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Willow Glen Times

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SANTA CLARA COUNTY

County reaches least restrictive yellow tier thanks to high vaccination rates

By Mike Wasserman
County Supervisor

Santa Clara County is now in the least restrictive "Yellow Tier" under the State's guidelines!

The County's vaccination rates are among the highest in the nation, as more than 75% of County residents 16 and older have received at least one dose of the vaccine.

County Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody's new health Order retires most remaining local rules, including requirements that businesses maximize the number of staff who are teleworking. The County is also supporting the State's decision to wait until June 15 to align with the most recent CDC masking and social distancing guidelines.

Vaccines for youths 12 to 15

COVID-19 vaccination eligibility has been expanded to youth ages 12 to 15.

Appointments can now be scheduled through the County's website below, which also includes information about numerous drop-in vaccination sites throughout the County.

This expansion of eligibility follows the CDC Director's adoption of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices' recommendation endorsing its safety. Youth between 12 to 17-years-old need to provide a signed consent form from a parent or legal guardian.

For County-operated sites, the consent form is available online. The County will continue its expansive efforts to ensure equitable access to the vaccine for those communities hardest hit by COVID-19. We also are partnering with schools and other community organizations to provide drop-in vaccination clinics in communities that have experienced disproportionately high rates of COVID-19 cases, and the County's robust outreach efforts will continue with this expansion of eligibility.

There are thousands of appointments available throughout the County at dozens of locations. For the latest information about COVID-19 vaccinations in Santa Clara County, visit: sccFreeVax.org

Budget update

As we move forward on the path to normalcy, the Board of Supervisors will be holding budget hearings the week of June 14th.

The Recommended \$9 Billion Budget for FY 2021-22 prepares the County to operate more effectively in a post-COVID world and balances new initiatives with caution for potential pitfalls. Last year's budget included cost reductions that addressed the County's structural deficit, but risks and concerns still exist.

The pandemic's long-term impact on County operations is not clear, which is why I am advocating for a cautious and prudent approach as we move forward. Some of the variables creating uncertainty are the timing, allowable uses and dollar amounts for the American Rescue Plan disbursements, which are currently unknown. Additionally, excess ERAF funds (Educational Revenue Augmentation Funds) are still at risk with possible State legislative changes that could significantly impact the County.

The County budget reflects the vast and vital services provided daily to our 2 million residents from children's health care to meals for seniors, libraries, parks, homeless services, housing, hospitals and clinics, jails and criminal justice. Additionally, in an effort to help small businesses on their path to recovery, the current proposed budget also includes a \$19 million small business loan program.

The County's budgeting process is public and can be viewed online the week of June 14th.



Jaylen Ivey with his partner Amaya Rogers are shown competing at the 2021 Acrobatic Gymnastics World Team Trials in Pendleton, Indiana, held April 22-26. Photo by Alison Wang

Jaylen Ivey to participate at World Acrobatic Gymnastic Games in Switzerland

Commends California Connections Academy Monterey Bay for helping him with flexible learning schedules

USA Gymnastics announced that Jaylen Ivey of San Jose, and his partner Amaya Rogers, have been selected for the U.S. team that will participate in the World Acrobatic Gymnastics Championships at the Vernets Sports Center in Geneva, Switzerland June 22-July 4.

While the pandemic impacted his travel schedule in 2020, Jaylen's education went undisrupted as a competitive acrobatic gymnast enrolled at California Connections Academy Monterey Bay—a tuition-free online public school serving students in K-12 across Monterey, San Benito, San Mateo, Santa Clara, and Santa Cruz counties.

With flexible scheduling and the opportunity to work at his own pace, Jaylen was able to train for the World Team Trials this past April—landing 1st place in Jaylen's category, 12-19 Mixed Pair, and securing his spot on the World Team—while making it on the high honor roll for the first time since elementary school.

The team of Jaylen and Amaya qualifying for the World Games was announced following the conclusion of the U.S. Acrobatic World Team Trials. They both participated in the five-day trials held at the Community Sports and Wellness in Pendleton, Indiana April 22-26.

More than 200 gymnasts representing 24 nations will compete for five World titles up for grabs at the World

Games in Switzerland's second largest city. Initially planned for the spring of 2020, the championships were delayed for a year due to the pandemic.

"If it were not for the incredible flexibility that California Connections Academy Monterey Bay offers, I do not think that I would have been able to keep up with my school work and juggle my rigorous training and competition schedule," Jaylen said. "Thanks to the flexible schedule I have with the full-time virtual school, I'm able to train and compete at the 27th Acrobatic gymnastics World Championships in Geneva, Switzerland!"

Acrobatic Gymnastics competition at the World Championships includes five categories - Men's Pair, Women's Pair, Mixed Pair, Women's Trio, and Men's Group - as well as a team competition, meaning a total of 18 medal sets will be awarded in Geneva.

Hosting a World Championships in Acrobatic Gymnastics is a first for Switzerland, a nation where gymnastics is so deeply rooted that school children practice flying rings as part of their physical education classes.

The Swiss have embraced Acro, hosting a World Cup event in previous years, and in Geneva a Mixed Pair, one of 20 vying for the podium, will mark the country's first participation at an Acrobatic Gymnastics World Championships.

"I am extremely grateful for my generous teachers at California Connections Academy Monterey Bay, who have been incredibly understanding and helpful as I continue my education while pursuing my dreams in Acrobatic gymnastics."

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Times Community News

IN MEMORY

Nicholas J. Hilje

Jan. 11, 1923 - May 16, 2021

Willow Glen Resident

Nicholas J. Hilje died May 16th at the age of 98 and is survived by his childhood sweetheart Margaret his wife of 77 years.

Hilje served in WWII being one of the first troops to liberate Dachau. He grew up on the family's apricot orchard where his family had a dry yard.

Jilje is survived by Margaret, his two daughters Diane Paradiso and Marlene Hilje. Nick is also survived by two grandchildren Larry and Lia Paradiso as well as two great grandchildren Gauge and Griffin Paradiso Pinn. Margaret and Nick also raised two nephews Tony and Frank Gairnese. Frank predeceased Nick. He is survived by his sisters Helen Hult and Betty Postier. He is predeceased by sisters Cathrine, Mary, Gloria, Dolores and Geraldine as well as many nieces and nephews.

Nick worked many years in the construction industry and he was especially proud of the work he did for Rudolph and Sletten building the Stanford Children's Hospital and many others.

He was a fisherman, golfer, and he enjoyed



playing poker with his friends. He especially enjoyed spending time with his family.

A funeral was held at Chapel of the Flowers on June 2.

Poll: Majority of California's Asian Americans fear violence

Californians are acknowledging that Asian Americans experience discrimination, and an overwhelming majority of Asian Americans report that they fear becoming victims of hate-based violence, according to a new survey.

The California Community Poll, which surveys Californians about politics, race and current events, found that 70 percent of Californians agree that Asians are "frequently or sometimes" discriminated against.

The conclusion of the poll marks a "substantial shift" in perceptions and experiences of discrimination among the group, up from 55 percent last year.

"This increase in awareness — as horrible as the reason for the awareness is — it gives us the chance to talk about what solutions to this could be," said Nancy Yap, executive director of the Center for Asian Americans United for Self Empowerment, one of the poll's sponsoring organizations. "We're all afraid of this, we're all in this together, so how do we start to change what race relations look like in California?"

Recent incidents in the Bay Area, have shocked local Asian-American communities, resulting in San Jose and Oakland, community leaders forming patrols to protect Asian-American residents.

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CAREER COLUMN

Pandemic Purge: Employees looking to leave at record rates

By Angela Copeland
Special to the Times

When you look at it, the numbers are staggering. Workers are looking to change jobs during or after the pandemic at a very high rate. A number of surveys have been conducted on the topic, and somewhere between thirty-five and sixty-five percent of all employees plan to find a new job soon.

One of the top reasons cited is corporate culture. The pandemic has drawn out for over a year. Not all companies have handled the situation well. Some have forced employees into endless meetings, or have been unforgiving with personal matters. The experience has been especially isolating for young employees who may be home alone, without an option to socialize with coworkers or even to go out with friends.

Many organizations have



failed to recognize how tough working from home in this situation can be. Although, in fairness, those at the top are likely struggling with their own pandemic challenges. In the end, employees whose employers haven't handled COVID well have had enough. They're ready to move on.

In addition, many people have found added balance during this crazy time. They are reprioritizing what's important to them. They are no longer interested in the corporate rat race or working themselves to the bone. These employees are not only looking to switch companies, they're looking to switch careers completely. They want to do something different, and something that better suits their personal values and priorities.

Similarly, many workers have taken advantage of the work from home situation the pan-

demic has provided. They've left expensive cities and have moved closer to family. Many of those workers are not interested to return to the city or to the office anytime soon. They're now looking for permanently remote jobs.

This change will present interesting opportunities for employees. The more people who change jobs, the more jobs will be available. And, all of this

change may in fact give job seekers the upper hand. They may be considered for roles they were previously thought to be less than qualified for. And, employers will be forced to be more competitive with regards to benefits such as work from home.

Today, some candidates are interviewing all the way to the offer stage. Then, if the company is unwilling to allow them to work from home permanently, the candidate is walking away. This is something we never would have talked about two years ago, because the strategy would have had little chance of working. But, today, companies are being

forced to rethink work from home in order to remain competitive.

What are you doing to prepare? This is an unprecedented time. With that, there may also be unprecedented opportunities. If you've thought of looking for a new job, it's time to get your resume and LinkedIn profile in order. If you want to switch careers completely, take an inventory of your transferrable skills. Set up networking calls, and get yourself back out there.

Angela Copeland, a career expert and founder of Copeland Coaching, can be reached at copelandcoaching.com.



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OP ED

Do you really appreciate what you have?

By Bryan Golden

Life is filled with challenges. There are many external circumstances outside of your control. The weather, actions of others, the economy, and politics are just a few examples. However, your response to these circumstances is completely within your control. You chose your thoughts, emotions, and actions.

Two people can exhibit completely different reactions to the same situation. One person will successfully deal with the circumstances, while the other becomes enmeshed in negative emotions. Unfortunately, it is more common for people to focus on the negative instead of the positive.

How you view your life influences your mindset. A positive view creates a positive attitude, while a negative view leads to a negative attitude. People with a positive attitude are much better at coping with stress and challenges.

Although there are many factors contributing to how you react to situations beyond your control, one of the most significant components is whether or not you appreciate what you currently have in your life.

Those who truly appreciate all of their blessings feel as if they have more than enough. Conversely, people who constantly focus on what they believe is lacking continually feel they never have enough.

Taking all you have for granted is too easy because you get lost in negativity. Not appreciating what you have until it's gone is too common. Air, water, and food are ignored when plentiful. Yet, you surely appreciate any of them which are in short supply.

Think about how the quality of your life would suffer with the loss of any component you may be taking for granted. This approach also helps you keep things in perspective.

Throughout the world, there are too many people struggling to acquire all of the things you may be taking for granted.

No positive aspect of your life is too small to appreciate. Each and every day must be cherished. Begin each day by reviewing a list of everything you are thankful for. Start by appreciating that you woke up. Appreciate what you see and hear. Appreciate the food you eat. Appreciate where you live. Appreciate family and friends. Look in awe at the seemingly endless miracles in nature.

Life is not a contest. Don't compare yourself to others. Someone who seems to have more does not diminish what you have. Also, there are numerous examples of people living very spartan lifestyles who are happy and content.

Appreciate your ability to control your thoughts, emotions, and actions. You are not a victim. You decide how to respond to circumstances. You can find solutions for problems, or you can find problems in every situation.

Decide beforehand to have a positive response to whatever circumstances you encounter. A response is preplanned and thought out. A reaction, on the other hand, is spontaneous and emotional.

A positive response should always be appreciated because it enables you to find the best course of action, while keeping you calm. A positive mindset leads to greater happiness and reduced stress. Your positive attitude generates positive emotions.

Appreciate humor and its wonderfully beneficial effects. Humor boosts your immune system, relieves pain, produces endorphins, reduces stress, and stimulates many internal organs. Humor clears your mind and helps you feel better.

Look for the humor which exists in most situations. There is usually some funny perspective in the circumstances you encounter. Humor is a great coping mechanism, not insensitivity. The more you laugh, the more you'll appreciate the good in your life.

Develop and cultivate an attitude of gratitude for appreciating all of the good in your life. There is no positive aspect of your life too small to appreciate. You'll be happier and healthier while increasing your enjoyment of life.

Bryan is the author of "Dare to Live Without Limits." Contact Bryan at Bryan@columnist.com or visit www.DareToLiveWithoutLimits.com Copyright 2021 Bryan Golden

Valley Currents

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



Our Landscape Rebate Program can help you transform your thirsty yard into a beautiful drought-ready landscape.

Is your yard drought ready? Valley Water rebates can help make the change!

By Barbara Keegan

Valley Water Director, District 2

As you likely noticed, the past winter was very dry, leaving most of Santa Clara County in a drought. Conserving water today allows us to be in the best condition possible if we move into an extended period of drought. We can all do our part by reducing the amount of water we use.

Given that at least half of the water in a typical Santa Clara County home is used outdoors, making sure your yard is drought-ready is a great way to help the environment and save money on your water bill. If you enjoy hav-

ing a garden, I invite you to consider including beautiful drought-resistant California native plants in your landscape and using water-wise irrigation systems.

Our Landscape Rebate Program can help you transform your thirsty yard into a beautiful drought-ready landscape and make your irrigation equipment more efficient. So far, nearly 10,000 residents and businesses have already participated in the program.

Homeowners can get \$3,000 and businesses \$60,000 to convert

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for a maximum of \$3,000 for homes and \$60,000 for businesses and institutions. Visit www.watersavings.org to get started and apply for your rebate.

As we ask you to get ready for the potential of an extended drought, we are also getting ready. Valley Water is preparing for climate change and the threat of more frequent and severe droughts by investing in technology and infrastructure now. We are in the process of rebuilding the dam that holds back our largest reservoir, Anderson, to that it can safely withstand an earthquake. We are exploring expanding our water reuse efforts through recycled and purified water technology that can provide millions of gallons of water per day of high-quality, drought-resilient water for drinking and non-drinking purposes.

Every drop saved today is water that's available for the future. So, please consider reducing your water usage by replacing a water-thirsty lawn with a beautiful landscape. Your yard will look gorgeous, and you will know that you are saving water and money and helping us all be ready for this and future droughts.



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Evictions in Santa Clara County continue during state eviction moratorium

By Sacred Heart Housing Action Committee
Special to the Times

For many Santa Clara County residents, the pain of the housing crisis is deeply felt due to Covid-19 pandemic.

The loss of stable income only accelerated the unfolding of a crisis and although the State acted to put in place an eviction moratorium, evictions in Santa Clara County continued to take place. Sheriff Laurie Smith and her Sheriff Department are largely responsible for the continued devastation that home evictions cause to families across the county.

Should evictions have been paused in Santa Clara County during the pandemic

Why did this occur during a global pandemic that forced people to shelter in place, where a high number of evictions are happening in our county? Other counties like Alameda, San Francisco, Marin, Napa, San Mateo, Solano, and Sonoma had less than sixty-five evictions take place in the same time period. While the neighboring county Sheriffs stopped conducting lockouts, Sheriff Laurie Smith decided to continue to enforce evictions. Many of the sheriffs in other counties made the decision to stop enforcing evictions while there was a shelter in place order. In total 27 out of 58 California county sheriff's departments had stopped enforcing lockouts. The Press Democrat, San Mateo The Daily Journal and the Marin Independent Journal reported that in their respective counties the Sheriff was public about pausing evictions. Considering that Santa Clara County's Sheriff did not take the same precautions, it resulted in Santa Clara County being #1 in eviction rates. From March 19th to Dec 31st 2020, 145 evictions were documented in Santa Clara County.

Should a collaborative model been put in place regarding evictions in Santa Clara County

Aside from pausing lockouts, a majority of the other county courthouses across the state adopted a collaborative model in which landlords were forced to talk to their tenants and negotiate before initiating an eviction. The Santa Clara Superior Court refused to adopt that model when it had the chance. This could have potentially helped influence the way the Sheriff participates in enforcing evic-

tions but due to negligence this was not even considered important by the department.

Do evictions during a pandemic cause safety and health issues for families

Early this Spring, the Sacred Heart Housing Action Committee and the Survivors of the Street Committee asked Sheriff Smith for a meeting in order to demand the end of lockouts and eviction enforcement. Continuing an established pattern of lack of accountability, Sheriff Smith did not follow up with our request for a meeting nor responded to our demands to end lock outs during the pandemic. As a moment when Sheriff Smith is facing public scrutiny for allegations of corruption, abusive practices in

jails, and pay-to-play schemes, we understand that her deliberate decision to continue to enforce evictions further proves her inability to do right by this community. The people are done waiting for Laurie Smith to change for better, we are now demanding she follow the lead of other Bay Area counties and to be held accountable for her negligence that put the safety and health of our families and communities endangered by the traumatic threat of lockouts and evictions.

Get connected with Sacred Heart Housing Action Committee by contacting: estefaniab@sacredheartcs.org or by calling (408)775-5760.



The Sacred Heart Housing Action Committee (SHHAC) and the Survivors of the Streets Committee (SOS) are community-led organizing efforts seeking housing justice for all. Photo credit: Beth LaBerge/KQED



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Times **Feature**

VTA Board of Directors selects Carolyn Gonot as new CEO

By William Bellou
Publisher

Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority has a new leader at its helm, Carolyn Gonot.

The transit agency's board's unanimous selection of VTA veter-

an Gonot to become its new CEO and general manager last Friday comes after several months of deliberation. She previously worked for the transit company for more than 20 years.

Gonot said she's aware of the many challenges VTA faces and

wants to make sure VTA's ridership comes back. She served as interim chief officer, helping the organization make improvements following the passage of the county's 2016 Measure B half-cent sales tax which provides a 30-year revenue source of more than \$6 billion.

"COVID knocked many of the transit agencies down, but it did



not knock us out," she said. "I look forward to renewing our commitment and building back even better as we come out of the restrictions we've been living under for the past 14 months."

Gonot served as Utah Transit Authority's first female executive director in 2019, managing a district covering six counties with an operating budget of \$336 million and a capital

budget of \$255 million.

VTA faces a sea of change and a tough recruitment process following Fernandez's departure. Gonot is replacing VTA General Counsel Evelyn Tran, who was tapped in January to serve as interim general manager and CEO. Also, in January, Nuria Fernandez was chosen to serve in the Biden administration as acting administrator of the Federal Transit Administration.

Willow Glen Times Real Estate

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Times **Feature**

Loss of in-classroom instruction impacting current generation of students

Parents can help kids make up for lost classroom time over the summer

While the number of lost classroom hours due to the pandemic varies by school district, no one can deny the large impact the loss of in-classroom instruction will have on this generation of students.

Consider this: About 84% of U.S. parents are worried that COVID-19 has negatively impacted their child's learning, according to a recent Brainly survey of 1,600 moms and dads.

Patrick Quinn, 'Parenting Expert' at Brainly, the world's online learning platform, is well aware of the risks over a year without in-classroom instruction can have on students and has some sage tips for parents.

Quinn, a father himself, says his first tip for parents is to stay in close contact with their child's teacher and make sure they know the key concepts their child should be able to master at their grade level. Quinn says after that, it's important for parents to follow their instincts, saying, "You know if your child has fallen significantly behind, and you know if they're in need of extra help to catch up on certain subjects."

So, how can parents help their kids make up for lost classroom time over the summer?

Here are 7 helpful tips:

1. Form a neighborhood or friends book club. This can be done in a couple of different ways, depending on the age of your kid and pandemic restrictions. Kids of similar ages can choose one book each week for everyone to read. Then they can meet to talk about the book they read. They can discuss the plot and characters, what they liked about it, didn't like, and their takeaways from it. Another type of book club, especially for younger kids, will require more parent involvement. Create a logging system so each child can keep a record of the books they've read. At the end of the summer, hold a pizza party for all the participants. Create homemade certificates and give out inexpensive prizes to all the participants. Then honor the winner with the most books read with a special award.

2. Incorporate learning into your travel. Before you go on your family vacation, do some research in advance. Look for science centers, history museums, and historical sites to build into your trip. Have your kids join you in mapping out the trip. This will help keep geography fresh in their minds while they are also learning map skills.

3. Hands-on project-based learning activities. With all the screen time kids are getting from online learning (not to mention their non-educational screen time), sometimes the best thing you can do to get kids flexing their brain muscles is to have them physically design and create something with their own two hands like a 3D puzzle, pop-up storybook, or time capsule, to name a few examples. Another idea is to turn a game into an art activity by having your kids create their own board game to play.

4. Summer journaling. Give your kid a journal. It can be fancy or just a spiral notebook. If your child hasn't kept a journal before, suggest they spend 20 minutes writing in it every night about their day's adventures and activities. Let your kid know it is their private journal and promise not to read it unless they choose to share it with you. This might encourage your child to invest more time and thought into their journaling.

5. Enroll them in an e-learning course and/or encourage daily educational screen time. Think of it as a virtual summer camp. But before you blindly sign up for some online programs, look for some specialized programs designed to keep children learning with engaging activities and personalized instruction. There are also many free online resources and services, like Brainly, where children can ask questions, learn new things, and keep stimulated to prevent the COVID slump. Your kids may not love the idea at first, but they'll thank you for pushing them to take advantage of the slower months to boost problem areas when Fall season rolls around and it's back-to-school time.

6. Take up a new educational hobby. Now is the perfect opportunity for students to take up a new hobby. Learning a musical instrument, taking a coding class, or joining an online trivia league can help students of any age stay sharp throughout the summer and beyond.

7. Move the learning outdoors. It may seem basic, but a little sunshine and fresh air are excellent for everyone's mental health and can help bored students reinvigorate their learning by helping them escape the monotony of their home learning space. Physical activity can also help memory recall and increase mental dexterity. Try passing around a soccer ball in the backyard while learning the state capitals, or playing hopscotch while reciting new

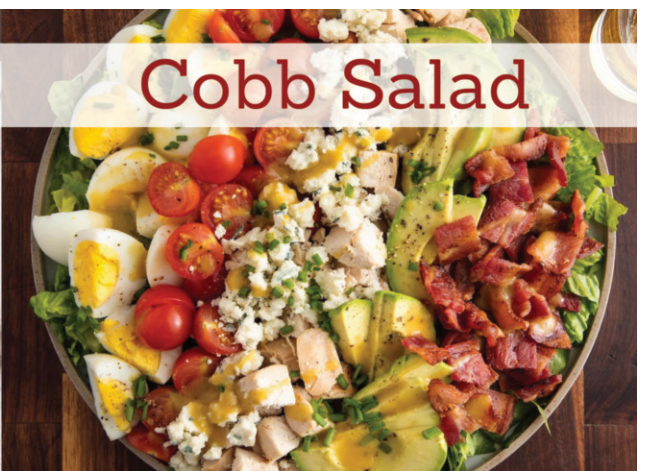
vocab terms.

Regardless of what you choose, staying mentally active throughout summer can give your child a much-needed leg up come this Fall season.

"Now more than ever, many parents like me are realizing it's imperative for us to make sure our kids don't fall behind or slip between the cracks of the education system. We're all still trying to understand the full effect of the pandemic on students' long term educational outcomes, but one thing is clear: as we return to the 'new normal,' we're going to have to get creative to make up for lost time and do everything possible to empower students to learn so we don't end up with a lost generation on our hands," says Quinn.



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Times **OpEd**

The courts have decided the law applied to all land use development projects, both public and private. As a result, projects ranging from low-income housing developments to hotel construction projects are required to conduct costly and time-consuming EIR studies.

Can we fix CEQA?

By Johnny Khamis

Special to the Times

If Bay Area Housing stakeholders are to ever address factors that have led to construction delays and to the rise in costs for constructing desperately needed housing, we must delve deeper into how a well-intentioned law has inadvertently led to difficulty in producing sufficient housing.

The California Environmental Quality Act, better known as CEQA, was adopted under Governor Ronald Reagan in 1970. The law was meant to mitigate the environmental impacts of public projects.

CEQA requires state and local agencies to deliver an Environmental Impact Report, or an EIR, to document all possible harms of a proposed land use project. It also requires decision-makers to seek out alternatives to reduce adverse impacts and to conduct public hearings for formal comment. Over time, the courts decided this law applied to all land use development projects, both public and private. As a result, projects ranging from low-income housing developments to hotel construction projects are required to conduct costly and time-consuming EIR studies. Even inner city infill development projects are subject to this expensive and lengthy process that can result in EIR studies that are thousands of pages in length and can take six months to over a year to complete.

In my years as a council member, I have seen CEQA abused to prevent development projects from proceeding. Examples include a disgruntled neighbor who did not want a proposed development next door to “block their view”, a convenience store owner who filed a lawsuit against the expansion of a competing gas station, a union that used CEQA to extract valuable contracts, and cities that sued to halt housing and hotel construction near their borders. It is these types of abuses and frivolous lawsuits that hold up projects until the courts decide the validity of the studies. These delays are all factors leading to high-



er construction costs in the form of labor contracts and materials, unnecessary legal fees as appeals take up to two years or more to resolve, and interest and loan fees accumulating as projects are placed on hold.

A 2015 Holland & Knight study on CEQA abuses concluded that, “The largest single target of CEQA lawsuits... are residential projects,” and these projects, “overwhelmingly [involve] non-polluting land uses.” The study found that of all CEQA lawsuits filed between 2013 and 2015, over 14,000 were challenges to housing construction. If we really want to start addressing the causes of our housing crisis we must work on CEQA reforms. Some fixes that have been discussed but have yet to be implemented include:

1. Requiring all entities that file CEQA lawsuits to fully disclose their identities and their environmental interests. Currently, claims can be filed anonymously.
2. Disallowing procedural gamesmanship that pushes CEQA proceedings past a year and beyond.
3. Ordering the losing party to pay court costs on CEQA lawsuits.
4. Making infill land development in urban non-riparian areas exempt from challenges.

In recent years, CEQA exemptions and streamlining legislation have passed, highlighting the need for larger comprehensive reform. Just last week, Governor Newsom signed Senate Bill 7 into law at the site of Google’s proposed Downtown West project in San Jose. SB 7 will allow dense affordable housing projects to move through the CEQA process at an exponentially faster rate. Although this bill received overwhelming bipartisan support, overarching reform to streamline the arduous CEQA process rarely gains much support.

It is often said that the road to hell is paved with good intentions. California is losing businesses and housing costs are out of control. We cannot afford to ignore CEQA reforms any longer. Let’s take this well-intentioned law and make it work for California.

Times Feature



Morgan Hill Mayor **Rich Constantine** with his wife **Andrea** and daughter **Emma**.
Photo courtesy of Rich Constantine's Twitter page

Morgan Hill Mayor Rich Constantine running for County Supervisor

By Lorraine Gabbert

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

Morgan Hill Mayor Rich Constantine has joined the contest for Santa Clara County Supervisor Mike Wasserman's seat.

Constantine joins former councilmember Johnny Khamis, County Board of Education President Claudia Rossi and Los Gatos Vice Mayor Rob Rennie in vying for the District 1 seat on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors.

Wasserman's term will end in 2022 after serving the typically Republican district for 12 years. The largest of the five districts, District 1 includes South County, Los Gatos, Monte Sereno, parts of southern San Jose and unincorporated areas.

Constantine said he felt it was important that somebody from South County ran for the Board of Supervisors to ensure it was represented. "Gilroy, Morgan Hill and San Martin tend to be forgotten sometimes," he said.

Constantine said another motivation for throwing his hat in the ring was his frustration with a lack of resources from the state for building affordable homes. "Morgan Hill per capita has more below market rate housing than any city in Northern California," he said. "That's pretty bad that we're leading the way per capita."

In addition to focusing on economic recovery from COVID, Constantine said the county needs to partner with its cities on issues. "There are people who get missed in the system," he said. "That's where the county comes in. We can't fix problems like the homeless issue by ourselves. It has to be something we do as a team."

Morgan Hill Councilmember Rene Spring said he's rooting for a candidate who doesn't live in San Jose. "The areas of Gilroy, San

Martin, Morgan Hill and Los Gatos are so vastly different than the needs of the city of San Jose," Spring said. "They already have four supervisors. I don't think they need that last seat as well."

Spring said he has a good relationship with Constantine on the council and likes his stance on protecting agricultural land and open space, as well as his support for the LGBTQ community. He said he respects Constantine and that he would be "a wonderful supervisor."

Former Congressman Mike Honda said Constantine protected open space in South County, combatted traffic congestion, strengthened the workforce and ensured families had access to healthcare. "District 1 residents deserve a representative like Rich who knows the unique issues and strengths of the district," Honda said, "and who can get to work on day one."

Constantine has served on the Morgan Hill City Council since 2010 and as mayor since 2018. In addition, he was a firefighter with the San Jose Fire Department and volunteered with the search and rescue unit of the United States Air Force Civil Air Patrol.

Morgan Hill Unified School District Board of Education President Wendy Sullivan said she supports Constantine for supervisor. "Our children and families need a champion on the board who understands that access to childcare, health services and critical social service programs are needed throughout the county and that champion is Rich," Sullivan said.

Constantine has served on the Santa Clara Valley Water Commission, Santa Clara Habitat Conservation Agency and the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority. He is the committee chair of the Governance, Transparency & Labor Relation policy committee for the League of California Cities.



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South Bay parents hesitant about COVID-19 vaccine for kids

By Lorraine Gabbert

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

Most parents in a new survey said no to immediately getting their kids vaccinated against COVID-19.

The survey by Invisibly found 74% of parents will either wait or not vaccinate their kids against the coronavirus. Only 26% of parents said they will have their children inoculated right away, 41% will wait a few months and 33% will not have their kids vaccinated.

Invisibly conducts real-time polling to harness data. The firm surveyed 1,258 parents nationally from March 25 to 29, asking them if and when they'd get their kids vaccinated. It also asked the ages of the children and parents.

Invisibly Realtime Research surveys appear on web pages in place of ads. They are optional, ensuring voluntary participation.

Laura Vestal, vice president of marketing at Invisibly, said the vaccine is a hot topic, especially when it comes to children.

"Parents are extremely cautious when it comes to their kids," Vestal said.

The survey results come as the FDA this week approved emergency use authorization of the Pfizer vaccine for children ages 12 to 15. The approval is just in time for students to be vaccinated before starting in-person learning in the fall.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) states that Pfizer's vaccine is "safe and 100% effective" for this age group.

Pfizer will seek FDA vaccine approval for children ages 2-11 in September, and for ages six months to 2 years later this year, AAP states. Moderna is also doing clinical testing with children ages 6 months through 17 years.

AAP has pushed for pediatric vaccines as more than 3.85 million children nationally have tested positive for COVID

as of May 6. More than 14,849 children have been hospitalized and at least 297 children have died from the virus. Children represent 14% of the country's COVID cases with 5,121.5 cases per 100,000 children, AAP states.

President Joe Biden said he is challenging states to vaccinate as many adolescents as possible by July 4. In addition to regular vaccination sites, vaccines for children will be available through pediatricians and family physicians.

But parents remain concerned about the newness of COVID vaccines as well as possible side effects, Vestal said. Although she couldn't wait to get the vaccine for herself, Vestal said she is hesitant about having her 3- and 7-year-olds receive it. "It's also what's happening in the news," she said. "With the pausing of the Johnson & Johnson vaccine, the first thing that came to my mind was...if my kids had it, I would've been nervous."

Invisibly's survey found the age of kids played a big role in parents' willingness to have them vaccinated, with parents being more concerned about side effects on younger children. About 9% of parents are willing to have children from newborns up to age 5 vaccinated, Vestal said, while 24% of parents are willing to have children ages 14-17 receive the shot.

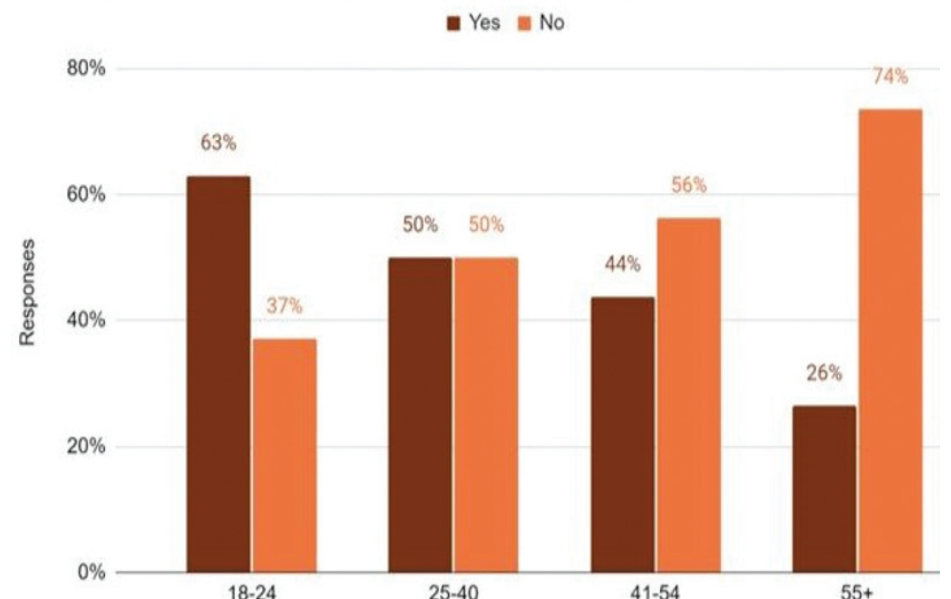
The age of parents also played a big role. The younger the parents, the survey showed, the more willing they were to vaccinate their kids. Sixty-three percent of parents ages 18-24 were in favor of it, while 74% of parents over 55 said they didn't want to have their kids vaccinated, Vestal said.

The national survey appears to mirror the views of many South Bay residents.

San Jose residents said on Nextdoor that even if they were immunized themselves, they are not comfortable giving their children the COVID vaccine. Some,

See VACCINE, page 12

Do you plan on getting your child the Covid-19 vaccine? (select one only)



Invisibly's COVID vaccination survey found parents age 55+ were less likely to have their children get the vaccine. Image courtesy of Invisibly.

Times **Community News**

California State Board of Equalization adopts \$126.8 billion in assessed property values for fiscal year

Schools and local communities set to receive \$1.99 billion

The California State Board of Equalization (BOE) unanimously adopted \$126.8 billion in assessed property values of 341 companies within California last week.

The assessed property values include telephone, gas, and electric companies, independent power producers, regulated railroads, and intercounty pipelines. In the upcoming fiscal year, schools and local communities statewide will receive a total of approximately \$1.99 billion in property tax revenue resulting from the Board exercising one of its core constitutional functions.

"The BOE's critical role protects the tax dollars schools and local communities depend on every day," said BOE Chairman Antonio Vazquez. "On behalf of the entire Board, I commend BOE staff for their expertise and hard work as today's action translates to funding teachers, public safety officials, parks, and roads across California."

Whereas most property in California

is assessed by the 58 County Assessors, the BOE serves as the "59th assessor" by directly assessing certain public utilities, regulated railroads, and intercounty pipelines throughout the state. Also, since these properties are not subject to Proposition 13, the BOE annually determines the market value or the "unitary value" of property that includes improvements, personal property, and land. The BOE develops the fair market value by considering market conditions, use of and income generated by the property, replacement costs, investments in the property, regulatory climate, depreciation, and other factors as of the January 1 lien date.

For fiscal year 2021-22, there was a 6.7% increase in the total value from last year in the amount of \$7.9 billion which will generate approximately more than \$124 million additional tax dollars. County governments will use the values set by the BOE to levy the local property taxes.

The entire list of assessed property values and more information on the State-Assessed Properties Program is available on the BOE website: <https://www.boe.ca.gov>.



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Vaccine

Continued from page 10

like Valery An Joaquim, expressed concerns with the lack of a long-term study of side effects.

Sogol Matin, 36, who has three kids under 5 years old, said COVID-19 vaccines are unnecessary for kids due to the high survival rate and low infections in children from COVID. "My kids are fully vaccinated for all mandatory vaccines," Matin said. "However, I will not vaccinate my kids with this experimental COVID-19."

Some residents are undecided. Joy Etraude said she may wait as her children are both under 6 years old. "I would not want them to have the same reaction I did when I got mine," Etraude said.

Kryis Lindseth Reed, 49, said she will wait to have her 10-year-old daughter and 12-year-old son vaccinated until she sees what side effects children in those age groups suffer. "I want to know more before deciding," she said, "but I am not against vaccines."

But others like Deneen Marie want their children vaccinated right away. "Why would you want your child to get sick with something that could have been avoided?" she said. Kids or not, vaccine hesitancy is not uncommon in Silicon Valley. Newly-released data shows one in 10 Santa Clara County residents are refusing a COVID-19 vaccine due to fear of side effects or safety concerns, misinformation and scheduling

issues—a problem that county health officials are quickly trying to ameliorate.

The top three reasons why county residents are saying no to vaccines are fear of side effects or safety concerns, not having done enough research and not having enough time or availability, the survey found.

Erin Fitzgerald said she understands people's hesitancy, but contracting the virus can result in cognitive dysfunction, shortness of breath, fatigue, muscle pain, headaches, dizziness and more.

"Well after the virus has cleared," she said, "some cannot walk without getting winded, and even simple tasks like brushing hair can be exhausting. I will vaccinate my child."



A 'VACCINES ONLY' sign is displayed outside the room where health care workers are receiving the first doses of the COVID-19 vaccine at O'Connor Hospital in San Jose, Calif. Photo by Vicente Vera.

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WAVES OF FUN

Swimming safety tips for summer

FAMILY FEATURES

Playing in or around water is one of the joys of summer, but this treasured seasonal pastime comes with some serious risks. Drowning is the second-leading cause of accidental death for children under the age of 14 in the United States, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

As COVID-19 restrictions ease, many families will have more informal gatherings and take trips to the beach, increasing the potential for children to have unsupervised access to water sources. Because of this, it's important for children to take swimming lessons to learn water safety skills and create safer habits in and around water. As swimming lessons begin across the country, many are being conducted safely with COVID-19 precautions in place.

Protect your family's safety around water this summer with these tips from the Make a Splash Tour, presented by Phillips 66 and the USA Swimming Foundation.

Designate a Water Watcher and Closely Monitor Children. Designate a water watcher when you are in, on or around water. Watch all children and adolescents swimming or playing in or around water, even if they know how to swim. Keeping young children or inexperienced swimmers within arm's length at all times can help ensure you're able to provide assistance if and when it's needed.

Wear a Life Jacket. Anyone participating in any boating, paddling or towed water sports, regardless of swimming ability in pool or open water situations, should wear a Coast Guard-approved life jacket. Preschool-aged children (5 years old and younger), who are not protected by touch supervision, in particular, should always wear a life jacket. Swimming aids and water toys – such as water wings, inflatable water wings and rings – are not intended to be life-saving devices. They may provide some buoyancy in the water but do not prevent drowning.

Swim with a Buddy. When possible, choose swimming locations where a trained lifeguard is watching for dangerous conditions and helping keep an eye on swimmers. Also make it a practice to always have at least two people swimming together. That way, if someone has a problem, the other can get help.

Learn to Swim. Research has shown formal swimming lessons reduce the risk of childhood drowning by 88%. Through the annual Make a Splash Tour, the USA Swimming Foundation, with the support of Phillips 66, encourages children's swim lessons. By equipping your child with the skill of swimming, you'll open doors to a lifetime of safety, fun, fitness and even employment opportunities.

While lessons progressively teach a variety of swimming strokes, some of the most important things swimmers learn – even in beginner classes – are breath control and how to float. These basic skills are essential for staying above water should someone find himself or herself unable to touch or too tired to swim to safety. Children can participate in swimming lessons before they can walk, and parent-child swim lessons provide bonding opportunities along with water safety education.

Enter Water Feet First. Diving in a pool that is too shallow or into water where you're not certain what's below the surface, like a lake, can have dire consequences. Teach children to dive only in designated diving areas and to always enter water of unknown or non-visible depth feet first.

Swim in Designated Areas and Obey Posted Signs and Flags. Ropes, buoys and flags in larger bodies of water like lakes or oceans are commonly used to mark off safe swimming areas and provide visual cues about changes in depth, underwater surfaces and currents. Teach children what these signs and markers mean and that they're in place as safety tools, not toys to play with or float on.

Learn CPR. If the unthinkable does happen, knowing how to perform CPR allows you to take immediate action, which has been shown to significantly better the outcome for children with submersion injuries. In the time it takes for paramedics to arrive, you could save someone's life. Seconds count; the more quickly lifesaving CPR is started, the better the chances of recovery. There are many places that offer CPR training, including community organizations and nonprofit groups. Remember to keep your certification current once you have completed the initial requirements.

Make safety a priority for your summer water fun. Find more information, including swim lesson providers in your area, by visiting usaswimming.org/makeasplash.



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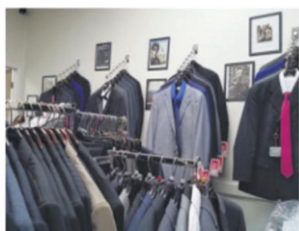
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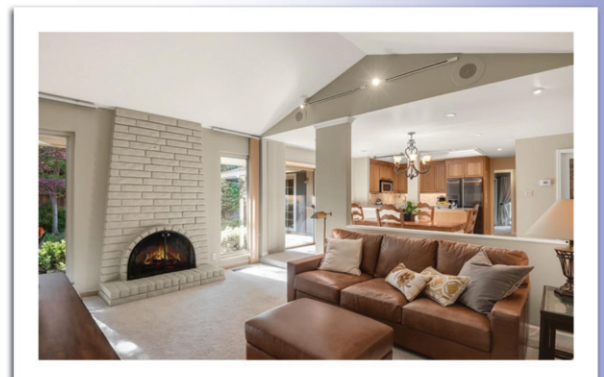
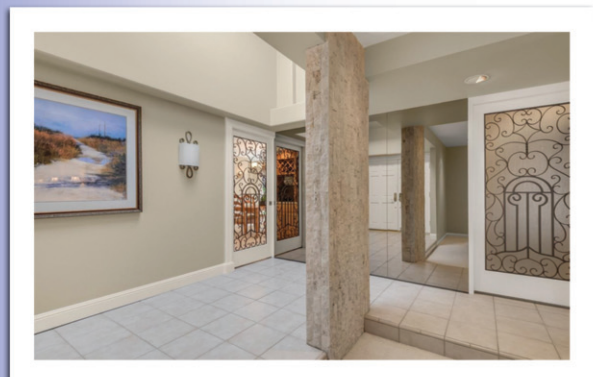
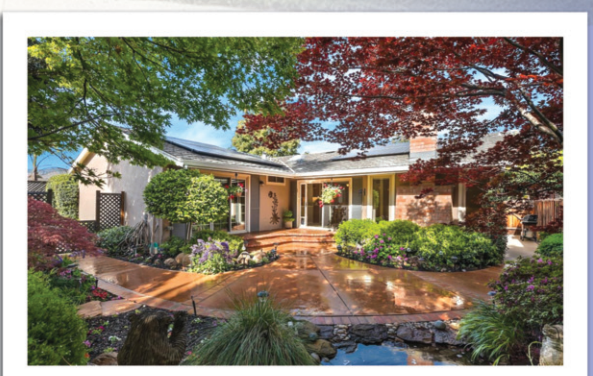
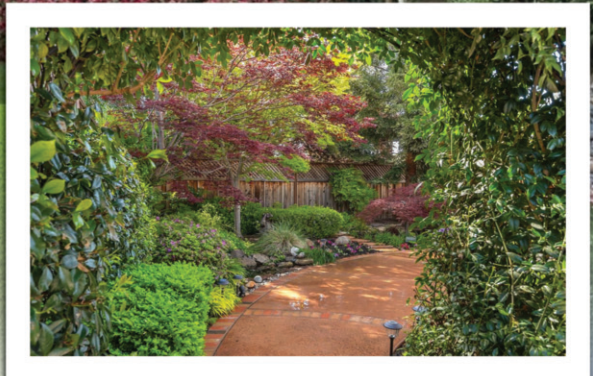
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