

New research tells us which National Parks are the most dangerous
SEE PAGE 4



Silicon Valley Reads
'Connecting' is the theme for this year's literary event
SEE PAGE 4

San Jose Dance Theatre costume recovery fund goal at 50%
SEE PAGE 8



JAN. 22 – FEB. 4, 2021 ■ VOL. 34, NO. 2

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Assistant director of pharmacy **Oliver Hsu** holding a vial containing the COVID-19 vaccine being administered at O'Connor Hospital in San Jose, Calif. (San José Spotlight / Vicente Vera, Pool)

SC County stops administering Moderna vaccine lot due to allergic reaction risks

By Madelyn Reese
Article courtesy of
San José Spotlight

After struggling for weeks to expand the South Bay's COVID-19 vaccine rollout, Santa Clara County officials are now warning that a specific batch of doses shouldn't be administered because of an increased risk of allergic reactions.

Santa Clara County received about 21,800 doses of the Moderna Lot 41L20A distributed Jan. 5 and Jan. 12. More than 330,000 doses from the lot were distributed across the state. Now, health officials are pausing vaccines from the lot and warning that some individuals might experience an acute allergic reaction, anaphylaxis, after receiving their shot.

"To the county's knowledge, no doses from this lot of vaccine have been administered to anyone in Santa Clara County," the county's health department said in a statement.

State health officials announced Sunday that fewer than 10 people administered vaccines from this lot had a reaction that required medical attention and that the decision to pause the lot's administration was "out of an extreme abundance of caution."

See VACCINE, page 14



David Tindall, acting assistant chief of police for the City of San Jose, said the SJPd has changed its tactics during protests to a more public safety standpoint.

Racial disparities in policing focus of AVCA forum

By Lorraine Gabbert
Senior Staff Writer

The lack of racial equity is an issue for police departments statewide.

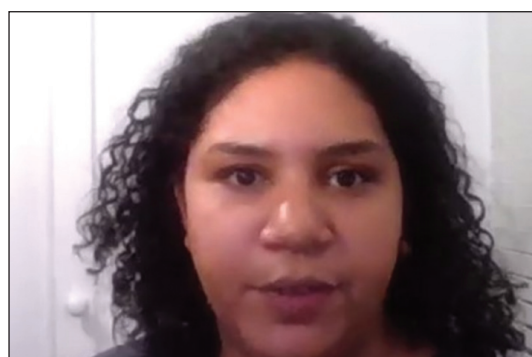
At an Almaden Valley Community Association (AVCA) forum on Jan. 11, representatives from the San Jose Police Department (SJPd), District Attorney's office, police auditor's office and American Civil Liberty Union (ACLU) spoke out on this issue.

Allyssa Victory, an attorney with ACLU, said race impacts the behavior of law enforcement.

"Even the recent event at the Capitol shows very clearly...the difference in law enforcement responses based on the color of folks," Victory said. "There is a very clear difference in how people are treated, how use of force is deployed...when people are declared to be unlawfully assembling."

The SJPd came under heightened scrutiny following its reaction to protestors during the Black Lives Matter demonstrations. Officers in riot gear

See POLICING, page 5



Allyssa Victory, an attorney with ACLU, said race impacts the behavior of law enforcement.



Santa Clara Valley Transit Authority is going to run some bus lines more frequently so fewer passengers get left behind. Pictured: VTA's Proterra Catalyst 40 ft. bus.

VTA plans to run more buses on seven routes so it doesn't leave so many people behind

By Nicholas Chan

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

Santa Clara Valley Transit Authority is going to run some bus lines more frequently so fewer passengers get left behind.

Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, the transit agency has been requiring passengers to be spaced six feet apart on its buses and light rail cars. Doing so, though, has limited the capacity of its vehicles, and some have been unable to accommodate passengers waiting to board as they have no space available.

VTA vehicles leave behind about 650 customers a day, agency officials estimate.

Seven bus routes account for the majority of passengers left behind: 23, 25, 64, 66, 68, 71 and 77. Starting Feb. 8, the agency will run buses more frequently on those routes and adjust schedules of nearly all routes in the system.

"We want to provide as much service as

we can," VTA spokesman Ken Blackstone said. "That's the business that we're in."

Thanks to the changes, VTA service will increase to 80 percent of pre-pandemic levels from 74 percent, Blackstone said.

The VTA's plan is long overdue, said public transit advocate Monica Mallon.

"It's really exciting," said Mallon, who is the founder of Turnout4Transit, a campaign to preserve transit services. "This is something that has needed to happen for a while and has been suggested for over six months."

VTA buses passed up more than 17,700 people in October alone, according to an analysis by the Silicon Valley Transit Users of VTA data. Some of those left behind arrived late to

work or to doctors' appointments, said Eugene Bradley, founder and CEO of the advocacy and watchdog group. Others were forced to use rideshare services instead.

VTA's plan to increase bus frequencies on

See BUS LINES, page 21

"It's really exciting. This is something that has needed to happen for a while and has been suggested for over six months."

– Public transit advocate Monica Mallon

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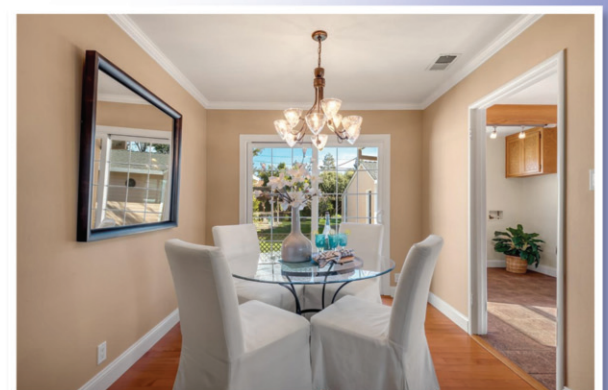




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Rabbi Mendel and Mussi Weinfeld moved to Almaden a year ago to establish an active Chabad presence, but COVID-19 has presented challenges.

'Every challenge is an opportunity for growth'

For Rabbi Mendel and Mussi Weinfeld, the dynamic duo who moved to Almaden Valley of San Jose in January 2020 to establish an active Chabad presence, there is no such thing as a coincidence.

"Every challenge is an opportunity for growth," is more than an optimistic catchphrase. It is their way of life. More fundamentally, it is the underlying philosophy of their newly built Chabad House, as inspired by the teachings of the Lubavitcher Rebbe.

Just three months after their move to San Jose, this philosophy was put to the test when COVID-19 hit. The streets were on lockdown, social distancing was mandated, and regular life was put on indefinite halt. Rabbi Mendel and Mussi realized that they could not serve the community the way that they had originally expected—with synagogue services, lavish Shabbat dinners and large events. Instead of despairing they got right to work, finding innovative ways to serve a community going through an unexpected crisis.

"It quickly became clear that there were many people locally in need of assistance during these

See MENDEL, page 6

Valley Currents

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

Connect with Silicon Valley Reads

Virtual kickoff event on January 28

For the past 18 years, Silicon Valley Reads has encouraged people of all ages in Santa Clara County to read books and join conversations relevant to a theme.

With the many challenges, hardships and life adjustments needed throughout 2020 and into 2021, the theme for this year is CONNECTING. An array of books was chosen to embody the importance of connecting with each other and with things that bring comfort.

The Silicon Valley Reads virtual kickoff event is Thursday, January 28th at 6:30 p.m. in partnership with the Commonwealth Club of Silicon Valley. The featured panel includes Dr. Sara Cody, Santa Clara County Public Health Officer; Dr. James Doty, Clinical Professor in the Department of Neurosurgery at Stanford University School of Medicine and Founder/Director of the Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education at Stanford University; and Usha Srinivasan, Pres-



There will be a special appearance from **Dr. Vivek Murthy**, author of *Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World* and former Surgeon General.

ident of Mosaic Silicon Valley (formerly Sangam Arts) whose mission is to strengthen diverse communities through intercultural arts. These experts will share their perspectives on ways in which individuals and communities can find comfort and connection through difficult times.

There will also be a special appearance from Dr. Vivek Murthy, author of *Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World* and for-

mer Surgeon General. The event will be moderated by San Jose Mercury News Columnist, Sal Pizarro. Registration for the Zoom event is required and available at siliconvalleyreads.org/events.

The 2021 featured titles address relationships, nature, art, music, food, and animals. The selection provides a variety of books to help people identify with what they connect with most. The adult books include:

■ *Together: The Healing Power of Human Connection in a Sometimes Lonely World* by U.S. Surgeon General nominee Dr. Vivek H. Murthy, who describes loneliness as a national epidemic and offers solutions to help people live more connected lives.

■ *Always Home* by Fanny Singer, an uplifting memoir of her unique childhood and special relationship with her mother, famed Chez Panisse restaurateur Alice Waters.

■ *Mutual Rescue* by Carol Novello, heart-warming stories about adopted rescue animals who ultimately were responsible for "saving" their people.

■ *The Home Place* by J. Drew Lan-

ham, a lyrical memoir about how his childhood connection with nature in the rural south established his path to become an ornithologist and ecology professor.

■ *The Giver of Stars* by Jojo Moyes, a historical novel about the Pack Horse Library Project in Kentucky in the 1930s and how books helped create strong community connections.

■ *The Music Shop* by Rachel Joyce, a charming novel about a record store owner in the 1980s with an uncanny skill at matching people with the music they needed to hear.



The featured panel includes **Dr. Sara Cody**, Santa Clara County Public Health Officer.

Which National Parks are the most dangerous?

The USA is bursting with beautiful scenery - and the national parks contribute greatly to these picturesque sights. But which parks are the most dangerous?

New research from the outdoor experts over at Outforia has revealed the most dangerous US national parks by FOI request, highlighting the parks with the most deaths and common causes of deaths.

Top 10 Most Dangerous U.S National Parks			
Rank	National Park	State/Territory	Death total (Since 2010)
1	Grand Canyon	Arizona	134
2	Yosemite	California	126
3	Great Smoky Mountains	N. Carolina, Tenn.	92
4	Sequoia & Kings Canyon	California	75
5	Yellowstone	WY, MO, ID	52
6	Denali	Alaska	51
6	Mount Rainier	Washington	51
8	Rocky Mountain	Colorado	49
9	Grand Teton	Wyoming	48
10	Zion	Utah	43

The dangers facing visitors to the Grand Canyon are pretty clear to see, with drops of 100 feet into the base of the canyon itself, although falls aren't actually the biggest cause of death in the national park. 27

people have died from falls in the Grand Canyon since 2010, while as many as 42 have died from medical or natural causes, many of which were due to the extreme heat in the area.

Top 5 Causes of Death	
Cause of Death	Number of Deaths
1. Falls	245
2. Medical/ Natural Death	192
3. Undetermined	166
4. Motor Vehicle Crash	140
5. Drowning	139

Unfortunately, while the rugged mountain terrain of the country's national parks is what makes them so spectacular and popular with visitors, it also contributes to the number one cause of deaths, falls—with 245 deaths in the last ten years. While it can be tempting to take the odd risk here and there to capture the perfect picture, the figures show just how important it is to be aware of your surroundings when visiting a national park.

There have also been 166 deaths in the country's national parks that went unexplained, with an 'undetermined' cause of death.

You can see the full research by visiting: outforia.com/danger-parks

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

released rubber bullets in an attempt to disperse a crowd near city hall, which resulted in numerous injuries.

“We were met with a level of violence we were not expecting,” said David Tindall, acting assistant chief of police for the City of San Jose. “Individuals took over the freeway on 101 and started stopping traffic and were violent towards everyday citizens ... When they got back to city hall... it was...a rapid response.”

Tindall said since these protests, the SJPD has changed its tactics during protests to a more public safety standpoint.

“We made policy changes and looked at how we deploy...and ways to mitigate and diffuse the situation,” he said.

Last week, the San Francisco Police Department (SFPD) released the Racial Equity Action Plan. Victory said this resulted from a report on the racist culture of the police department by a trainer brought in to teach inclusion.

“We understand that it is necessary for law enforcement to listen to the African American community and embrace courageous changes to address disparate policing practices,” said SFPD Chief William “Bill” Scott in the report. “...We have to change the way we do policing in this country.”

Oakland has been under a settlement agreement for 17 years, stemming from a case about racial profiling and police using excessive force on Black residents.

Although the city agreed to reduce racial disparities and excessive use of force within its police department, the court said the metrics have not only failed to be met but are backsliding, Victory said. There is still an internal culture that needs to be addressed, she said, as even within police departments racial dynamics affect people of color and women.

“When you look back at the history of policing, it is not good,” Tindall said. “There are a lot of disparities. A lot of injustice happened in previous years.”

In response to George Floyd’s death, which was caused by a Minneapolis police officer restraining Floyd with neck compression, blocking his ability to breathe, the ACLU sponsored police reform bill AB 1196. It also sponsored AB 392, which addressed the use of deadly force.

Introduced by Assemblymember Mike Gibson, D-Carson, following the death of George Floyd by police officers in Minneapolis, AB 1196 banned law enforcement from employing carotid restraints and choke holds.

AB 392, introduced by Assemblymember Shirley Weber, D-San Diego, required peace officers to only use deadly force to defend against an imminent threat of death or serious bodily injury to the officer or to another person or to apprehend a fleeing person for any felony that threatened or resulted in death or serious bodily injury.

When laws change, the ACLU tries to ensure law enforcement agencies also change their policies, Victory said.

Tindall said police officers receive specialized training in de-escalation and force options at the police academy. They also take Crisis Intervention Team Training to better help people with mental illness, but have to

balance public safety with de-escalation techniques, Tindall said.

The SJPD receives over a million 9-1-1 calls a year. In 2019, Tindall said out of its more than 400,000 interactions with the public, it received 216 complaints; 21% dealt with the use of force. There were 642 documented use of force cases in 2019 by SJPD, in addition to the department initiating 50 internal investigations of officer misconduct, he said.

“Nobody dislikes a bad cop more than a good cop,” Tindall said.

Measure G, a City of San Jose charter

amendment passed in November 2020, expanded the police auditor’s powers, allowing for the review of complaints generated by the police department, in addition to complaints initiated by residents.

It also granted the auditor’s office access to incident reports which reflect uses of force resulting in great bodily injury and/or death. Previously, the auditor’s office only had access to those reports if someone filed a complaint.

Shivaun Nurre, an independent police auditor for the City of San Jose, said having access to police records allows her office to make

policy recommendation about the use of force and review what the department is doing.

The city council asked the police auditor’s office to advise it on needed police reform following the summer’s protests. Consultants were hired to look at SJPD’s use of force and policing policies through a racial equity lens.

The police auditor is also considering moving investigations out of SJPD’s internal affairs to instill public confidence that investigations

See POLICING, page 6



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COMPASS

Times Feature



Sukkot

Promotional images display some of the events Mendel hopes to create in the coming year and the future.

Mendel

Continued from page 4
challenging times,” says Rabbi Mendel. “Whether that meant getting food on the table due to financial fallout, providing emotional support to those dealing with loneliness, or spiritual encouragement to individuals grappling with loss and illness, we were here to meet the need.”

“There was never a moment that because of COVID we had nothing to do,” says Mussi. “If anything, COVID created an even greater need than ever before!” Torah classes over Zoom; Meals-to-go; Drive-by events; Senior



Hamentach Bake

and hospital visitations; One-on-one support. Every day brought a new challenge,

and with every challenge the Weinfelds found new ways to uplift and inspire the community.

During a time of overwhelming darkness for humanity at large, The Chabad House served as a source of light and warmth for over 1,800 Jewish families. The community has been thrilled to welcome Rabbi Mendel and Mussi, and over 450 individuals came together to support the new Chabad House during this time.

“I couldn’t be more grateful that Chabad came when they did,” says Ruth Litwin, a longtime local. “At a time when the world felt most divided, Rabbi Mendel and Mussi brought a powerful sense of unity to our community. By joining together, we were able to triumph over the challenges.” Ruth is one of over 150 community members who have joined The Chabad House team as part-time volunteers, whether that means sponsoring meals for the hungry, delivering care packages to those in quarantine, or brainstorming on new initiatives to bring help and healing to the community.

While simultaneously nurturing and caring for the Jewish community, Rabbi Mendel and Mussi welcomed their first child, Berel, in August of 2020. Working hand-in-hand with Rabbi Cunin at the Chabad in Los Gatos, the young couple continues to defy all expectations of what can be accomplished during the most trying circumstances.

Rabbi Mendel and Mussi remain eternally optimistic, saying: “With God’s blessings, and thanks to the support of this incredible community, we look forward to even more expansion in the year ahead!”

To learn more, visit: www.chabadal-maden.com; or call (408) 910.2034.



Kosher Truck

Policing

Continued from page 5

of police misconduct are fair and objective.

In February 2019, Santa Clara County District Attorney Jeff Rosen commissioned a Race and Prosecutions report to address systemic inequalities in the county’s criminal justice system.

According to the report, Latino and Black individuals were over-represented in both felony and misdemeanor cases. Although they represented 26% of the county’s population, Latinos received 52% of felony charges and 51% of misdemeanor charges. Black people, who make up 2% of the county’s population, received 14% of felony charges and 12% of misdemeanors.

Jay Boyarsky, chief assistant district attorney for Santa Clara County, said the racial disproportion in the jail population is another reason to support bail reform.

“Latino and Black households have dramatically lower incomes than Caucasian or Asian households,” he said. “A person should be held based on the risk they pose to the community...and not based on the size of their bank account.”



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Times **Community News****Gillian Ferguson of Almaden Valley named to Dean's List at University Of New England**

Gillian Ferguson of Almaden Valley has been named to the Dean's List for the 2020 fall semester at the University of New England.

Dean's List students have attained a grade point average of 3.3 or better out of a possible 4.0 at the end of the semester.

The University of New England is Maine's largest private university, featuring two distinctive campuses in Maine, a vibrant campus in Tangier, Morocco, and an array of innovative offerings online.

Heather Krenn of Almaden Valley named to Dean's List at Eastern New Mexico University

Heather Krenn of Almaden Valley has been named to Eastern New Mexico University's Dean's List for the fall 2020 semester.

To be eligible for the Dean's List, a student must complete a minimum of 15 credit hours with a GPA of 3.25 or greater.

Eastern New Mexico University is ranked in the top Regional Universities West. Schools are ranked according to their performance across a set of widely accepted indicators of excellence. ENMC was accredited by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools as a four-year liberal arts college in 1946–47. Graduate work leading to the Master's Degree in some departments was added in 1949, and on April 5, 1949.

Report: 66% of nursing homes say they won't make it another year

Key findings of a survey that American Health Care Association and National Center for Assisted Living (AHCA/NCAL) recently conducted of nursing home providers across the U.S.

Key findings outlined in the letter on why long-term care facilities should receive vaccine first include:

- Two-thirds (66%) of nursing homes say they won't make it another year given current operating pace due to increased COVID costs.
- 90% of nursing homes are currently operating at a profit margin of 3% or less. (65% of nursing homes are currently operating at a loss).
- Staffing has been the top cost in response to COVID with nine out of 10 nursing homes hiring additional staff and/or paying staff overtime.
- 58% of nursing homes said additional staff pay and hiring new staff were their top cost incurred due to COVID.

• 70% of nursing homes have hired additional staff and nine out of 10 have asked current staff to work overtime and provided hero pay.

In a statement from Mark Parkinson, President and CEO, AHCA/NCAL on the survey he said, "Our nursing home providers are facing the worst financial crisis in the history of the industry due to increased costs related to COVID (testing, personal protective equipment, staffing) and chronic Medicaid underfunding. Without adequate resources, the U.S. will repeat the same mistakes made during the initial outbreak last spring. We need Congress to prioritize our vulnerable seniors and their caregivers in long-term care facilities, by passing another COVID relief package right away."

Happy New Year!

By Matt Mahan

City Councilmember, District 10

I hope you had a safe and happy holiday season.

My term as your Councilmember began as we rang in the New Year. I am excited to get to work representing our beautiful neighborhoods.

Since the election, I've been studying the key issues facing our neighborhoods that you raised during the campaign, publishing my policy reflections on these topics (you can read them here: mattmahan-sj.medium.com), and recruiting an exceptional team to ensure our new office represents you effectively in the years ahead.

As we head into 2021, our city faces many long-running challenges that have been exacerbated by COVID-19, including rising homelessness, economic insecurity for far too many, persistent property crime and a city budget that struggles to deliver services at the level you expect and deserve. While I can't change the broader public health and economic context in which we operate, I will be a

strong voice for doing more with less at City Hall by adopting technology, measuring results, and holding our staff to the highest standards.

To help our team be as responsive as possible, we've created a District 10 survey for you to identify your top priorities for the city and, most importantly, the specific issues you're experiencing in your neighborhood. It's very important to me that we hear from every neighborhood and hold ourselves accountable for serving residents in every corner of District 10. You can help us do this by filling out the short and confidential survey here: <https://bit.ly/d10survey>

Finally, if you need anything, please reach out to our office at district10@sanjoseca.gov. You can also keep in touch with us on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram, where my team will be posting regular updates on what's happening at City Hall and in our District 10 community.

The District 10 office phone number is: (408) 535-4910.



District 10 Report
Matt Mahan
Councilmember-elect, District 10

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Times **Feature**

San Jose Dance Theatre costume recovery fund goal at 50%

More than \$10,000 has been raised for the costume recover fund for the San Jose Dance Theatre.

On January 6th, San Jose Dance Theatre's costume storage facility was broken into and nearly 100 costumes stolen and corresponding head pieces, arm bands, etc. and even fabric!

Included in the theft were vintage and new Nutcracker costumes for Sugar Plum, Ribbon Candy, Snowflakes, Spanish, Flowers, and more of the scenes you love. Beyond Nutcracker, all of the newly created tutus for the upcoming digital performance of Sleeping Beauty, along with custom tutus from Swan Lake, La Bayadere, Paquita, and the Firebird are missing.

These costumes are part of the San Jose

Dance Theatre collective of over 55 years of history.

The estimated value of the labor and materials stolen is estimated to be between \$13,000 to \$20,000.

Because the tutus are so specialized, they have low resale value for a thief. To those at this nonprofit, they are priceless.

The San Jose Dance Theatre has been operating since 1965 and has the distinction of holding the longest-running performance of the Nutcracker in San Jose. Many of the costumes hold historical significance to their participants.

If you'd like to help, please consider donating to the San Jose Dance Theatre Costume Fund by visiting gofundme.com/f/san-jose-dance-theatre-costumes.



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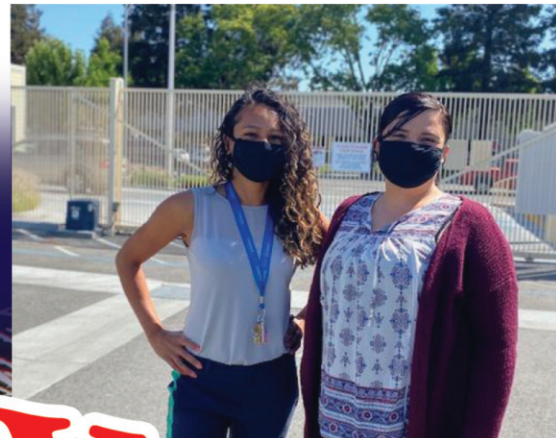


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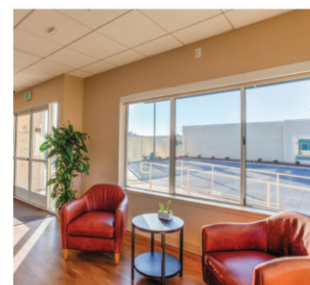
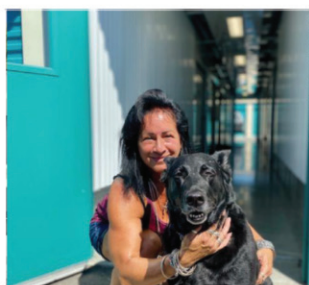


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Times **Community News**

Featured artist acclaimed Russian pianist Anna Fedorova performs virtually through Steinway Society: Feb. 19-22

Popular artist returns in Steinway Society's online Home Concert Hall Series

Russian pianist Anna Fedorova, a superstar among next-generation classical pianists, will be the featured artist in the February concert of Steinway Society – The Bay Area's Home Concert Hall virtual series.

These performances are recorded exclusively for Steinway Society and are not available anywhere else online.

This will be Ms. Fedorova's third Steinway Society appearance. Her concert will be available during a four-day performance window, and patrons can view the recording as many times as they'd like during that period.

Ms. Fedorova will give a short talk before the performance about her pieces, while sharing information about her musical life and how she is faring during the pandemic. A recorded pre-concert lecture by a Bay Area classical music expert will also be available for viewers to watch at their leisure.

Anna Fedorova is one of the world's leading young pianists who captivates audiences with her musical artistry. Born into a family of musicians in Kiev, Ukraine, she began piano studies at the age of five. She's taken top prizes at the Rubinstein and Moscow International Frederick Chopin Competitions, and been mentored by world-renowned musicians Alfred Brendel and András Schiff.

Most watched YouTube pianist for interpretation of Rachmaninoff Concerto

Ms. Fedorova has performed with esteemed orchestras in prestigious concert halls and music festivals of Europe, North and South America, Asia, and at highly regarded piano festivals in Switzerland, Poland, Greece, and New York. Her Rachmaninoff 2nd Piano Concerto recording is the most watched classical concerto on YouTube with nearly 30 million views.

"The excellent pianist Anna Fedorova savored the work's wit with unbounded musical joy, excellent technique, percussive drive, pointed exuberance, and emotional keystroking intimacy." —l'Adige

For more information on season subscriptions, individual tickets, the artists, and Steinway Society, visit: www.SteinwaySociety.com or contact (408) 300-5635.



Popular pianist **Anna Fedorova** returns to the Steinway Society – The Bay Area with a Home Concert Hall performance of music by Schubert-Liszt, De Falla, and Chopin. The performance is available from February 19-22, 2021. Photo courtesy of Steinway Society

Report: '2021's Best Places to Find a Job'

San Jose has the highest monthly average starting salary

With the unemployment rate at 6.7% due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the personal-finance website WalletHub today released its report on 2021's Best Places to Find a Job.

To determine the strongest local job markets in the U.S., WalletHub compared more than 180 cities across 32 key metrics. The data set ranges from job opportunities to employment growth to monthly average starting salary.

Best Cities for Jobs

1. South Burlington, VT
2. Columbia, MD
3. Virginia Beach, VA
4. Salt Lake City, UT
5. Boise, ID
6. Scottsdale, AZ
7. Chesapeake, VA
8. Seattle, WA
9. Colorado Springs, CO
10. Plano, TX

Worst Cities for Jobs

173. New Haven, CT
174. Cleveland, OH
175. Gulfport, MS
176. Bridgeport, CT
177. Las Cruces, NM
178. North Las Vegas, NV
179. Brownsville, TX

180. Detroit, MI
181. Shreveport, LA
182. Hialeah, FL

Best vs. Worst

- San Jose, California, has the highest monthly average starting salary, \$6,327, which is 3.1 times higher than in Laredo, Texas, the city with the lowest at \$2,058.

- Fremont, California, has the fewest part-time employees for every 100 full-time employees, 29.52, which is 3.9 times fewer than in Burlington, Vermont, the city with the most at 115.76.

- Gilbert, Arizona, has the highest median annual household income (adjusted by cost of living), \$97,934, which is 3.5 times higher than in Newark, New Jersey, the city with the lowest at \$28,227.

- Fargo, North Dakota, and Bismarck, North Dakota, have the lowest unemployment rate, 3.00 percent, which is 6.9 times lower than in Detroit, the city with the highest at 20.60 percent.

- Pearl City, Hawaii, has the lowest share of workers living in poverty, 1.35 percent, which is 14 times lower than in Huntington, West Virginia, the city with the highest at 18.96 percent.

To view the full report and your city's rank, visit: <https://wallethub.com/edu/best-cities-for-jobs/2173>

Five easy ways to cut back on food waste

Food requires a lot of resources, including land, water and energy. It should come as no surprise then, that the food we waste accounts for a whopping six percent of global greenhouse gas emissions.

Fortunately, it's not hard to cut back on food waste. It can even be fun! Check out these five ideas for waste-preventing, emission-reducing inspiration.

1. Store food properly

How you store food makes a big difference in how long it lasts. Use this printable guide to learn how to properly store produce, and find out what parts of your fridge are best for storing different types of foods.

2. Freeze, dehydrate or pickle food that's about to go bad

If you have too much food sitting in your fridge, don't let it go to waste. Extra bananas can be peeled and frozen for future use in breads and smoothies. Other fruit like peaches and berries can be frozen and stored for smoothies, pies and other baked goods. Uncooked meat can be frozen for future meals, and cooked meals like soup can be frozen for an easy meal on a lazy day. To explore more food saving tips, tricks and recipes, visit www.lovefoodnotwaste.org.

If you have extra veggies like cabbage, carrots, cucumber or green beans, try pickling them to make them last. You don't have to learn canning, either — quick pickling works just as well.

3. Eat veggies without peeling

Not only will it save you a lot of work, it will cut down on food waste, increase your dish's flavor and give you more nutrients. The veggies you can stop peeling include beets, carrots, cucumbers, eggplant, ginger, parsnips, potatoes and sweet potatoes. Worried about dirt?

Soak your veggies in water for a few minutes to get most of it off, then use a vegetable brush to finish the job.

4. Find ways to eat the parts of your food you'd normally toss

If there's a part of some kind of food that you always toss, see if there's a way you could make it edible. Here are some of our ideas:

- Add carrot tops to pesto or chimichurri.
- Make broccoli rice out of broccoli stalks.
- Wilt beet greens and add them to your beet dish, like in this beet salad.

5. Put your food scraps to work

Not all food scraps are destined for the bin. Try out some of these fun ideas to give your scraps a second life:

- Make a broth out of carrot, celery and onion scraps.
- Make an exfoliating coffee scrub out of used coffee grounds. Simply add a little oil of your choice (like coconut or jojoba) to freshly brewed grounds and exfoliate away! Use a drain catcher to keep the grounds from clogging up your plumbing.
- Make potpourri from dried orange and other citrus peels.
- Grow new plants out of food scraps.

While reducing food waste is always best, there are times when you must dispose of some food. Add your food scraps to a backyard compost pile or bin if you have one. Otherwise, all food scraps belong in your black garbage cart. They will be removed for composting.

If you have leftovers in a recyclable container, be sure to empty and scrape any food into the garbage before recycling the container. If it is too soiled with food or liquid, place the container in the garbage as well. Food-soiled containers can contaminate otherwise clean recyclables, making them unrecyclable.



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Rep. Eshoo re-elected Chairwoman of Health Subcommittee

U.S. Rep. Anna G. Eshoo (CA-18) has been re-elected as Chairwoman of the Health Subcommittee by members of the House Energy and Commerce Committee.

“As COVID-19 surges nationwide and continues to expose drastic problems in our health care system, expanding health care coverage and lowering costs is more important than ever,” Eshoo said. “I’m grateful to my colleagues for trusting me to lead efforts in the House and I look forward to working with the incoming Biden-Harris Administration and the Senate to

strengthen the Affordable Care Act, reduce the price of prescription drugs, and continue to make critically important investments in our public health system to crush the COVID-19 pandemic.”

Rep. Eshoo was elected to the Energy and Commerce Committee in 1995, and has served on the Health Subcommittee for 18 of her 26 years on the Committee. Of the more than 50 bills and provisions she has authored that have been signed into law by four presidents, more than half have been health related.

“As COVID-19 surges nationwide and continues to expose drastic problems in our health care system, expanding health care coverage and lowering costs is more important than ever.” – Rep. Anna Eshoo

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Times **Community News**

How much do you need to earn to purchase a home in San Jose? More than \$240K a year

By Lloyd Alaban

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

The housing market in Silicon Valley is notoriously expensive. But a new report from HSH.com shows just how much a resident needs to earn in San Jose to pay for a home.

According to the study, to afford the principal, interest, taxes and insurance payments on a median-priced home, a buyer in San Jose must earn \$243,303 a year to cover the \$5,600 monthly mortgage payment.

A typical family in San Jose makes around half that amount.

"While we are producing housing, it's also about what cost point we're producing that housing," said Noni Ramos, the chief executive officer of Housing Trust Silicon Valley, an affordable housing advocacy group. "We need to recognize that we have a spectrum of individuals who have a spectrum of income levels, and not every household will even be remotely able to come close to be able to buy something in that range."

That's priced out San Jose natives like John De Guzman, a procurement specialist for a Silicon Valley tech company. De Guzman and his fiancée, a nurse practitioner, both work in the area. They got a head start in their search for a single-family home before getting married, but even with their combined incomes, they realized buying a home would be difficult.

"We looked at a few houses. It was kind of scary looking at prices and seeing what we could afford," De Guzman said. "We used Zillow just to browse but the down payment and mortgage looked too much for what we want to pay on a monthly basis."

Instead, they've considered moving to places like Tracy or Manteca, even though the commute might put them an hour away from their workplaces.

The COVID-19 pandemic has exacerbated issues of housing affordability, leaving many people priced out of homes due to unemployment. That's despite the fact that the area has seen a "red-hot" market in recent months, with demand keeping single-family home prices high.

"That has resulted in increased prices and multiple offers, and homes selling over asking price," said Doug Goss, broker associate at Keller Williams Bay Area Estates and president of the Santa Clara County Association of Realtors. "Given the pandemic, it's surprising how well the housing market has really picked up, not only here, but nationwide."

By Goss's estimate, 75% to 80% of the homes he's worked with in

San Jose are receiving multiple offers, making homes more likely to be sold over asking price. Single-family homes, he said, are more likely to be sold over listing price, while condos are more likely to be sold near their listing price.

There are several reasons, Goss said, that prices in the area remain so high.

First, the region's position as the tech capital of the world means there is a high number of residents who want to live near where they work. That means — even with the exodus of big companies in search of cheaper land — people still want to live in Silicon Valley, which keeps demand high. Second, the supply of housing has not kept up with the demand, so there are more buyers than there are homes. Also, interest rates are at historic lows.

According to the study, the 30-year fixed mortgage rate dropped in all 50 of the largest metropolitan areas in the U.S. In San Jose, interest rates experienced a -0.27% change over the last quarter.

The study used a 20% down payment, a fixed-rate 30-year mortgage, local property tax numbers and homeowner's insurance costs to calculate home costs. The numbers are based on data from the second quarter of 2020.

For comparison, the average income needed to buy a house nationally is \$60,770 — approximately a quarter of the income needed in San Jose. In the cheapest metro area, Pittsburgh, one must only earn around \$33,000 a year, with the median home price being \$177,250.

The median home price in San Jose is \$1.4 million, according to the study.

The prices might be overwhelming for some prospective buyers, but Helen Gardin, realtor at San Jose-based Pulse Real Estate, has some advice.

"They (homeowners) should watch their credit," Gardin said. "And find a lender to help them with that and to help them figure out what to pay off." She and Goss also recommended homebuyer assistance programs, such as Empower Homebuyers.

Still, the problem might be more long-term than that, according to Mathew Reed, spokesperson with Silicon Valley At Home, a local affordable housing advocacy group. He said the housing market, which has far outpaced the median incomes of people in the area, is "not sustainable." "It's not good for families and it's not good for the economy," said Reed.

For De Guzman, who is looking to also take care of his parents, it's near impossible — even with what they consider "well-paying jobs," to afford to live in San Jose. "We can't get a break and catch up with costs," he said.

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



A single-family home in the Willow Glen neighborhood of San Jose. Photo courtesy Spencer High/Santa Clara County Association of Realtors.



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Vaccine*Continued from page 1*

The reactions were recorded in several individuals at a large vaccination site in San Diego.

"Our goal is to provide the COVID vaccine safely, swiftly and equitably," said California State Epidemiologist Dr. Erica S. Pan.

Pan said the California Department of Public Health is "recommending that providers use other available vaccine inventory and pause the administration of vaccines from Moderna Lot 041L20A until the investigation by the CDC, FDA, Moderna and the state is complete."

County officials have notified health care providers who received doses from this lot, specifically Santa Clara Valley Medical Center, Stanford Health Care and El Camino Health. Health officials said they're not aware of any unusual adverse reactions to COVID-19 vaccinations in Santa Clara County, but paused administration of this lot to comply with the state's recommendation.

"We have not administered any vaccine from this lot and have pulled it from our current inventory," said El Camino Health spokesman Christopher Brown. "We are awaiting additional information from Santa Clara County and the California Department of Public Health. El Camino Health's community vaccination clinic will proceed as planned tomorrow utilizing Moderna vaccine that is not from this specific lot."

Dr. Georges Benjamin, executive director of the American Public Health Association, said the fact that allergic reactions were caught swiftly and the lot pulled is an example of the system working correctly.

"This is a known complication of the vaccine," Benjamin said. "The numbers (of reactions) are still very small, but the fact that they came out of one lot, one location, one company means that investigation (into the cause) should be much easier."



Meanwhile, Benjamin said, millions of doses of COVID-19 vaccines have already been administered with no complications.

Kaiser Permanente officials told San José Spotlight in a statement that all of the vaccines from the lot in question had been removed from the system's vaccine supply.

"At Kaiser Permanente, we have not recorded any severe adverse reactions in patients who received vaccine from this lot," the statement said. "While all vaccine supply is extremely limited, this situation only affects a relatively small percentage of our supply."

Stanford Health Care spokesperson Julie Greicius said Stanford had received 4,000 doses of the lot in question, but none had been used yet.

"The doses are sequestered until further guidance from our county and state health authorities," Greicius said.

State and county officials promised updates as they learned more.

County officials also announced over the weekend that a new COVID-19 variant has been discovered in Santa Clara County. Scientists do not know how infectious or transmissible the variant is, but it's become more prevalent since November and has been linked to several large outbreaks in the South Bay.

As of Jan. 18, the county reported 93,557 COVID-19 cases and 1,076 deaths.

Contact Madelyn Reese at reese.made-lynn@gmail.com or follow her on Twitter @MadelynGReese

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Education sector offered the COVID-19 vaccine as part of California's Phase 1B

Teachers, childcare workers, and support staff members in the education sector will be offered the COVID-19 vaccine as part of the state of California's Phase 1B, Tier 1.

Like other counties, the County of Santa Clara follows the required sequence for vaccination laid out by the federal government and state. Currently, the state has authorized the vaccination of individuals in all three tiers of Phase 1A.

When the state allows vaccination of people in Phase 1B, vaccine providers in Santa Clara County will do so. When they are eligible for the vaccine, individuals who are patients of large health systems will be directed to obtain vaccination from those systems, including Kaiser Permanente, Sutter/Palo Alto Medical Foundation, Santa Clara Valley Medical Center, Stanford, and El Camino Health.



San Jose approves naming street after Barack Obama

Barack Obama Blvd. will soon intersect with Santa Clara Street

By Carly Wipf

Article courtesy of
San José Spotlight

San Jose will join cities like Los Angeles and Milpitas in naming a street after Barack Obama, elected leaders unanimously decided Jan. 5.

The renamed boulevard will include portions of Bird Avenue, South Montgomery Street, South Autumn Street and North Autumn.

The plan has been more than three years in the making.

Community leader Alex Shoor started the movement to create Barack Obama Blvd. in San Jose in 2017 with an online petition that received more than 2,800 signatures. His effort raised more than \$9,000 for application fees and implementation.

Shoor said Barack Obama Blvd. will continually remind residents — especially youth — of the important moment in history when the United States elected its first president of color.

“It’s a message to every person in San Jose no matter who they are or where they come from that they too can achieve their dreams,” Shoor said during the council meeting.

Shoor said he was inspired by the popular Democratic president while campaigning for him in 2008. He said he saw the impact Obama had on children of color who saw themselves in the country’s future leader.

Vice Mayor Chappie Jones, who is Black, reflected on the election

night when Obama was first elected.

“I remember looking at my wife and my family, and just having the sense of just so much pride and hope of what was accomplished that night,” Jones said. “We’ve gone through a dark, four year period and even through all of that, that hope, those dreams, those aspirations that Barack Obama represented, are still alive.”

In a memo, Jones and Mayor Sam Liccardo said the boulevard will celebrate Obama’s legacy in supporting universal health insurance, climate action, marriage equality and economic inclusion.

The leaders said the new stretch of road will serve as a gateway to welcome visitors into the diverse and vibrant city.

Former Sen. Jim Beall was among the initiative’s supporters. He joined forces with Bill Melson, Hellen Sims, Joe Bass and Shoor to make up the Barack Obama Boulevard Committee. The committee will be responsible for all costs related to new street and highway signs.

The renaming plan was even embraced by Shane Patrick Connolly, chair of the Santa Clara County Republican Party. According to a memo by city Planning Director Rosalynn Hughey, the city received more than 70 letters from the public — the majority of which supported the new street name.

But the process faced a number of obstacles. San Jose’s strict approval process for major street renamings required written approval from half the affected property owners. The stringent rules allowed Milpitas and Los



Barack Obama Blvd. is official in San Jose. The renamed boulevard includes portions of Bird Avenue, South Montgomery Street, South Autumn Street and North Autumn. (“Obama” by dcblog is licensed under CC BY-ND 2.0)

Angeles — cities that started petitions for a Barack Obama Blvd after San Jose — to approve their streets first.

Since the new San Jose street chosen for naming is considered a minor, the stringent approval process no longer applies.

In her memo, Hughey said Santa Clara County 911 communications office, the United States Post Office and San Jose’s fire and police departments assessed the impacts of renaming the four sections of San Jose streets and found no issues.

Only portions of existing streets are being renamed after Obama to preserve historic references to T.S. Montgomery and Calvert T. Bird, according to Liccardo and Jones.

Some San Jose residents said they’re concerned the street choice catered to developers such as Google. The street is in close proximity to the tech giant’s proposed 80-acre megacampus near Diridon Station.

“It’s offensive for Barack Obama’s name to be associated with the most redlined, restricted, coveted areas in this city,” Paul Soto said. “This is the kind of stuff that Google wants to use to sanitize its reputation by having on all of its letterheads the word association between Barack Obama and Google.”

Shoor insisted the street location had nothing to do with Google. It was chosen based on its proximity

to major San Jose landmarks, he said, such as SAP Center. It also intersects with Santa Clara Street — one of the city’s major thoroughfares.

“Barack Obama is a man who points to the future of this country and gives it a lot of hope and possibility,” Shoor said.

Contact Carly Wipf at carly@san-josespotlight.com or follow @CarlyChristineW on Twitter.



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FTA announced the allocation of \$100 million to VTA for the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Silicon Valley Phase II project.

VTA first in nation to submit application for expedited Project Delivery Pilot Program

VTA also receives \$100 million funding allocation for Bart Silicon Valley phase 2 project

The U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Transit Administration (FTA) today announced that the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) has submitted the first application in the nation under the newly established Expedited Project Delivery (EPD) Pilot Program.

In addition to VTA completing this important step, FTA announced the allocation of \$100 million to VTA for the Bay Area Rapid Transit (BART) Silicon Valley Phase II project. This is the second funding allocation to VTA under the EPD Pilot Program. FTA previously announced a \$125 million funding allocation to VTA in August 2019. With today's announcement, FTA has allocated a total of \$225 million to VTA for the project.

"I am so pleased that \$100 million dollars will be allocated to the first Expedited Project Delivery Pilot Program project in the country to Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority in San Jose, California. Cutting red tape and streamlining federal review processes will help advance the completion of infrastructure projects on a faster timeline for the benefit of the community," said former U. S. Secretary of Transportation Elaine L. Chao.

FTA's Expedited Project Delivery Pilot Program is a discretionary program aimed at expediting delivery of new transit infrastructure projects that utilize public-private partnerships, are planned to be operated and maintained by employees of an existing public transportation provider, and have a federal share not exceeding 25 percent of the project cost.

"We are pleased to receive VTA's formal application – the first in the nation – and announce an additional \$100 million dollar funding allocation to VTA as part of FTA's newly established Expedited Project Delivery Pilot Program," said FTA Deputy Administrator K. Jane Williams. "FTA is proud to provide this federal investment and partner with VTA to create jobs and help communities continue to recover from the COVID-19 public health emergency."

The project is a 6.5-mile extension of the BART system from the Berryessa Station

through downtown San Jose to the City of Santa Clara. The total estimated project cost is \$6.86 billion and VTA has requested \$1.715 billion in federal funding through FTA's Pilot Program.



Americans were 25% more charitable last holiday season compared to 2019

According to a recent report by TOP Data and Kindest, a startup that helps nonprofits automate fundraising seamlessly, Americans were 25% more charitable last holiday season compared to 2019.

The average amount donated to charitable organizations in 2020 was just over \$600. Of all the generational cohorts, Millennials were the most active donors, with 74% of them donating to causes they care about.

"Despite COVID-19 around us, we've seen those people financially unaffected come forward to make charitable contributions, often-times with higher donation amounts compared to previous years," said David Semerad, Kindest Co-founder and CEO at Kindest. "We are encouraged by Americans charitable giving efforts, which make a difference specifically for many nonprofits who are struggling during this unprecedented time."

The top five states that have increased their charitable contributions the most this past holiday season compared to 2019 are:

- Idaho
- Wyoming
- Montana
- Utah
- Oregon

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Times **Community News**

Let's work together in the New Year

By Mary Ann Dewan, Ph.D.

County Superintendent of Schools January is always a special time of year; it signals new beginnings and brings opportunities to think positively about the year ahead of us.

Let's embark on this new year by working together to build the future we want for our youth.

We may experience increased stress during this pandemic. The health and safety of our community must remain top of mind. Now more than ever, it is important to practice self-care and reach out to others with acts of kindness and appreciation.

California's continued surge in COVID-19 cases leaves Santa Clara County in deep purple-tier status. It is essential that we strengthen our resolve and choose to stand



with one another, as a community, to do our part to stop the transmission of COVID-19. Please

observe the stay-at-home order and other risk-reduction practices. As we face the future together, remain vigilant and practice the four (4) Ws:

- Wear a mask
- Wash your hands frequently
- Watch your distance (stay more than 6 feet from others)
- Wait to gather

Now, as we embark on 2021, we do so with great anticipation and hope for a healthier, safer, prosperous and COVID-19-free future.

Remember, we are stronger together.



School News
By Mary Ann Dewan, PhD
County Superintendent of Schools

Northern California PGA announces 2020 Section Award Recipients; Matt Flenniken named 'Teacher of the Year'

The Northern California Section of the PGA of America (NCPGA) has announced its 2020 Section Awards, honoring PGA Professionals and golf industry executives who have excelled in the game and business of golf.

Among the 2020 award recipients was Matt Flenniken, PGA, of San Jose who was named 2020 NCPGA Teacher of the Year. Flenniken is Director of Instruction at Los Lagos Golf Course. He was honored for his outstanding services as a golf teacher, innovator and coach.

For 35 years, Flenniken has taught the game at a rate of 2,000 lessons per year or an astonishing 66,000 lessons to date. His dedication to the advancement of all things that are good with golf helped him to develop the value of the sport for others. Inspiring individuals contributed to building the sport and creating lifelong valuable golf experiences for those he tutored.



Matt Flenniken named NCPGA Teacher of the Year.

NCPGA stated, "Flenniken's long standing mastery of teaching and first-class club fitting combine for a best of breed PGA best practice. His on course advantage is designed to teach how to conduct business golf enabling the use of the game as a tool to improve business."

During the pandemic, Matt

opened an online teaching portal for remote learning and started a YouTube channel to offer free instruction. He is a huge supporter and contributor for Section events such as the Player-Teacher Forum. He has also participated on many national teaching forums.

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Times **Community News**

Tech Jargon of the Week

Predictive Analytics

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:

Predictive Analytics

No one today has the ability to capture and analyze data from the future. However, there is a way to predict the future using data from the past. It is called predictive analytics. Today it is used in insurance, banking, marketing, financial services, telecommunications, retail, travel, healthcare, and other industries.

Predictive analytics is the branch of the advanced analytics which is used to make predictions about unknown future events. It uses techniques like data mining, statistics, modeling, machine learning, and artificial intelligence to analyze current data to make predictions about future. Now this requires a high level of expertise with statistical methods and the ability to build predictive data models. As a result, it’s typical-

ly the domain of data scientists, statisticians and other skills data analysts. They’re supported by data engineers, who help to gather relevant data and prepare it for analysis, and by software developers and business analysts, who help with data visualization dashboards and reports.

Data scientists use predictive models to look for correlations between different data elements in website clickstream data, patient health records and other types of datasets. Once the data collection has occurred, a statistical model is formulated, trained and modified as needed to produce accurate results. The model is then run against the selected data to generate predictions.

Predictive analytics allows organizations to become proactive, forward looking, anticipating outcomes and behaviors based upon the data and not on a hunch or assumptions. It goes further and suggests actions to benefit the predictions and also provide decision options to benefit from the predictions and its implications.

It’s pretty amazing that we can use analytics to predict the future. All we have to do is gather the right data, do the right type of statistical model, and be careful of assumptions. Accurate predictive models can help organizations make intelligent decisions.

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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Press day: Feb. 3, 2021
Deadline: January 31, 2021

Write to editorial@timesmediainc.com

Almaden Times



Austin, TX has been named the safest State Capitol for 2021.

Report: '2021's Best State Capitals for Safety'

With 17 state capitals being the most populated cities in their states and the FBI indicating there could be armed protests in all 50 state capitals in response to Joe Biden’s inauguration, the personal-finance website WalletHub today released its report on 2021’s Best State Capitals for Safety & More.

To identify the most livable seats of state government, WalletHub compared all 50 state capitals across 44 key metrics, ranging from the cost of living to K–12 school-system quality to COVID-19 cases.

Top 20 State Capitals

1. Austin, TX

2. Madison, WI
3. Raleigh, NC
4. Lincoln, NE
5. Boise, ID
6. Concord, NH
7. Olympia, WA
8. Columbus, OH
9. Helena, MT
10. Salt Lake City, UT
11. Montpelier, VT
12. Bismarck, ND
13. Oklahoma City, OK
14. Des Moines, IA
15. Atlanta, GA
16. Denver, CO
17. Annapolis, MD
18. Cheyenne, WY
19. Frankfort, KY
20. St. Paul, MN

To view the full report and your city’s rank, please visit: <https://wallethub.com/edu/best-state-capitals/19030>

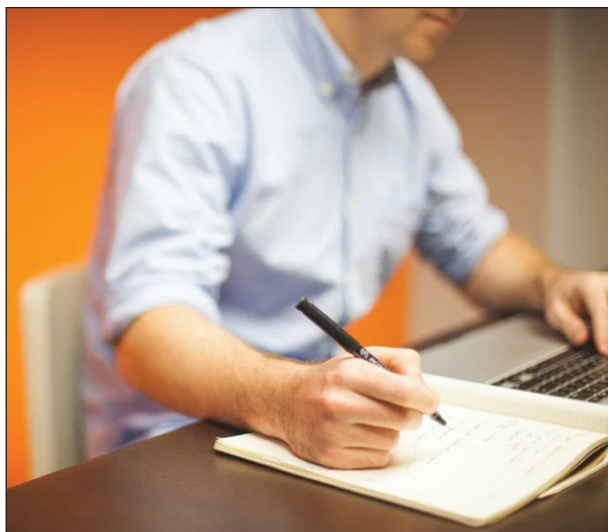
Times **Community News**

California makes several legislative changes for businesses in 2021

California has made some legislative changes for businesses in 2021.

Here are the following new labor law changes for employers that may require immediate action.

- SB 1383 – Expanded employee access to CFRA (California Family Rights Act) to companies with just 5 employees or more.
- AB 685 – Requires employers to provide written notices to employees within one business day after receiving notice of potential COVID-19 exposure.
- AB 1963 – Requires employers with 5 or more employees to provide Mandated Reporter training to HR professionals and supervisors who manage minors.
- AB 2017 – revised the law to clarify that the employee has the right to designate sick leave as kin care.
- AB 2992 – expanded the prohibition on discrimination and retaliation against employees who are victims of crime or abuse.
- AB 1947 – extends the time an individ-



ual can file a complaint of discrimination or retaliation with the DLSE (Labor Commissioner).

- SB 1384 – Expands the Labor Commissioner's ability to represent claimants under certain circumstances.

- SB 973 – Requires businesses with 100 or more employees to file an annual Employer Information Report (EEO-1) to California's Department of Fair Employment and Housing by March 31, 2021.

Bus lines

Continued from page 1

the seven routes is a step in the right direction, Bradley said. "This is something that our group has fought for," he said. "We were just frankly flabbergasted that people were being left behind."

Bradley is concerned about one consequence of VTA's plan — the agency will discontinue certain early morning and late-night light rail runs. Those changes will negatively affect riders like security guards and janitors who work graveyard shifts, he said.

VTA has seen a decline in riders and resources during the pandemic and is trying to adapt as best it can, Blackstone said. The agency proposed deep service cuts of up to 30% in November to reduce costs, but postponed the cuts after cries from the community to save transit.

But without additional federal government assistance, VTA could face up to an \$80 million budget deficit for the fiscal years of 2022 and 2023, Blackstone said. "We — like everyone else — are having to make adjustments," he said. "We are trying to make those adjustments as inclusive as we can."

The transit system is a lifeline for people coping with financial difficulties, especially during the pandemic, Mallon said.

"Everybody doesn't have enough money to buy a car and to pay for gas and insurance," she said. "This is the kind of time when people want to cut costs and look into things like transit, if they are struggling financially."

Now, the agency is shifting its focus to some of its busiest bus routes. Riders should also expect additional adjustments to its services after February, Blackstone said.

"We will continue to adjust as necessary

and have another set of adjustments in June and October this year," Blackstone said. "The changes for both are (to be decided) and will be based on conditions at that time and the pandemic."

The changes slated to take effect in February are positive steps forward, but they won't completely solve the problem of passengers being left behind, said John Courtney, president of Amalgamated Transit Union Local 265, which represents roughly 1,500 VTA transit workers.

"It's a good faith effort. We're heading in the right direction," Courtney said. "But when you really delve into the look of the schedules, it's not really that much of an increase. The proposal they have on the table right now is still not nearly enough to pick up the people that are out there."

More buses are needed to fill in the gaps, Courtney said. For now, the agency will reduce time granted for operators' breaks, among other changes, to help increase the frequencies of bus routes, he said. But VTA is hiring new drivers, which will help relieve the workload of current ones.

"VTA is trying their very best. At every turn, there's a new challenge," he said.

"The challenge now is not just [to] increase service hours, but to increase buses on the road in peak hours on all routes, and bring transit back. We just have to keep hiring, keep the buses rolling again to gain the trust of the public back and come back with a roar."

Visit the VTA website for the description of changes that will take effect on Feb. 8: www.vta.org/blog/service-frequency-improvements-begin-feb-8

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- lunches and other social programs

organized and run by members of the Association;

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

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

Connected

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

Stop by the main desk at the Almaden Community Center and ask for an application today. Yearly dues of \$10 are returned to you by discounts to most of the programs you participate in.

Join us today, meet new people and get involved with classes and programs that 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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Singles

Almaden Valley (Senior) Singles

The organization that brings single residents of Almaden Valley (95120) over 65 to enjoy a social life close to home and take part in community service.

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.

TimesClassifieds

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Driver Training is the behind the wheel training which prepares your child to pass the driving test at the DMV. We also offer complete programs for adults and senior citizens. If you have never driven or just need some supplemental instruction to improve your driving skills, we are just the school for you! We believe Advantage Driving School offers a great combination of experienced driving instructors and affordable prices!

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1334 Rimrock Drive

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5 Bed | 3.5 Bath | 3126 Sq Ft | 14,732 Sq Ft Lot

Custom home in the Almaden Country Club area with incredible views of Quicksilver Park and Downtown SJ. Kitchen has granite tile counters and plenty of wood cabinetry. Master bedroom with two large closets and amazing views. Downstairs area with separate entrance, private deck and great views could be used for an au pair or in-law quarters. Enormous multi-tiered backyard. Central A/C. 3-car garage. Graystone, Bret Harte, Leland.



1333 Rimrock Drive

\$2,025,000

4 Bed | 2.5 Bath | 2608 Sq Ft | 16,988 Sq Ft Lot

Custom-built home set high in the Almaden Country Club area with incredible views of Quicksilver Park, Mt Hamilton and downtown San Jose. Enjoy amazing city light views from your back deck. Kitchen has granite slab counters and plenty of maple cabinetry. Master bedroom suite has a slider to a private deck. Stunning landscaping. Three-car garage. Top schools: Williams, Bret Harte, Leland.



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. And 2020 was no exception. She is the only Almaden Valley specialist to have been nationally ranked and recognized twice by The Wall Street Journal/RealTrends for being in the Top 250 Agents in the US. Additionally, Swan is consistently among the Top 100 Agents in the SF Bay Area.

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

Therese Swan

408.656.8240

tswan@tswan.com

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