

Enchanting book helps newcomers navigate the 'American Dream'
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Candidates speak out
San Jose police chief finalists talk racial equity, biased policing and use of force – **SEE PAGE 10**

Mayor Liccardo forms non-profit advocacy group for safe re-opening of schools
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FEB. 26 – MARCH 11, 2021 ■ VOL. 38, NO. 5

EvergreenTimes

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Three speech and debate teams from Evergreen School District receive honors and recognitions

By William Bellou
Publisher

Three Evergreen School District (ESD) Speech and Debate Teams made their first appearance at the Santa Ana Unified School District Annual Mardi Gras Tournament and all three teams received awards, honors and recognition at the event on Feb. 20-21.

Evergreen School District Speech and Debate is dedicated to helping students find their voice, work ethic, and competitive spirit. While we celebrate our performance at this past tournament, we

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A screenshot of the virtual Lunar New Year 2021 celebration shows a rendering of the Vietnamese-American Service Center.

Vietnamese-American Service Center set for grand opening this fall on San Jose's Senter Road

By Tran Nguyen

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

After nearly a decade of planning and years of construction, Santa Clara County's Vietnamese-American Service Center is set for a grand opening this fall.

"This has been a community effort," Supervisor Cindy Chavez said during a recent Lunar New Year virtual celebration of 60 participants. "This center is the reflection of the unyielding commitment in our county to celebrate our diversity."

The 30,000 square-foot center at 2410 Senter Road in San Jose, scheduled to finish construction in summer, will be the first county facility to focus on serving the Vietnamese community in the South Bay.

The center's service model, as well as the building's architecture, incorporates extensive community feedback.

Interest in a hub serving the Vietnamese population sparked in 2012 after the county's Public Health Department released a study revealing that Vietnamese residents in the South Bay suffered from significant health disparities. Cultural and language barriers also played a big role in preventing access to the county's services. The effort was led by then-Supervisor Dave Cortese.

"It reveals the large health disparities and challenges in mental health, health care and physical health, intergenerational conflict and difficulties navigating services," Chavez said.

San Jose is home to the largest Vietnamese population in any city outside of Vietnam. According to U.S. Census data, the community makes up roughly 11% of San Jose's population.

After six months of meetings and surveying in 2016, Santa Clara County approved the center's construction and a \$7 million budget to develop a service plan. During the same year, San Jose also established a Vietnamese cultural center at George Shirakawa Senior Center. The city center has offered different services and cultural events over the years.

In 2018, the county awarded a \$33 million construction contract to Gilbane Corporation. The center broke ground in 2019.

Meanwhile, the disparities identified by the county in 2012 have continued to play out during the COVID-19 pandemic. Among all Asian groups, Vietnamese have seen significantly more cases of the virus after Thanksgiving and Christmas, according to the county's data.

In addition, inaccessible and complicated

See *CENTER*, page 19



Fundraising activity provides needed funds for Silver Oak Elementary School

New fundraiser with Panda Express in Evergreen: March 3

Silver Oak Elementary School and its 6th Grade Promotion Committee, under the direction of parent volunteer Catherine Azevedo, has been developing new ways to fundraise.

Normal fundraising is non-existent with current distance learning in place the 6th graders who cannot sell concessions at school to raise funds to offset expenses for their gift to the school, yard signs, goodie bags, and other items.

Kathleen Kelley, a parent volunteer, explained that the school is generating funds through a partnership with local restaurants when members of the community purchase food with them and specify the name of Silver Oak Elementary School.

"We've partnered with GreatMealsDelivered.com to hopefully drive more business to them and to also help raise funds for Silver Oak throughout the final days of February," said Kathleen Tanabe Kelley, parent volunteer. Great Meals Delivered is currently donating back 15% of meals ordered to Silver Oak as long as the people click onto the Silver

See *FUNDRAISER*, page 3

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

Times **Community News**

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The author, **Senait Mesfin Piccigallo**, is pictured in Kenya processing her visa to come to the U.S. in 2007.

Enchanting book helps newcomers navigate 'American Dream'

'You're in America – Now What? 7 skills to integrate with ease and joy'

By **Kevin Larsen**
Contributing writer

Her name is Senait Mesfin Piccigallo and she has traveled and volunteered in many countries to help the less fortunate.

With her life experiences she carefully crafted words to help guide new immigrants acquiring skills and understanding of the American culture.

If you know of any person new to America or who is planning to visit a foreign country, this helpful book will be a good friend for them to take along on their journey.

Author Senait Mesfin Piccigallo states, "This book talks about the skills needed for one access and navigate all the complexities of this ever-changing culture and how to sharpen up their existing skills while acquiring new ones that will help them not only survive, but thrive in the U.S.A. culture."

The author continues, "Moving to a new country and integrating into a new culture has always been challenging, even under the best conditions. New immigrants need to learn English quickly, so they can communicate, look for a job and housing, and to be able to settle down. However, the need to master a tremendous range of skills from communication to building a support system from scratch along with any confidence issues can be challenging, especially while figuring out the norms and values of the U.S. culture."

Piccigallo explains that rebuilding your life from scratch can be a lonely endeavor; one that may force new immigrants to make difficult decisions every day with limited information.

"While sorting through these challenges, eventually, every new immigrant runs

headfirst into a problem they haven't encountered before; the kind that leaves them unsure of where to start," Piccigallo said. "Luckily, there are many agencies who point us toward services available, like how to go about finding a job, where to go to apply for housing, which classes to attend to improve English, and mental health services. I have received the advantage of some of those services; however, I have yet to find a place to learn how to build a support system and what one needs to acquire to build one's confidence, handle racism, and in navigating the vast ocean of cultural diversity."

The 'Seven Skills'

Senait Mesfin Piccigallo shares about one of the seven empowering skills which she explores in her book aimed at helping any newcomer to America.

She states, "One of the skill sets I talk about in my book is self-confidence: how to nurture, build, and keep self-confidence in your new country. Most people think either you are born confident or you are not, which is far from the truth. Self-confidence is a skill that is important for anyone who wants to succeed in life, but it is vital when it comes to building your life here in the U.S. from scratch. Because without it, you cannot even think about achieving the dreams you brought with you, let alone achieve them, especially at this time of crisis with the pandemic, magnified racism, and life circumstances that weigh you down."

"How can you stay confident within yourself to tackle the hard life you meet every day while looking forward to a bright future where your American Dream is possible and at the same time try to culturally integrate? How can you feel confident when you meet Xenophobic people who tell you to go back to your country? How can you feel confident when people discriminate against you because of the color

See **PICCIGALLO**, page 20

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

Oak Fundraiser box during check out for the rest of this month.”

Panda Express fundraiser

The next Silver Oak Elementary School fundraiser will be held on March 3rd with an association with Panda Express on San Felipe Rd. in Evergreen.

“We are thankful to be partnering with our local Panda Express located at: Evergreen Marketplace, 4898 San Felipe Road, San Jose,” said Azevedo. “Everyone can take the day off from cooking and enjoy delicious food while supporting our community and school.”

“I am so proud of our 6th graders. In the almost 6 years I’ve been at Silver Oak, I’ve seen many of them grow from little kids to the people they are today,” said Howard Greenfield, Silver Oak Elementary Principal. “I wish [that] they dream big, and work hard and smart to make their dreams come true.”

Food order procedures

The community can order online for Panda Express pick up or delivery by entering the school’s special coupon code: 321628 in the coupon code box at checkout. To order in person, just show the fundraiser flyer, either paper or digital copy (See pages 8 and 15 in



Panda Express offers a variety of entrees and side dishes.

this issue of the *Evergreen Times*) which will ensure that Silver Oak Elementary receives credit for each order.

“In a year like none other, our 6th graders have persisted and they deserve to celebrate their promotion to Middle School,” said Azevedo. “To that end, we would like to acknowledge their resolve, integrity and grit with a fun and memorable promotion celebration that brings smiles and happy tears as they say their last goodbye to the school, most have called home for the past seven years. I want to express our special thanks to the community for their support during this challenging school year on behalf of the students, the 6th Grade Promotional Committee, Great Meals Delivered, and Panda Express.”

Editor’s note: Silver Oak’s final fundraiser is scheduled for March 22nd – March 24th at The Creek Eatery, 5623 Silver Creek Valley Road.

**Debate***Continued from page 1*

look forward to seeing how our students will do at the State and National Championship.

The Mardi Gras Tournament is one of the largest middle school tournaments of the season with 30 schools and 700 students participating.

“Despite strong competition such as the Advanced Learning Academy (three-time national champions) and Parks Junior High (2021 national champions), all three ESD schools received multiple honors and recognitions,” said Emy Flores, Superintendent, Evergreen School District.

“Our speech and debate competitors have been preparing since the beginning of the school year to test their skills against national champions. This is a huge accomplishment for all of our students, teachers, and coaches as they only have one semester under their

belt. We are so very proud of them.”

Chaboya

Due to all their points and effort, Chaboya Middle school ranked 1st place at the 2021 SAUSD Mardi Gras Tournament. The school received the Sweepstakes Award, receiving an outstanding 30 semifinalist recognitions. Along with 13 finalist appearances, Natalie C. won the Extemporaneous Speaking category. Viviana B. won the Poetry Interpretation category.

Leyva

Leyva Middle School received six semifinalist awards in multiple categories, with many competitors qualifying in more than one event.

Quimby Oak

Quimby Oak received 13 semifinalist and 5 finalist recognitions in multiple categories, which helped them receive the 5th place School.

The Santa Ana Kiwanis Club has supported the program since its inception.

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License Pending  

Extreme winter storm disrupts Bay Area COVID vaccine shipments

Some vaccination appointments canceled

COVID-19 vaccines destined for Santa Clara County have been delayed due to the massive winter storm that has battered many areas of the U.S.

The delays have affected counties throughout California, including Santa Clara, San Mateo, Alameda and Contra Costa, causing some to consider canceling appointments and vaccination events.

The setback comes as vaccine shortages have forced some vaccination sites to suspend operations. Some appointments for second shots on Friday may have to be canceled.

The storm also delayed doses that were supposed to go to Kaiser Permanente. The healthcare provider is working with federal and state health officials to track the shipments.

Aaditya Sarma of Evergreen named to University of Delaware Dean's List

Aaditya Sarma of Evergreen Valley has been named to the University of Delaware Dean's List for the Fall 2020 semester. Sarma is a Computer Science major.

To meet eligibility requirements for the Dean's List, a student must be enrolled full-time and earn a GPA of 3.5 or above (on a 4.0 scale) for the semester.

The University of Delaware (colloquially UD or Delaware) is a private-public land-grant research university located in Newark, Delaware. UD is the largest university in Delaware. It offers 3 associate's programs, 148 bachelor's programs, 121 master's programs (with 13 joint degrees), and 55 doctoral programs across its eight colleges.

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Valley Currents

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

Mayor Liccardo forms advocacy organization 'Solutions'

Non-profit advocates for safe re-opening of schools

By William Bellou
Publisher

With a large number of school districts still remaining closed due to the pandemic as well as growing inequities for families who lack internet access and other educational resources, San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo decided to take matters into his own hands.

Last week, Liccardo founded a 501(c)4 advocacy organization called Solutions San Jose, which will be dedicated to safely re-opening campuses—starting with elementary schools—and advocating for other policy solutions.

In a Feb. 11 email obtained by San Jose Inside, Liccardo cites a report that found a low risk of coronavirus transmission in elementary schools in two studies conducted at the start of the pandemic in Oise, France which found the presence of antibodies in students and teachers attending in-person school without masking or social distancing. One study, which looked at high schools, found that 43 percent of teachers, 59 percent of other staff



Sam Liccardo launched non-profit "Solutions" San Jose last week.

and 38 percent of students had antibodies compared to a community prevalence of 9 percent. The elementary school study found only 9 percent of students, 7 percent of teachers and 4 percent of other staff had antibodies.

In the email, the mayor also notes that Dr. Anthony Fauci, the U.S. government's top infectious disease expert, has backed recommendations by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to re-open more schools.

Liccardo said in the Feb. 11 email that "fail-

ure to re-open public schools violates the civil rights of our poorest families, creating a 'separate but unequal' education system."

"High-income parents can work from home, send their kids to private schools, hire tutors, create learning pods, buy extra internet bandwidth and help their children succeed in scores of other ways," Liccardo explained. "Our low-income students—despite the city spending more than \$10 million to provide broadband connectivity to tens of thousands of

homes—struggle with little other support and fall farther behind, while their parents must either work outside the home in essential jobs, or forego their paychecks."

While Liccardo's rush to re-open schools has been met with push-back from organized labor, the mayor included a link to a petition to safely re-open schools (ipetitions.com/petition/safely-re-open-our-schools).

So far the petition has garnered more than 3,200 signatures as of late afternoon, Wednesday, Feb. 24.

LETTER

Pandemic provides risks to teachers

Dear Editor,

My name is Wendy and I've been a teacher for 15 years. I am a first generation college graduate from a farm working family from the Salinas Valley.

No one wants to be back in the classroom more than educators. I want to welcome every one of my students back to my classrooms in a way that keeps everyone safe: students, their families and staff.

Unfortunately the school I work at is one of the oldest in my district and suffers from horrible ventilation and is in a zip code where the COVID cases are high.

As California continues to struggle to control the pandemic, which is still impacting many communities disproportionately, a phased-in approach that responds to local conditions and transmission rates has to be part of a responsible return to in-person instruction.

Any path to bringing students back to campuses will require implementing multi-layered mitigation strategies that consider community conditions and include robust cleaning and updated ventilation systems, asymptomatic testing of students and school employees, six-feet social distancing and enforcement.

To reopen schools for in-person instruction, the state must ensure all employees required to report in person have been provided the opportunity to be vaccinated before students return to campus. The vaccine distribution should prioritize educators in schools already open and schools in communities with high transmission rates.

We must take a comprehensive and data-driven approach to reopening schools that includes addressing community spread. After all, no matter how safe of a bubble we put around our schools, the students and staff inside go home at the end of the day. If mitigation efforts are inadequate in the community, the risk of it being brought back to school increases significantly.

Wendy Cruz-Alcantar
San Jose

San Jose to build innovative homeless housing apartments

New community to revive Guadalupe River Park

Mayor Sam Liccardo has introduced an innovative approach to building interim housing at 1/5 of the cost and 1/10 of the time of regular apartment developments.

Since the onset of the pandemic, the City has constructed three emergency interim housing communities that will serve more than 300 previously unhoused San Joseans.

San Jose has been expanding programs that provide a work-first approach to self-sufficiency for unhoused residents through its San Jose Bridge initiative which has shown early success in getting unhoused residents jobs and permanent housing.

The newest proposed community would be located in San Jose Police Departments' overflow parking lot, a short walk from Guadalupe River Park, and could enlist future residents of the site to act as stewards of the park.

Mayor Liccardo released the following statement:

"We have an opportunity to bring these successful approaches to Guadalupe River Park, where we will build a housing community for unhoused residents, including a corps of stewards who will revive the park by repairing, cleaning, and beautifying it. Peter and Susanna Pau have generously donated more than \$3 million in prefabricated housing for the project, and we are actively fundraising from other partners. I hope that our collective efforts will demonstrate to our community, and many others, how our unhoused neighbors--too often pointed at as 'the problem'-- can be active participants in the 'solution'."

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Times Community News

Blue Shield's to oversee California's vaccine rollout

*Program is run 'at cost' making
zero profits for Blue Shield*

By William Bellou
Publisher

Blue Shield California has set a lofty goal of getting 3 million people per week inoculated against COVID-19 starting next month under a contract that gives it control over the state's vaccine rollout.

The health plan provider released a 55-page contract last week following Gov. Gavin Newsom's recent announcement that the Oakland-based nonprofit health insurance giant would take over the administration of vaccines.

Until now, counties allocated vaccine doses to hospitals, medical centers and other sites as they saw fit. Blue Shield will take that responsibility through Dec. 31, 2021.

Here are the key points to the contract:

1. Blue Shield to choose which health care providers will give the shots. The company promised to distribute the vaccine with "a focus on equity" and an eye on the communities hit hardest by the coronavirus pandemic.

2. By April 30, Blue Shield's goal is to vaccinate 4 million Californians per week, or 1 million more per week than it hopes to inoculate starting March 1. The state has administered about 6 million vaccines total so far, according to Newsom's tweet on Monday.

3. Providers are to give 95% of the vaccine



Blue Shield, a nonprofit health insurer, was founded in San Francisco 78 years ago.
(Steve Rhodes/Flickr)

doses within a week of receiving them and to make them available to most people within an hour distance in rural areas and 30 minutes in urban areas. For those who are homebound or cannot travel to get a shot for health reasons, Blue Shield must find a way to get the vaccine to them.

4. The state will set monthly goals for vaccinating a certain number of people in communities most vulnerable to COVID-19 or deemed by the state to be under-resourced. For example, Blue Shield must have administered vaccines to at least 60% of disproportionately impacted populations by the end of March and at least 50% to people living in communities ranked in the bottom 25% of the Healthy Places Index.

5. Blue Shield must report to the state every day where there are low-performing vaccine providers or where COVID-19 rates spike.

6. Blue Shield cannot bill the state more than \$15 million during the contract's term and has to run the program at cost, making zero profits.

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San Jose Mayor urges San Joséans to get COVID vaccine

Leaders seek volunteers for outreach to underserved communities

Mayor Sam Liccardo was joined by Santa Clara County Supervisor Cindy Chavez and Gardner Health Services' CEO Reymundo Espinoza, to call for volunteers to support vaccine outreach on Feb. 18.

Liccardo is encouraging underserved communities to make appointments for vaccinations, as those communities continue to be disproportionately affected by the pandemic.

"Vaccination provides the only viable route for us to get to the other side of this pandemic, and we can all play a role in helping our community get access to safe and effective vaccines," said Mayor Liccardo. "Anyone willing to help us engage in outreach, staff vaccination centers, or offer other volunteer assistance can sign up through our SiliconValleyStrong.org website."

San José's most vulnerable residents continue to be disproportionately affected by the virus, with higher infection rates than affluent areas. Out of 45,483 Latino seniors, only 12,072 have been vaccinated, or almost 26 percent, compared to 60 percent of white seniors. These vaccines are extremely safe and effective and are available at several sites across the city, including some without appointments.

"There is no cookie-cutter approach when trying to vaccinate a population as economically and culturally diverse as we have in Santa Clara County," said Santa Clara County Supervisor Cindy Chavez. "We must have mass vaccination centers in large urban areas hard hit by coronavirus and we must go directly to the residents of diverse, disproportionately COVID-infected communities with pop-up vaccinations



tents and mobile units. We need trained volunteers to do all of this vaccination work because the execution of the vaccine programs is critical to getting the job done."

The following are available vaccination clinics in San Jose:

- Public Health Story Road Hub - 1775 Story Road, San Jose, 95122

Wednesday/Thursday/Friday: Sign-ups start at 9:30 a.m. on a first-come, first-served basis, No advance appointments

- Mexican Heritage Plaza - 1700 Alum Rock Ave., San Jose, 95116

Open Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday: Sign-ups start at 9 a.m. on a first-come, first-served basis, Vaccinations given from 10:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m., No advance appointments

The following sites are available for vaccination by appointment only, to schedule, visit sccfreevax.org.

- Valley Health Center Tully - 500 Tully Rd. SJ

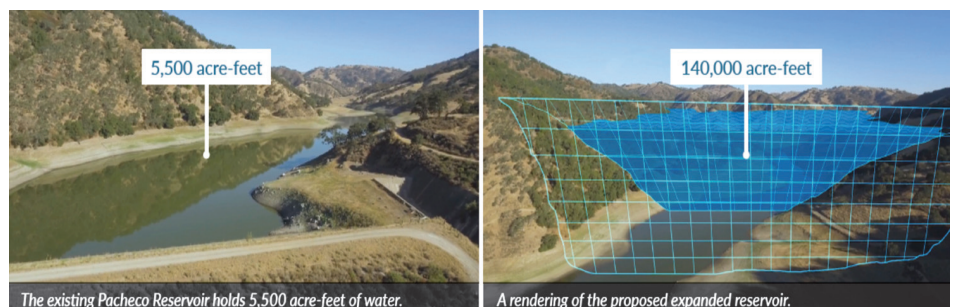
- Santa Clara Fairgrounds - 2542 Monterey Highway, Gate D, SJ, 95111

- Berger Auditorium - 1555 Berger Drive, SJ, 95112

- Valley Health Center - 751 S Bascom Ave Bldg Q, SJ, CA 95128

- Valley Health Center- East Valley - 1993 McKee Rd, SJ, CA 95133

Residents interested in volunteering can sign up at www.siliconvalleystrong.org.



Valley Water gathering public feedback on proposed expansion of Pacheco Reservoir

By Gary Kremen, John L. Varela, and Richard P. Santos

Valley Water Directors

The first few months of this rainfall season were below average across California, with drought conditions evident statewide.

Although the Golden State received a much-needed soaking in late January,

moderate drought conditions remain across Santa Clara County.

Valley Water remains focused on preparing for future wet and dry years through various projects and programs, including the proposed expansion of Pacheco Reservoir in southern Santa Clara County.

A partnership with the San Benito County

See *WATER*, page 15

Times Feature

San Jose police chief finalists talk racial equity, biased policing and use of force

By Lloyd Alaban

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

Seven law enforcement leaders vying to be San Jose’s next police chief Saturday, Feb. 13 answered questions from residents about everything from racial equity to biased policing and use of force.

The virtual forum was facilitated by Gary Peterson, who led the recruitment process. He picked a handful of questions from more than 500 submitted through an online survey.

The forum was delayed twice after the city received questions, including from San José Spotlight, about why no external candidates were being considered. The additional time allowed the city to include Justin Doll and Larry Sciroto, two outside candidates, in the finalist pool.

Five of the candidates are either current or former officers with the SJPd, with four of them still with the department: Deputy Chief of Police Anthony Mata, Deputy Chief of Police Heather Randol, Police Captain Jason Ta and Acting Police Chief David Tindall. Jeremy Bowers became Piedmont chief of police in 2016 after a career with the SJPd that began in 1996.

Doll is the chief of police in Anchorage, and Sciroto a retired assistant chief from the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania Police Department.

Four of the seven candidates are people of color, and Randol is the only woman candidate.

The city is looking to replace former Police Chief Eddie Garcia who retired in December. The selection of a new chief comes after much turmoil for the San Jose Police Department, including racist Facebook posts, excessive force complaints and officers targeting and taunting peaceful protesters.

Racial equity

The forum opened with each candidate explaining how they’ll address racial equity and systemic racism in policing. They all agreed that law enforcement has a role in promoting equity, and vowed to work to reverse the culture in the department. They also pledged to create more racial bias training to ensure all residents are treated equally.

Mata pledged to work with groups, such as SOMOS Mayfair and Silicon Valley De-Bug, as he’s been doing as Deputy Chief.

“Through these partnerships, I have been able to identify barriers and limitations and made the necessary changes to policy and procedures so that we provide just and equitable services,” Mata said.

Randol, the first woman to lead the SJPd detectives bureau, said acknowledging bias exists in the brass is the first step.

“We have addressed crime without considering the wider impacts it has on communities,” she said. “And that’s something we have to look at and consider. We, the police department, can no longer ignore our role in contributing to this current situation.”

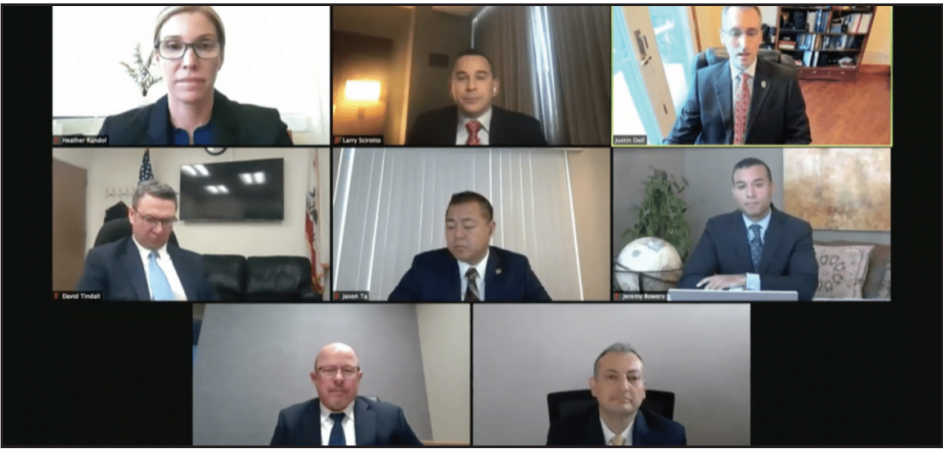
Sciroto agreed, saying that some officers might not be familiar with how some police

policies originated in the Jim Crow era. “But community members are very aware of how they’ve been treated and have a lived experience in that environment and that level of trust is diminished because of it,” he said.

Quality-of-life crimes

The candidates agreed on the importance of working with mental health professionals to deescalate crisis situations and promised to incorporate technology in policing.

See CANDIDATES, page 10



The seven candidates for next Chief of Police along with facilitator Gary Peterson. Photo by Lloyd Alaban.



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COMPASS

Times Feature

Candidates

Continued from page 9

"We know that not every call requires a police response," Mata said. "This is one way to create efficiency."

Bowers meanwhile said reducing response times would mean quality-of-life crimes, such as car break-ins, can be stopped. "I would convene a workgroup to get together to ... look at our responsiveness," Bowers said. "Looking at our priority dispatching, the capability of it and its performance."

Accountability and discipline

The candidates said they're aware of public outcry following the perceived lack of discipline for officers who have been accused of police brutality in other cities.

They also wanted to ensure that officers are able to speak out against discriminatory behavior from their fellow officers without the fear of retaliation.

Randol and Mata would ensure officers have an easy way to report fellow officers should they overstep their role. Ta wanted to prioritize disciplinary issues when they come up and resolve them in a "timely" and thorough way. Scirotto recalled a time when he had to reprimand an officer who bullied a teen, promising to do the same if an SJPD officer was caught abusing his power.

"There is a difference between making a

mistake of the mind and a mistake of the heart," said Scirotto. "We took action to set an example for what is right and just that no officer is ever going to be above and beyond



Former San Jose Police Chief **Eddie Garcia** is pictured in this file photo.

the profession and that immoral, unethical, unlawful behavior will be punished severely."

Tindall wanted to ensure that no bad actors will be employed by the SJPD.

"Instances like George Floyd's murder have marred the public's trust in us. But I will continue to push for changes in arbitration so we can get transparency and accountability," Tindall said.

Improving relations between the community and police

Peterson asked many questions about how the police engage with the public and build bridges between residents and the police. One idea included using multilingual officers for outreach.

"There's no secret recipe to connect with marginalized communities," Ta said. "But if you don't have these connections, these conversations, you'll never improve these problems you see with ineffective communication."

The city's new police chief will take the helm of a department that has been criticized in recent months after its handling of San Jose's George Floyd-related protest in May. "Every single time any member of the police department... has a contact with a member of the community, that is an engagement and relationship-building opportunity," said Doll. "It's really incumbent upon the chief to set that tone for him or herself, but also all the way down through the entire organization."

Recruitment and retention

Officials have lamented in recent weeks that the number of police officers are dwindling. Candidates pledged to encourage more San Joseans to apply to become cops and push to recruit officers from different racial, religious and economic backgrounds.

Ta said the department must do more to hire mid-to high-level officers of color.

Tindall said he would convene a workgroup working with the city's Office of Racial Equity. Scirotto said he was proud of hiring diverse officers in Pittsburgh, including the department's first transgender officers.

Next steps

Earlier this week, police leaders announced exploring the use of "less lethal" weapons in place of guns. Still, some say more needs to be done.

"The protests reflect mass imprisonment and other structural problems, so changing one institution isn't going to be enough," Paul Knepper, chair of the Department of Justice Studies at San Jose State University, told San José Spotlight. "Making change happen on the scale we need to deal with will require all of us collaborating in ways we really haven't done before."

City Manager Dave Sykes announced the candidates will be interviewed by several community organizations and city officials in the coming weeks. The Chief will be selected in mid-March.

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

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Times Feature

Report: Safest states during Covid-19

As the U.S. continues its struggle against the COVID-19 pandemic, staying safe is one of Americans' top concerns.

With only 5% of the population fully vaccinated against COVID-19 as of February 17, and vaccination being an essential component for full reopening of the economy, WalletHub has released its report on the Safest States during COVID-19.

Some states are already safer than others, though, based on how well they have kept the pandemic under control and how much they are vaccinating. In order to find out the safest states during the COVID-19 pandemic,

WalletHub compared the 50 states and the District of Columbia across five key metrics. The data set includes the rates of COVID-19 transmission, positive testing, hospitalizations and death, as well as the share of the eligible population getting vaccinated.

California's Safety During Coronavirus (1=Best; 25=Avg.):

- 19th – Vaccination Rate
- 26th – Positive Testing Rate
- 43rd – Hospitalization Rate
- 43rd – Death Rate
- 4th – Transmission Rate

To view the full report and your state's rank, visit: wallethub.com/edu/safest-states-during-covid/86567



*Estimates the average number of people to whom an infected person will transmit COVID-19.

TECH JARGON OF THE WEEK:

Digital Footprint

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 me teach you the meaning of some commonly used tech words:

Digital Footprint

Every time we access the Internet, we contribute to a growing portrait of who we are online; a portrait that is

probably more public than we assume. This portrait helps companies target content to specific market segments, and also helps advertisers track our movements across multiple websites. Whatever we do online, we might leave our digital footprint behind.

Digital footprints are sometimes broken down into active and passive data traces. Active data traces are the ones that the user leaves intentionally. Facebook, Twitter and blog posts, social network connections, image and video uploads, email, phone calls and chats are among the ways people create active digital footprints.

Passive data traces connected to an individual are left by others or gathered through the activities that the user does without purposefully putting out data. Website visits and

See TECH JARGON, page 13



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Times Feature

Evergreen School District

From strong roots grow bright futures

Evergreen Senior Citizen Property Owners Are Eligible for Measure EE Parcel Tax Exemption

Evergreen property owners age 65 by June 30, 2022 or older are eligible to file for exemption from the annual \$125 Evergreen School District parcel tax for parcels they occupy as their principal residence.

For joint owners of a principal residence, only one owner needs to be age 65.

More information regarding the parcel tax exemption, including a form to request exemption, can be found on our District website at www.eesd.org/page.cfm?p=2896.

To complete the exemption, the form and supporting documents may be brought into the District Office located at 3188 Quimby Road, San Jose. Call Santha Pinedo or Patty Maciel at (408) 270-6863 to make an appointment.

Residents must file for the exemption in person with documents to prove their home ownership, residency, and age eligibility.

Those who have previously been granted an exemption from the Measure EE Parcel Tax, their exemption will continue to be automatically renewed each year as long as you remain eligible for the exemption.

Resident unable to submit the application in person or for additional information, contact Santha Pinedo or Patty Maciel at (408) 270-6863.

San Jose Youth Symphony to present free interactive and virtual masterclass for brass musicians: Feb 27

Masterclass led by Adam Luftman, Principal Trumpet, SF Opera & Ballet

The San Jose Youth Symphony will present an exciting free interactive, virtual Zoom masterclass for all interested advanced musicians on Saturday, Feb. 27 at 3 p.m.

The free masterclass will feature performances by members of the most advanced and flagship group, the Philharmonic Orchestra, including trumpet and trombone players.

Participants will receive valuable tips on performance, practice and technique. These are all important topics for serious and aspiring student musicians. Additionally, a Q & A will be presented at the end of the presentation when online participants will have a chance to talk to a world-renowned musician.

The masterclass is led by **Adam Luftman** (inset), Principal Trumpet, San Francisco Opera & Ballet Orchestras. Luftman is a faculty Member of the San Francisco Conservatory of Music, U.C. Berkeley & Stanford University.

Luftman has held positions with the Baltimore Symphony, the New World Symphony in Miami and the Civic Orchestra of



Chicago. He has also been a guest artist with many of the country's finest orchestras, including The Cleveland Orchestra, Philadelphia Orchestra, Chicago Symphony and San Francisco Symphony. He has presented masterclasses all over the country including at the Curtis Institute of Music, New England Conservatory, Cleveland Institute of Music, New World Symphony and Tanglewood.

Registration for the free SJYS Interactive Zoom Masterclass is available at this special shortened link: prb.gy/fly537

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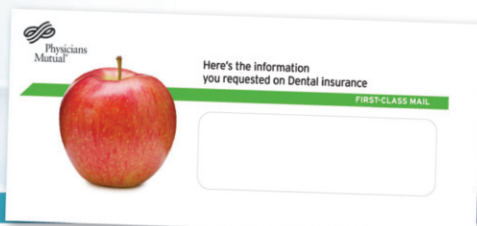
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Times **Feature**

Past LLS Students of the Year

Team Metasaviors 2.0 of Evergreen Valley High School raising funds for Leukemia Lymphoma Society

LLS choses Metasaviors in their inaugural "Student of the Year" fundraiser

Team Metasaviors 2.0 of Evergreen Valley High School is organizing a fundraiser for Leukemia Lymphoma Society (LLS).

The fundraising team's fundraising goal is \$30,000 during a seven week period, Feb. 5 - March 27.

All of the funds raised will be directed toward cancer research, specifically targeting Leukemia and Lymphoma and Team Metasaviors 2.0 is hoping the Evergreen community will participate on the journey of fundraising. LLS is the largest donor to blood cancer research in the nation.

Today, more than a million Americans are fighting a daily battle with blood cancers and every 4 minutes another person unwillingly joins the fight.

"The LLS has chosen us as a team in their inaugural "Student of the Year" fundraising

challenge, and we could not be more excited to make a difference in the lives of patients across the country," said Team member Ria Pattekar. "We have been given the once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to join the battle and help those living with blood cancers."

"We are honoring those who have battled blood cancers and raising money that will go directly to LLS in support of its long-standing mission to find a cure and improve the quality of life of patients and their families," said Team member Amaya Khan. "Our team will work to increase awareness about the impact of blood cancers and the cutting-edge treatments that are currently being researched, as well as inspire others to join the fight to find a cure."

If you would like to help out Team Metasaviors 2.0 in their fundraising efforts, visit: tinyurl.com/ypmg-su58; or use the following QR code.



Tech Jargon

Continued from page 11

actions, searches and online purchases are among the activities that add passive data traces to a digital footprint.

It's not possible in today's world to have zero footprints. One would have to stay away from all sources of internet to do so. However, one can always work towards reducing their digital footprint and manage their own digital identity. For example, you can be more cautious on the content

you publish online on social media websites. While you can often delete content from social media sites, once digital data has been shared online, there is no guarantee you will ever be able to remove it from the Internet.

About the Author

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

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Times Feature

Water

Continued from page 8

Water District and Pacheco Pass Water District, the Pacheco project will increase the reservoir's capacity from 5,500 acre-feet to up to 140,000 acre-feet, enough water to supply up to 1.4 million residents for one year during an emergency.

When Valley Water moved forward with the Pacheco Project's planning in 2017, California was coming out of one of the worst droughts on record. As Valley Water Board Members, we viewed the potential expansion of Pacheco Reservoir as a way to reduce the frequency and severity of water shortages during future droughts.

The multi-benefit project will improve habitat for the South-Central California Coast Steelhead, a threatened fish population. The expanded reservoir will also incidentally reduce flood risk along Pacheco Creek and downstream Pajaro River by holding back peak flows, offering some relief to communities in Dunneville, Watsonville and Pajaro.

We know there are challenges with a project of this size. Recently, Valley Water staff informed the board that the project's estimated cost rose from about \$1.3 billion to \$2.5 billion. Our agency is exploring four different dam alternatives, each with a different cost estimate. One of the options could reduce the cost by about \$400 million.

Valley Water staff is currently working on the project's environmental impact report, which will allow our agency to share the environmental impacts, gather more

information on the proposed project, and include feedback from the public.

As board members, we recognize the importance of engaging with our community partners as we continue to evaluate this project.

On Feb. 24 and 25, Valley Water hosted virtual public scoping meetings and open houses to allow the public and agencies an opportunity to learn more about the scope and content of the environmental impact report.

Recordings of the meetings are posted on the Valley Water website.

Our engagement with the public will not end with these virtual scoping meetings. We are dedicated to continuing an active dialogue and engagement with the community.

We plan on releasing a community input survey in the coming weeks to gather your feedback on the overall project. The survey will be posted on our website and promoted on our social media platforms.

Feedback from the community will help guide us and our fellow board members to make an informed decision as we evaluate this project.

For more details about the public scoping meetings, visit www.valleywater.org/pachecoexpansion.

Editor's note: Vice Chair Gary Kremen, John L. Varela, and Richard P. Santos are Valley Water Directors and can be contacted at their respective email addresses: jvarela@valleywater.org (District 1), or santos@valleywater.org (District 3), or gkremen@valleywater.org (District 7).

San Jose Youth Symphony to hold general auditions for 2021-22 Season

The San Jose Youth Symphony (SJYS) will be holding its annual general auditions for the 2021-2022 Season during the first two weeks of April.

The auditions will be held on two consecutive Thursday, Friday afternoons and all day on two Saturdays (April 8, 9, 10, 15, 16 & 17, 2021).

All student musicians are welcome, ages 8 and up, who play orchestral instruments (woodwinds, brass, percussion & strings) or who are interested in performing jazz.

Students who participate in their high school marching bands are also welcome to audition. To submit an audition application, visit: www.sjys.org to join one of SJYS's 12 orchestras and instrumental ensembles.

The deadline for applications is March 31, 2021.

About the San Jose Youth Symphony

The San Jose Youth Symphony is one of the oldest and finest youth orchestras on the West Coast of the US. Founded 69 years ago as part of the former San Jose Symphony, SJYS has a rich tradition of musical perform-

ance and education.

SJYS member musicians, of ages 8 to 20, are selected from more than 650 applicants through our annual spring General Auditions. SJYS comprises 12 distinct performing ensembles: two full orchestras; a chamber orchestra; two flute choirs; concert winds, saxophone, percussion, jazz and harp ensembles; and two string ensembles. Each group rehearses weekly from September to May or early June and performs a scheduled series of concerts each season. In addition, member musicians participate in a weeklong summer camp and receive special coaching and participate in masterclasses from professional and renowned musicians in the Bay Area.

The premier group of SJYS is its Philharmonic Orchestra, led by SJYS Music Director and Conductor, Yair Samet. The orchestra performs its season subscription concerts at the historic and beautiful, California Theatre, in downtown San Jose, as well as in its annual Season of Hope Concerts in December at Cathedral Basilica of St. Joseph, now an over-25-year-long tradition. The orchestra also travels biannually on its International Concert Tours, and have performed in renowned concert halls in Japan, Italy, Austria, Germany, Spain, Hungary, Croatia, Czech Republic, Ireland, and most recently, in Argentina and Uruguay, in the summer of 2019.




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Times Feature

GEMS IN STEM

Tessellations and 'Harry's Tiles', pt. 2

By Apoorva Panidapu

Special to the Times

Hi everyone! As a recap: this column, Gems in STEM, is a place to learn about various STEM topics that I find exciting, and that I hope will excite you too. This column will always be written to be fairly accessible, so you don't have to worry about not having background knowledge. However, it does occasionally get more advanced towards the end.

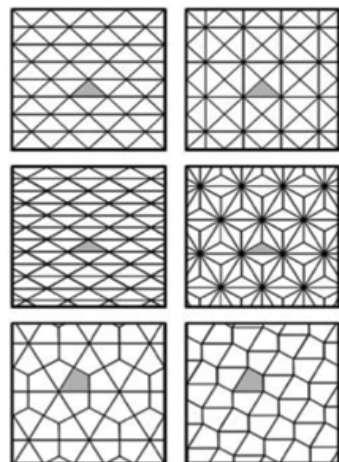


Tessellations and 'Harry's Tiles', pt. 2

Another type is monohedral tessellations. Here, we can notice that "mono" means one and "hedral" means shape, and we would be correct in thinking that these tessellations are made up of only

shape! However, these shapes don't have to be regular, and can be rotated or flipped to fit into the tessellation—but their size can't change. In fact, every triangle and quadrilateral can be tessellated in at least one way! (Try drawing a triangle and quadrilateral, and see if you can figure out how to tile it.)

Here are some examples!



So, if we're no longer talking about regular polygons (meaning shapes), can shapes other than triangles, quadrilaterals, and hexa-



Gems in STEM

By Apoorva Panidapu

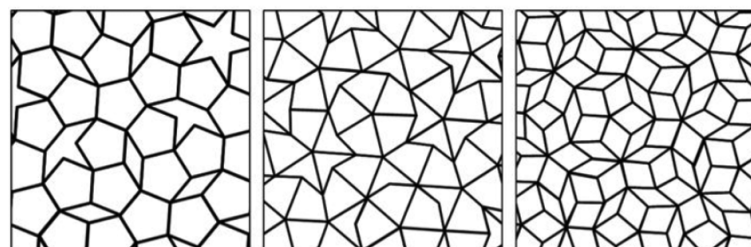
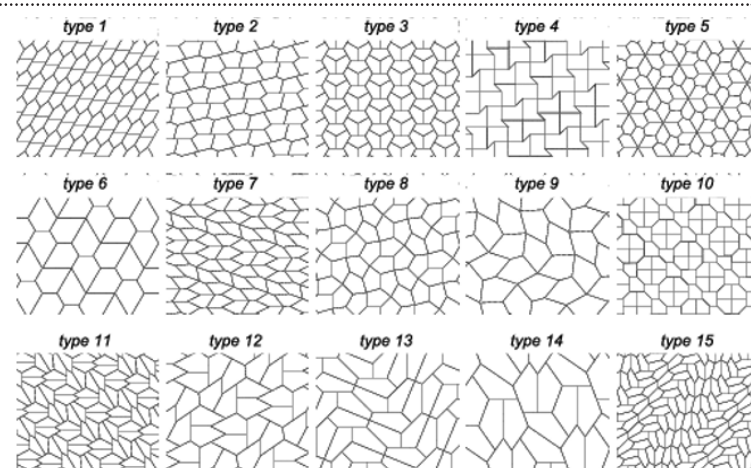
gons tessellate? Wow, what a good question, yes!

In fact, pentagons can tessellate! There are currently 15 known classes of pentagons that can tessellate, and, as expected, these are called pentagonal tessellations. If you're interested, all fifteen of them can be generated here: <https://demonstrations.wolfram.com/PentagonTilings/>

They are also shown above right.

Okay, cool! So heptagons (7-sided shapes), octagons (8-sided), nonagons (9-sided), decagons (10-sided), etc. can tessellate too, right? Sorry to break the bad news to you bud, but shapes with more than six sides don't tessellate unless one of their angles is greater than 180 degrees, i.e. if they are a concave polygon.

Finally, let's talk about aperiodic tessellations! Most tessellations are grounded in their repetition, but it's not a requirement! What? Aren't tessellations made from repeated shapes?! Well yes, but the arrangement of these shapes here is entirely unique, so these pat-



terns are called aperiodic (as they aren't periodic). A famous example is the Penrose Tiling, named after English mathematical physicist Sir Roger Penrose. These tilings display five-fold symmetry, which is something that doesn't appear in any of the (periodic) tessellations we've seen so far! (above, bottom).

Tessellations in Islamic Art and Architecture

In fact, aperiodic tessellations have rich, vibrant history. They can be found extensively in medieval Islamic architecture, and were used in Islamic art and buildings at least half a millennium before they emerged in the West. For example, you can see this five-fold symmetrical aperiodic tessellation on the exterior of an 1197 tomb tower in Maragha, Iran, the Gunbad-i Qabud (right).

Now, I looked around this building, but unfortunately still couldn't find a Sign of the (Harry's) Tiles. But, let's just stop our crying and keep going!

In fact, this concept of tessellations, i.e. beautiful geometric objects, were perfect for Islamic art as Islam forbids representing living figures in art. Hence, Islamic artists fully explored and developed the abstract beauty of tessellations over centuries of incredible artwork.

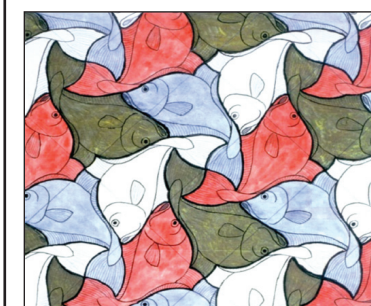
Islamic architecture's embrace of tessellations inspired the works of an artist that this article would be incomplete without: Maurits Cornelis Escher, known as M.C. Escher, a 20th century Dutch graphic artist.

M.C. Escher

As the story goes, M.C. Escher visited the Alhambra, a fortress-

turned-palace constructed by the Muslim Moors in the 14th century—an extraordinary display of tessellations. As an aspiring artist, Escher copied these patterns into his notebooks and later excitedly shared his sketches with his brother. His brother then showed him a 1924 paper by Hungarian Mathematician George Pólya. This paper claimed that there were 17 ways a pattern can be used to tile a flat surface, called wallpaper groups. This was a classification based on those symmetries we talked about earlier!

He studied these and between 1936 and 1942, he created 43 colored drawings by employing these patterns. However, it was not geometric shapes that he played with—he explored the humanity of tessellations. Geometric shapes are only recognizable by classification, but M.C. Escher's goal was unique recognizability, so he created tessellations of people, animals, plants, and everyday objects—things people could empathize with. His works are based in the innate geometry of tessellations, but he furthered these shapes into the art he is so well-known for.



To see more of his works, visit <https://mcescher.com/gallery/>!

He created this unique art by modifying monohedral tessellations, and inspired a whole line of artists that followed him. Though he had no formal training in math, his art is rooted in the concepts of

See GEMS, next page

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Times Feature

Theatreworks Silicon Valley and Opera San José offer world premiere Hershey Felder, Puccini

Livestream 5pm, Sunday, March 14 (Plus streaming on-demand through March 21)

Two leading Bay Area arts organizations, TheatreWorks Silicon Valley and Opera San José, will offer viewers the World Premiere livestream of Hershey Felder, PUCCHINI, a new work by and starring virtuoso pianist/performer Hershey Felder, with opera guest stars baritone Nathan Gunn, soprano Gianna Corbisiero, and tenor Charles Castronovo.

Presented by Hershey Felder Presents Live from Florence, Hershey Felder, PUCCHINI tells the story of a young musician captivated by the world of opera, particularly by Giacomo Puccini's immortal works La bohème, Tosca, and Madama Butterfly. When, through a series of unusual circumstances, the young musician meets the musical master himself, secrets are revealed that open a whole new world for the young man. Filmed and performed on location in Lucca, Italy, in the very home where Giacomo Puccini was born.

This sumptuously filmed world premiere gives home audiences a front row seat as Felder presents another masterwork, this time delving into Puccini's life and music. Felder is joined in this production by three internationally renowned opera stars: baritone Nathan Gunn, soprano Gianna Corbisiero, and tenor Charles Castronovo. Hershey Felder, PUCCHINI is directed by Felder & Stefano Decarli, with

associate direction by Trevor Hay. Production design is by Hershey Felder. Film production and live editing is by the DeCarli Live film company. Live broadcast and sound design production are by Erik Carstensen. Line producer is Annette Nixon. Meghan Maiya is the Director of Development. Costumes and Hair are by Camilla Saccardi.

Tickets

Hershey Felder, PUCCHINI will be streamed live 5pm PST, Sunday, March 14, 2021 (with streaming on-demand access

through March 21). To buy tickets (\$55 per household) or find more information, the public can visit TheatreWorks.org or Operasj.org. Ticket sales directly benefit the arts organization through which they are purchased. Patrons who purchase a ticket to the event will be emailed a link to stream the program at home on their computer, SmartTV or other device.

At right: Opera guest stars **Charles Castronovo**, **Gianna Corbisiero**, and **Nathan Gunn** join virtuoso performer Hershey Felder for the World Premiere livestream of "Hershey Felder, PUCCHINI" March 14, 2021. TheatreWorks and Opera San José are offering streaming access. Photo courtesy of Hershey Felder Presents.



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GEMS, continued

dimension, topology, and space, and some of his work may actually have predicted deep features of modern cosmology! With his art, he tells poignant and moving stories, as seen in "Liberation", where birds evolve from regular, restrictive triangles to flying free in the sky.

With his work, he adds a human and vibrant dimension to the mathematical concept of tessellations as he creates captivating visuals that enamor all audiences.

"We do not know space. We do not see it, we do not hear it, we do not feel it. We are standing in the middle of it, we ourselves are part of it, but we know nothing about it." - M.C. Escher

Now, whenever you spot a tessellation, you can appreciate it in its entirety and for its beauty. I hope you don't go peeking your head into beehives to do this, but if you do, don't say I didn't warn you! As for Harry's Tiles, after my fantastical expedition in the world of tessellations, I still didn't find any mention of him. Last I heard Harry's Tiles left in One Direction, walking on a Fine Line, so we may never find out where Harry and his tiles have gone. But, I think it was worth the journey because now we can appreciate all tiles.

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

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Times **OpEd**

Opinion: An unfortunate COVID-19 vaccine policy experience

An Evergreen resident posted this on NEXTDOOR.COM (2-10-21)

Just sharing my experience: My friend, who is living at my house since the whole COVID started, set up an appointment for today to get the vaccine (he is over 65). His house is in Contra Costa County but he does not live there since the epidemic started. His appointment

was at 500 Tully Rd. (Valley Health Center). We got there and the person asked for his driver license. She looked at it and saw that his address was not in Santa Clara County. I was there with him, just in case that was a problem, and told her that he lived in my house since March. I showed my id. She said she needed to ask the supervisor for approval. She comes back saying that she could not give the vaccine! Reason: policy! What?! I am very upset with the whole thing! If this is a real policy (not a supervisor that does not know how to deal with "exceptions"), the policy is wrong! Here are several reasons why it is wrong:

1. The person did not trust me. Solution: If

trust is a problem in our area, have a document where I can sign that I certify that the person lives at my house - problem solved!

2. The goal is to get everyone vaccinated that is willing to get vaccinated. If the person is from USA and is in the age group allowed, just give the vaccine! People can be living somewhere that is a temporary residency, for several reasons. If trust is a problem, ask the owner of the resident where the person is living to sign a paper. At the end, things will balance out: people that have a driver license from here would take a vaccine at xxx; people from xxx might take here, and so on. Keep an eye on the goal: have most people vaccinated.

3. If you are homeless, how can you prove where you live? If you are saying we do not have enough vaccines, then think twice: lots of people that are eligible to get vaccinated are choosing not to get vaccinated (e.g. almost 50% of the county's sheriff office do not want to get the vaccine). The policy should aim for the goal: get as many people vaccinated as possible! Anyway, if this is a real policy, it is wrong! If you were the supervisor at Valley Health Center around 4:45, you made a bad decision.

Editor's Note: Nextdoor is a social networking service for neighborhoods. The company was founded in 2008 and is based in San Francisco, California.

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Times **Community News**

A screenshot of the virtual Lunar New Year 2021 celebration shows a rendering of the Vietnamese-American Service Center.

Center*Continued from page 1*

systems to receive relief during the shutdown have left Vietnamese business owners feeling unsupported.

With five categories of programs, the center will provide health and human services, taking culture and language into account, officials say. It also will be a focal point where the community can gather and celebrate significant events, such as Lunar New Year next year.

"So exciting," a participant said during the Lunar New Year event. "Our elders could not wait to see this."

The county also gave an explanation on

the building's artistic choice.

"A large yellow letter V frames the view of the main lobby, representing the Viet people," said Thang Do, CEO of Aedis Architects who designed the building.

Visitors will follow an S shape, mimicking the Vietnam coastline, into the building. The building's windows will feature images of a bamboo edge, "that protects the Vietnamese villages in the old days," Do said.

Floors and walls will be donned with images and the color of rice paddy fields. An overhead installment in the main dining hall will resemble the shape of a conical hat — or "nón lá."

The team is also working on a rooftop installment, which will be an LED-light sculpture featuring three architectures repre-

senting different regions in Vietnam: Chùa Một Cột in Hanoi, Chùa Thiên Mụ in Hue, and Lăng Ông in Ho Chi Minh City. Connecting the three landmarks are images of Vietnamese women biking in traditional outfits.

"The image of a woman riding a bicycle

Visitors will follow an S shape, mimicking the Vietnam coastline, into the building.

represents the resilience of Vietnamese people," designer Kyungmi Shin said. "And, it also metaphorically represents the movement of the diaspora."

Many participating in the New Year celebration praised the thoughtful design.

"This beautiful building will be a landmark for the Vietnamese community," Tiffany Ho said. "Thank you Kyungmi for highlighting the huge role of women in our culture and (our) yearning for true peace and healing."

Contact Tran Nguyen at tran.nguyen@mail.missouri.edu or follow @nguyenntrann on Twitter.

Tien Nguyen of Evergreen graduates from Ohio University

Tien Nguyen of Evergreen Valley, graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing (Baccalaureate Nursing) from Ohio University's College of Health Sciences and Professions in Fall 2020.

Ohio University graduates represented many areas of the United States and an abundance of countries, including: China, India, Saudi Arabia, Peru and Canada.

About Ohio University

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Times **Feature**



Author **Senait Mesfin Piccigallo** and her book “Now What? 7 Skills to Integrate with Ease & Joy.”

Piccigallo

Continued from page 2
of your skin or because of the way you look or because of your gender? How can you stay confident with limited language skills while trying to communicate your needs?
How can you stay confident when you are talking to people who seem to know a lot about everything, and you feel like you have a lot to learn? Life happens to new immigrants as it happens to everyone, but it does not give us a break saying, ‘Oh, wait, you are busy building your life from scratch and integrating to your new home, so I am going to give you a break.’ No, while you are busy building your life, it continues to happen, divorce, birth of a child, death in your

family, COVID-19, riots, etc. Immigrants are constantly faced with challenges more than the average person and are constantly meeting circumstances that make them feel less confident.”
“My book addresses all these questions that we face as new immigrants and gives tools on how to build and keep our self-confidence despite the circumstances and achieve our American dreams,” Piccigallo said.
Author’s intensive research creates new approaches
The author has interviewed immigrants who have integrated to the U.S. culture successfully and those who struggled, for 13 years she has lived in the US.
The research approaches of: 1. in-depth interviews, 2. focus groups, 3. participant



Want to submit a news item for the Evergreen Times?

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Deadline: March 7, 2021

Write to editorial@timesmediainc.com

EvergreenTimes

Times **Feature**

Piccigallo's attends her graduation ceremony from Asmara University in Eritrea with her mom and university friends. in 2001.

observation, and 4. survey questions have been incorporated into the book.

"This is the book I needed when I moved to the US, and it's the book many of my clients, whom I have coached throughout the years, needed when they moved here – the same skills that would help anyone planning to move to a different country," states Piccigallo.

Americans can say 'Hello how are you' and walk away

In sharing a humorous situation that many newly arrived immigrants experience, Mesfin Piccigallo states, "One of my cultural shocks when I moved was how people say, 'Hello, how are you?,' and you are prepared to tell them how you are, but the other person has already moved on. For most people, 'how are you' is just a formality, and they don't really expect the person to tell them, 'How are you? I am fine, thank you,' is all they want to hear. I find it funny when people don't know how to handle it if you in fact start telling them how you are, which happened to me a lot when I first moved to America. Now that I am more culturally aware, when a person asks me how I am, I answer, 'Do you want the longer version or the shorter version?' Most of the time, people will feel puzzled and ask me, 'What do you mean by that?' and I share what 'How are you' means in my culture and what I understand it means in this culture which can be a wonderful conversation starter, leading to an understanding of cultural values.

Praise from others on the book

Professor Yonas B. Keleta, PhD states, "I wish I had this kind of resource before moving to the U.S. to make my cultural integration a lot smoother. I have never seen or read a book that is so well written and well thought out to make the life of an immigrant simpler! I highly recommend immigrants from all corners of the world to use it as a reference to make the process of their cultural integration a lot easier and joyful! The author walks you through many essential topics that the immigrant needs to know to make their life journey more suc-

cessful, to make your cultural integration process easier in a foreign society."

A gift for 'new arrivals'

The author has written a very important book to help those coming to America and also for those going to live in another country in our world. This would be a wonderful gift to hand to anyone we know who is a new arrival or those who have been in the US for some time but still struggle in achieving their dreams and feel stuck. In the future, Piccigallo is planning to translate the book into many languages.

The author states, "It's very natural when you first move to any new place to stick to what you know. To engage only with people who speak your language, who are from your own religious group, and people who you feel comfortable with. However, eventually, it's important for you to make an effort to step outside of your community and have friends from other cultures and learn to appreciate their uniqueness. Put aside your judgment and work on culturally integrating fully to this colorful and beautiful country that we call home while you are introducing your values and ways of belief. After all, we teach others best by being an example. Be confident and proud of being an Immigrant, and bring your beautiful beliefs, ideas, culture, and most of all, those delicious cuisines from your country of origin."

Editor's Note: To pre-order the book, visit bit.ly/3u5yFzO. For more information, visit anchoringthenewyou.com or follow Piccigallo on Facebook at bit.ly/2M1i6E0.



In 2005, Piccigallo is pictured teaching English as a second language in Dalian, China volunteering with the deaf.

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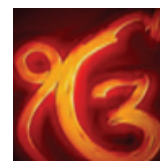
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The word Sikh (see-kh) means "disciple" or "student." A Sikh is a practitioner of the faith founded in the 15th century by Guru Nanak in Punjab of old British India. A Guru who is a "teacher" or "enlightener" completes the relationship of teaching and learning. Sikhism is monotheistic and stresses the equality of all men and women. Sikhs believe in three basic principles; meditating on the name of God (praying), earning a living by honest means and sharing the fruits of one's labor with others. Currently there are close to one million Sikhs living in the USA and Canada and 25 million Sikhs living around the world. Sikhism is the 5th largest religion in the world. At the Gurdwara (House of God) in San Jose we welcome all. We pray daily for peace and prosperity for everybody in the world. Come to visit and enjoy Langer (food) in our kitchen which is open 365 days of the year and serves complementary vegetarian meals. We also encourage you to enter our history room on site and

walk the beautiful grounds. Learn more about us and community events we sponsor by visiting our website; http://www.SanJoseGurdwara.org

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We invite you to join our community of faith located in the Evergreen area of San Jose. We are an inclusive diverse community striving to serve as Disciples of Jesus Christ in the footsteps of St. Francis, offering prayerful and joyful liturgies; evangelization, fellowship, and service opportunities to the community. We offer spiritual opportunities for all ages, including children's liturgy, dynamic E.C.H.O - Jr. High, IGNITE - High School and North Star - Young Adult Ministries, along with small faith communities and opportunities to help the poor and marginalized of San Jose. Our Preschool is the only Catholic Preschool offering quality family oriented service in the Evergreen and Silver Creek areas. Our Chapel, Gathering Hall, Parish Office, Mission Center, Parish Gift Shop, Memorial Garden and Preschool are all located at 5111 San Felipe Rd. Please come join us to worship at one of the following times and locations:
St. Francis of Assisi Chapel: Saturday 5:00PM, Sunday 8:30 AM, 10:30 AM, 12:30 PM, 4:00 PM (Mass in Vietnamese), 6:00 PM Youth Mass
St. Francis of Assisi Gathering Hall
Sunday 9:00 AM, Sunday 11:00AM, Igbo Mass - Second Sunday of the month 12:30 PM
Mt. Hamilton Grange - 2840 Aborn Road
Sunday 9:30 AM
The Villages Gated Community (Cribari Auditorium) Sunday 8:15 AM
For more information, please call or visit us at the Parish Mission Center open M-F 9:00 AM -12:00 PM; 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM. Come join us and share your presence with us so that together we may grow and share our gifts to help build God's Kingdom!



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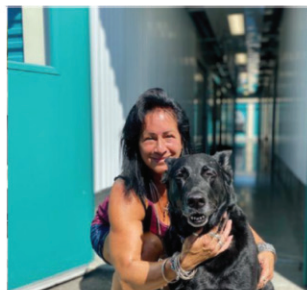
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