low-income adults the hardest.

Diana Miller, project manager with the Department of Aging and Adult Services for the County of Santa Clara, said she is concerned about social isolation for older adults who aren't digitally connected. Miller said about 350,000 adults aged 60 or more live in Santa Clara County and about 30% live alone.

The county is working with the city and nonprofits to offer digital inclusion workshop for older adults, including training for Zoom.

Kris Anne Gustavson (68) said she misses socializing at Almaden Valley Community Association meetings.

"Being alone and not seeing anyone in person has a negative effect on your mental health," she said. "Face-to-face communication is important for people's lives."

Gustavson said COVID-19 has led to her grocery shopping less and having to carefully plan her meals. It's also taken the fun out of it.

"I don't want to talk to anybody or be near anybody," she said. "Before I wasn't afraid if somebody was walking down the same aisle as me."

Gustavson said her husband Paul (70), a managing consultant who regularly traveled to meet with clients, now does so online but misses face-to-face interactions.

"He misses socializing," Gustavson said. "He misses seeing clients in person and going to Costco on Mondays with friends to have hotdogs and conversation."

Tutoring

Continued from page 1

or every one of their students, because they soon realize that learning can be fun.

Every Wednesday, the teens provide an hour-long virtual session for students in grades 4-6 who participate throughout the community.

Beginning with a "homework session," Aleeza, Hien, and Amrita make sure that the students have no confusion about their work from school by assisting them in any subject matter.


Learn Beyond's next step is to conduct a "math session," where the students cover a

multitude of topics such as operations with fractions, rounding, and working with decimals. The virtual session ends with a "science session," where they have covered a variety of interesting topics are covered such as Newton's laws, photosynthesis, and the physics behind the blue sky.

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Times **Community News**



Photo courtesy of LEGOLAND® Discovery Center Bay Area.

**LEGOLAND®
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Great Mall to
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*Enhanced health, safety
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Merlin Entertainments Ltd (Merlin), the second largest attraction operator in the world, announced that LEGOLAND® Discovery Center Bay Area—the ultimate indoor LEGO® playground for families—will open in spring 2021 at Great Mall in Milpitas, California.

The attraction was on track to debut in April 2020, however, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, construction was delayed and opening dates were shifted.

“Our number one priority is to create a fun and educational experience, while ensuring the health and well-being of our guests and staff,” said LEGOLAND® Discovery Center Bay Area General Manager James Judy. “We are taking every step necessary to prepare for a safe and exciting opening and look forward to welcoming guests from throughout the San Francisco Bay Area soon.”

LEGOLAND® Discovery Center Bay Area will follow up-to-date local and national safety regulations when opening in the spring of 2021. Enhanced cleaning measures will be implemented throughout the day to clean and sanitize the attraction, including high-frequency touchpoints, play areas, and LEGO® bricks.

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Center is comprised of more than 31,000-square-feet of interactive and educational attraction space geared towards children ages 3-10 and their families. Dubbed the ultimate indoor playground, its range of educational and interactive experiences includes themed build stations, master classes in the Creative Workshop from LEGOLAND® Discovery Center Bay Area’s Master Model Builder Sam Suksiri, an Imagination Express train ride, an earthquake table, a 4D cinema, special party rooms for birthdays and other celebrations, a café, a LEGO retail shop, and, of course, the popular Miniland area featuring models made entirely out of LEGO bricks in the likeness of San Francisco Bay Area iconic landmarks, including Winchester Mystery House, the Golden Gate Bridge, and Levi’s Stadium.

Tickets for LEGOLAND® Discovery Center Bay Area will be available for purchase in the coming months. For more information, visit <https://bayarea.legolanddiscoverycenter.com/>.

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Muslims, and what is the
Quran?

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you to experience Holy
Spirit Parish Community.

All are welcome! We are
located at 1200 Red-
mond Avenue, San Jose,
CA 95120. Mass is cele-
brated at 8:30 a.m. Mon-
day - Friday. Our week-
end Mass schedule is
Saturday 5 p.m., Sunday
8 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:30
a.m. and 6 p.m. Rite of
Reconciliation is every
Saturday at 4 p.m. or by
appointment. Our Parish
Office is open Monday -
Thursday 8:30 a.m. -
4:30 p.m. and Friday
9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Call 408-997-5100 for
recorded information or
408-997-5101 to speak
with someone in our
parish office. Information
on Faith Formation for
children and adults can
be obtained by calling
our Catechetical Office at
408-997-5115. Get in
the loop with our Sixty
High School Youth Min-
istry by calling 408-997-
5106. Holy Spirit School
serves grades Pre-K
through 8th, and is locat-
ed at 1198 Redmond
Avenue. You can reach
the school office at 408-
268-0794.

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nity, promoting spiritual
growth, reaching out to
people in need and
where you get to know
people by name. We
offer children's religious
education (CREATE);
Youth Ministry (BLAST
& X-STATIC); Scripture
Study (day & evening);
Senior's Group and
many other adult min-
istries as well. Saint
Anthony parish is locat-
ed in Almaden Valley at
20101 McKean Road,
San Jose, 95120. Our
weekend Masses are at
4 p.m. on Saturday at
our historic church at
21800 Bertram Road in
New Almaden, CA
95042 and on Sunday at
8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m.,
and 5:30 p.m. at the
McKean Road location.

Our Parish Office is open
Monday 9 a.m. - 12 p.m.
and Tuesday thru Thurs-
day, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. and
1 - 4 p.m. For more infor-
mation, stop by the
Parish Office or call
(408) 997-4800, or visit
our website at www.churchstanthony.com.

Fr. Larry Hendel, Pastor.

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the beautiful grounds.
Learn more about us and
community events we
sponsor by visiting our
website; <http://www.San-JoseGurdwara.org>

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*The Almaden Senior Association mem-
bers are a diverse group of enthusiastic,
active, 50+ adults who enjoy new learn-
ing opportunities, new experiences, and
new adventures.*

**Membership in the Almaden Senior Asso-
ciation offers discounts and opportunities
to enjoy . . .**

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

organized and run by members of the Associ-
ation;

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

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

Connected

We enjoy meeting new people, making new connections and getting involved. All
volunteer opportunities are based on your time and energy commitment. Fees for
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tion and membership strength.

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tion today. Yearly dues of \$10 are returned to you by discounts to most of the pro-
grams you participate in.

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will enhance your life and open new doors.

For more information, go to www.almadenseniors.org

Contact via email: alamadenseniors1@gmail.com



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Times!*

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Come and join us for our monthly breakfast which is held at 9 a.m. on the third Tuesday of each month at Cup and Saucer, Princeton Plaza Mall, 1375 Blossom Hill Road.



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newspaper!**

Happy New Year

from



Almaden Valley's #1 Agent *Again* for 2020!
That's 12 Years in a Row! *Have a Fantastic 2021!*



Therese Swan

408.656.8240

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The Swan has been the #1 Agent in Almaden Valley each year for the last **12 years** as measured by Dollars per Agent Per Year. She is the only Almaden Valley specialist to have been nationally ranked and recognized twice by The Wall Street Journal/RealTrends for being in the Top 250 Agents in the US. Additionally, Swan is consistently among the Top 100 Agents in the SF Bay Area.

If you are thinking of selling your home in 2021, now is the time to start planning. Call me as soon as possible.

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