

Silicon Valley business group director striking out on his own  
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**Dry days ahead**  
Drought to force water limits to two million residents  
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Local musicians return to the stage at 2021 Virtual Arts Panorama  
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JUNE 11 – JUNE 24, 2021 ■ VOL. 34, NO. 12

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# Almaden Times

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## New mask rules go into effect June 15

By Times Staff Writers

COVID-19 restrictions were re-defined last week for California workers, but the new rules raise some questions.

Starting June 15, vaccinated Californians are no longer required to wear a mask in the workplace — unless they are in a room with someone who has not been vaccinated. However the most recent mandate conflicts with the latest, more lenient federal health guidelines.

**What are the latest COVID-19 rules for the workplace?**

If you're fully vaccinated you can take off your face mask while you're indoors - but only if everyone else in the room also is fully vaccinated.

Fully vaccinated employees don't need to wear a mask outside either, except when working large "mega-events" such as concerts with more than 10,000 attendees, and employers must either have physical distancing protocols that keep workers 6 feet apart or offer all unvaccinated workers N95 masks.

After July 31, all employers  
*See MASKS, page 15*



Veteran **Dodie Gaines** brought his children, **My Anh** and **Phi Anh**, to share in the experience.

## Almaden's Shadow Brook neighborhood remembers those they've lost

By Lorraine Gabbert  
Senior Staff Writer

On Memorial Day, Almaden's Shadow Brook community honored not only those lost in battle, but also during COVID.

Meera Desai, Vice President, Social for the Shadow Brook Homeowners Association and Swim Club said it's been a really hard year and continues to be hard for those with families overseas still struggling with COVID.

"I felt it was important to not only acknowledge those that we've lost in wars and those who fought for our country," Desai said, "but also to take a minute to think about those we may have lost over the year because of COVID. I thought it would be a nice remembrance for people to be able to think about their loved ones and be able to heal and move forward."

Desai said she appreciates being part of a community  
*See MEMORIAL DAY, page 5*

## High School junior's non-profit raises awareness of diseases through various mediums

By William Bellou  
Publisher

Khushboo Teotia, a high school junior, has impacted more than 5,000 individuals globally through her valued multimedia approaches regarding disease study with the establishment of her 501(c)3 nonprofit- Edupod Inc.

As founder and president of Edupod Inc., Teotia and her non-profit organization team strive to raise awareness about various diseases through several creative mediums. They focus on one disease for a period of 4-6 months while using fundraisers, webinars, articles,

*See KHUSHBOO, page 21*

## MAKING A POSITIVE IMPACT



Khushboo Teotia, along with her admin team, have made a positive impact on numerous societies with research and projects on Cancer, Genetics, and Mental Health. Pictured (left to right) are: **SriVibha Yellamraju**, **Tiarra Wu**, **Khushboo Teotia**, and **Sourish Saswade**.

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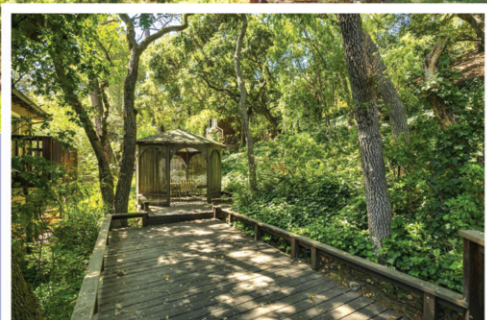
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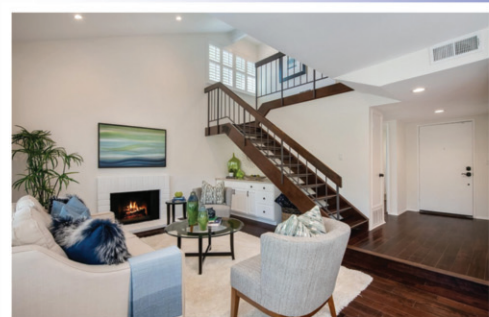


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# Valley Currents

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

## Silicon Valley business group director striking out on his own

By Lorraine Gabbert

Article courtesy of  
San José Spotlight

The Silicon Valley Organization has suffered another blow.

After the ousting of former CEO Matt Mahood due to a racist ad in October, the beleaguered chamber of commerce is losing Director of Government and Community Relations Eddie Truong.

Truong, known for his public policy and business advocacy, is leaving to start his own lobbying firm after working with the SVO for five and a half years. "At some point, I have to figure out what's next in my career," he said. "Other people in my position, like Victor Gomez, did exactly the same thing. Others try to become CEOs of other chambers."

Truong, a well-known figure in the business community, hoped to continue as a part-time employee at the SVO. But he said he's looking forward to being his own boss. "We couldn't come to an agreement on the exact terms, so I figured it was just easier for us to have a clean separation," Truong said. "I'm going to strike out on my own and be a full-time lobbyist and business owner."

Truong said his new venture, DT Strategies, has "nothing to do with the scandal."

"It just feels weird to exit completely and not contribute to building back the organization," Truong said, noting that he considered his next steps before the racist ad scandal but delayed his plans because he "couldn't bear to just leave" when things were volatile.

At SVO, Truong said he is proudest of helping to facilitate a paid summer internship program for more than 250 students. He played a key role coordinating a partnership between the SVO and the city and East Side Union High School District, as well as recruiting private sector employers for the program. "Helping our local underserved youth has profound impacts," he said. "It helps youth connect the dots between internships and careers."

Truong said he's wanted to start a small business for a long time as it runs in his family. He's inspired by his mother, who sustained their fam-



The headquarters of The Silicon Valley Organization is pictured in this file photo.

ily for years with her San Jose business Eddie's Crafts — named after him. He said he's excited about the vision of SVO's new CEO, Derrick Seaver, around equity and economic inclusion for minority business owners and hopes to be part of it.

"My parents, who were Vietnamese refugees... instilled in me the value of hard work and entrepreneurship," he said.

Instead of being an in-house lobbyist working for someone else, Truong said he will work as a contract lobbyist. He'll work with his first client, Westgate Church, on land use and advocacy. He first worked with the church through SVO in September, when he helped a faith-based coalition organize a news conference focused on rising poverty and a safe reopening of the economy. "It was sheer dumb luck I engaged them in the coalition," Truong said, "and it turned out to be really great for me."

Finny Abraham, local compassion pastor of Westgate Church, said he appreciated Truong helping faith-based communities find directives on safely reopening during the shelter in place order. He said Truong was willing to communicate with local government on their behalf. "He was able to be that bridge, listening to our concerns," Abraham said.

Truong said his new venture is



Eddie Truong is leaving the SVO to start his own lobbying firm. File photo.

not in competition with the SVO, but complementary. "The SVO as a large chamber of commerce is often forced to prioritize public policies that benefit as many businesses as possible," he said. "Whereas individual lobbyists will often contract with a sole business on a project-by-project basis."

In the future, Truong said he would like to create a regional lobbying firm. "Most major cities have some kind of a local, regional lobbying firm... but in San Jose, we don't really have a homegrown professional advocacy group doing work here locally," he said. "My dream would be to build out what a regional lobbying firm could possibly look like."

### San Jose City Council Updates

#### Fireworks Ordinance Workplan

– The San Jose City Council received an update on the City's fireworks workplan. The City recently increased fines for illegal fireworks and is studying how to add reporting to the San José 311 app. The council also voted unanimously for a Social Host Ordinance which makes it a violation for an individual to host a gathering at which fireworks are used.

**Sanctioned Encampments** – Due to the costs and legal liability involved with sanctioned encampments, The San Jose City Council voted to reaffirm the "setbacks and services" strategy. Councilmember Matt Mahan proposed earlier this year. This approach protects sensitive areas where encampments will not be allowed, including schools, and improves services, such as toilets and trash removal, for people who aren't camped in those areas.

**Illegal Dumping** – The San Jose City Council voted to increase fines for illegal dumping to \$10,000. Previously, fines were set at \$2,500 for the first offense, \$5,000 for the second, and \$10,000 for the third. To avoid fines and help keep San José and your home clean, residents are encouraged to use the City's free junk pickup service by using the San José 311 app.



Mission Chamber Orchestra

## Local musicians return to the stage at Silicon Valley Arts Coalition 2021 Virtual Arts Panorama

A great family entertainment time where you can join in the fun and watch at no cost

By William Bellou  
Publisher

Silicon Valley Arts Coalition (SVAC) has released its Virtual Arts Panorama, a curated collection of micro concerts performed in a concert hall setting, at the Hammer Theatre.

The Arts Panorama is a showcase to keep Silicon Valley's local performing arts accessible and engage new on-line audiences while bringing visibility to each SVAC member group, while complying with all safety standards during production including distancing, group size and adhering to all guidelines and restrictions.

The panorama style concert allows for performance in a more traditional concert format, as opposed to virtual living room performances or tiled performances while leveraging the advantages a virtual medium affords - like time shifting and easy accessibility. While musicians appreciated the opportunity to play together in person in a safe environment, the panorama and similar projects can become an emotional support for audiences and an economic lifeline for arts venues and their employees. This outsized impact

is exactly what SVAC was looking for.

"Suddenly performing arts came to a complete and loud stop. No rehearsals, no concerts and no audiences which also means no ticket sales," said SVAC President Kenin Coloma, "The idea of producing a Panorama provided the opportunity to bring the SVAC community together in a meaningful way and expand our engagement with our audiences and beyond."

Bringing together the experience to play and share music, SVAC presented 9 member ensembles including Mission Chamber Orchestra, San Jose Wind Symphony, Nova Vista Symphony, South Bay Philharmonic, and South Bay Guitar Society with video submissions by Lyric Theatre, Mission Valley Chorus, San Jose Symphonic Choir, and the Silicon Valley Chapter of the American Harp Society.

The SVAC Virtual Arts Panorama and individual performances are available to watch at no cost at [www.artssiliconvalley.org/artspano-2021](http://www.artssiliconvalley.org/artspano-2021) and socially on the SVAC YouTube Channel and Facebook page.

### About SVAC Virtual Arts Panorama

SVAC Virtual Arts Panorama is a collection of micro concerts performed and recorded in a concert hall setting at the Hammer Theatre in downtown San Jose, California. Hosted and presented by SVAC, these musicians came to make music together. SVAC member groups who participated in the Arts Panorama include Mission Chamber Orchestra, San Jose Wind Symphony, Nova Vista Symphony, South Bay Philharmonic, and South Bay Guitar Society with video submissions by Lyric Theatre, Mission Valley Chorus, San Jose Symphonic Choir, and the Silicon Valley Chapter of the American Harp Society, these musicians came together to make music. Such events build community and bring joy to us all! A great family entertainment time too!

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Times **Community News**

The Shadow Brook Bell Ringers played patriotic tunes on handbells.

## Memorial Day

*Continued from page 1*

that came together to honor veterans and others who lost their lives.

For Boy Scout Troop 290's Assistant Scoutmaster Brian Jones, Memorial Day is a sacred reminder of the men who fought and gave their all for freedom.

"Jones men fought in the American Revolution and in every important war in the United States," he said. "To honor my ancestors, it's important for me to be here today."

He said participating in the ceremony was also valuable for the Boy Scouts.

"History isn't just something you read in a book," Jones said. "It is something you have to experience by the stories of the men who fought the wars and honoring them."

Veteran Dodie Gaines, who also comes from a military family, brought his children My Anh and Phi Anh to share in the experience. Gaines received a purple heart for his service in Vietnam, as did his father, who served in the Air Force at Pearl Harbor.

The event began with a flag ceremony led by members of Boy Scout Troop 290; Ethan Brookshire, Caleb Chao, Wyatt Grove, Kirin Gruenhagen, Liam Heid and Nolan Hinz. As the troop meets at Bret Harte Middle School, the celebration was in their own backyard.

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, Shadow Brook Bell Ringers played patriotic tunes on handbells. Led by Ruthanne Adams Martinez, the players, who include Lynn Adams, Eva Chapman, Janet Lundy and Susan Monahan, rang out renditions of America the Beautiful, The Battle Hymn of the Republic, Wonderful Words of Life, Victorious, Down by the Riverside and Amazing Grace.

Chapman said being with her neighbors to celebrate Memorial Day and the opening of the pool "meant so much" after such a long separation.

"This is the beginning of some of the things we've always enjoyed

doing with our neighbors," she said. "This was just such a wonderful way of starting out. For us, we have a victory in terms of COVID and coming together from our isolation for over a year."

Boy Scouts distributed small flags for residents to plant in a memorial garden in honor of those lost in wars or due to COVID.

Veteran Donald Tietgens, who believes in recognizing veterans both alive and passed, said he appreciated this event and marveled at the turnout. His wife, Steph, planted a flag in memory of Louie Mendoza, a dear friend who died in the Vietnam War in 1965.

Lydia McClure planted a flag for Nicanor Ampere IV, a family friend who lost his life in Afghanistan on July 8, 2011. Ampere caught an airborne mortar aimed at his tank with all his men inside like a football, she said, before turning from the tank and sacrificing himself. He was 36 and would have returned home 10 days later.

Dan, Tammy, Jonathan and Jessica Sell gathered together to plant a flag.

"The flag is important because of the freedoms we enjoy," Dan said, "and our ancestors who suffered and sacrificed to give us our freedom."

The ceremony closed with Chao playing Taps.

Desai said coming together as a community to celebrate Memorial Day was special.

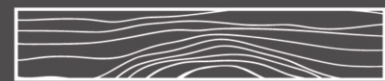
"We felt it was important to acknowledge those that gave the ultimate sacrifice for our country," Desai said. "I was thrilled to see so many members of the Shadow Brook family come out for this event."



The Sell family gathered together to plant a flag.



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## Drought to force water limits to 2 million residents

By Times staff writers

Santa Clara Valley Water District, the County's largest water provider announced Monday that it is moving forward with plans to declare a water shortage emergency.

The last time a water emergency was issued was during the historic drought of 2012 which lasted until 2016.

Valley Water is now urging cities and water companies, serving more than two

million residents in and around San Jose, to impose new mandatory water restrictions. The water wholesaler is seeking a minimum of a 15 percent reduction countywide based on 2019 levels.

"This is an emergency," said Rick Callender, the district's CEO. "Our water supplies are in serious jeopardy."

During the height of the state's last drought, the county cut water use 28 percent from 2013 levels.

San Jose Water Company, which provides drinking water to more than one million residents living in Santa Clara County said it is reviewing the district's request, but that any new rules the company considers must be approved by the California Public Utilities Commission, which could take a few months.

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# June brings global Pride celebration

By **Mary Ann Dewan, Ph.D.**  
*County Superintendent of Schools*  
Happy PRIDE month!

June presents month-long global celebrations each year, including Pride.

Pride is a time for everyone to elevate the importance of inclusion and diversity throughout our community while remembering the remarkable equal rights journey the LGBTQ+ community has fought for decades.

As Amit Paley, CEO and Executive Director of The Trevor Project shares, "Pride isn't just about parades; it's about celebrating what makes our LGBTQ community thrive. Pride is about finding our strength even in times of challenge, sharing our joy even in moments of pain, and creating space to express and celebrate who we are."

As adults, educators, families, and friends, it is our job to make sure LGBTQ youth know that they are not alone and that they know they can always be themselves around us. All youth are on the path to self-discovery and need positive role models, especially those who identify as LGBTQ. Each one of us can model compassion and inclusivity for LGBTQ youth in our community.

For example:

- Start by listening. LGBTQ youth need to be heard. They deserve to have a voice and receive respect. Take the time and pay attention to what they are telling you.

- Model inclusion and kindness. Model kindness and inclusion by making an effort to use inclusive language. Ask about, and respect gender pronouns. Using the right pronoun and gender identity allows youth to feel like they are important enough for you to make the effort to know them and respect them

- Let youth be who they are. It is extremely important to let them know it's okay to be authentic and be who they are.

- Advocate for the LGBTQ youth. As a community, it is our job to give all youth the tools and support that they need to allow their voices to be heard

- Educate yourself, stay informed, and be an ally. Allies are some of the most effective and powerful voices in a youth's life. They are people who have a genuine, strong concern for the well-being of LGBTQ+ people, who support and accept LGBTQ+ people, and who advocate for equal rights and fair treatment. An ally is a person who

confronts challenges that LGBTQ+ people experience.

Every youth deserves to feel a sense of belonging. By taking these steps, we show LGBTQ youth that we care and that they are welcome, they are important to us, and they are safe in their community.

For additional resources and support, view the SCCOE resource guide for educators, parents, caregivers, youth, and communities link: [tinyurl.com/2rcuf4ta](http://tinyurl.com/2rcuf4ta).

In addition, schools are encouraged to contact our office to become an Out for Safe School. Lastly, the resources below are available to help assist, as well.



## Students Roshanna Agah, Julia Bandoni and Ryan Edington make Utah Spring 2021 Dean's List

Three residents of Almaden Valley have been named to University of Utah Spring 2021 Dean's List.

Local students named to the prestigious list include: **Roshanna Agah** (above left), majoring in Pre Nursing BS; **Julia Bandoni** (above center), majoring in Nursing BSN; and **Ryan Edington** (above right), major-

ing in Health and Kinesiology BS.

The University of Utah congratulates Almaden residents named to the Spring 2021 Dean's List. To qualify, students must earn a GPA of 3.5 or higher in at least 12 graded credit hours during any one term.

The University of Utah, located in Salt Lake City, is the flagship institution of higher learning in Utah.

Founded in 1850, it serves over 32,000 students from across the U.S. and the world. With more than 100 major subjects at the undergraduate level and more than 90 major fields of study at the graduate level, including law and medicine, the university prepares students to live and compete in the global workplace.



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# Tragic shooting leaves San Jose community reeling

By Matt Mahan

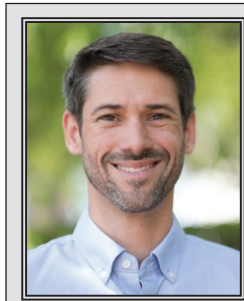
Special to the Times

Our community is still reeling from the May 26th VTA yard shooting that left ten people dead, including the shooter.

Just hours before, at a late-night City Council meeting, a festive mood filled the air as my colleagues and I unanimously approved Google's Downtown West project. How quickly that sense of celebration turned to shock and profound sadness.

My heart goes out to the families and coworkers of the individuals who lost their lives two weeks ago. I can only begin to imagine the indescribable pain of losing loved ones so unexpectedly and senselessly. You will continue to be in our thoughts and prayers.

You can learn a little bit about each of the victims and directly support their families through the financial hardship of this unimaginable loss by visiting their verified pages on GoFundMe here: [https://www.gofundme.com/c/act/san-](https://www.gofundme.com/c/act/san-jose-shooting-fundraisers)



## District 10 Report

Matt Mahan  
Councilmember-elect, District 10

jose-shooting-fundraisers

I'd like to thank SJPD, the County Sheriff's office, and all of the brave first responders for their swift response, surely averting an even greater loss of life. We appreciate your dedication to our community and the risk you bear every day on the job.

Thank you as well to our VTA employees for the essential service you provide—and continued to provide throughout the pandemic—to many in our community. I, for one, would not have had the opportunity to attend Bellarmine College Prep here in San Jose without the access offered by our public bus system, and I'm grateful for the service and professionalism of our drivers, mechanics, and the rest of the VTA team. I wish you all peace and healing in the days and

years ahead, as unimaginable as that may seem right now.

Finally, thank you to all of the District 10 residents who reached out to me personally over the last week in response to my father's passing. It has been a time full of loss and

grieving. As hard as it is to lose a parent, I am grateful for the long and full life my father led, and for the opportunity to say goodbye, which is something our VTA victims' families didn't get.

As always, I wish you and your loved ones all the best. Please continue to reach out with your questions, concerns and ideas ([district10@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:district10@sanjoseca.gov)). It is an honor to represent you at City Hall.

## CAREER CORNER

# Offers are like busses

By Angela Copeland

Special to the Times

The title of my column today may sound a bit confusing. It comes from one of my own mentors.



Years ago, when I was finishing graduate school, I spent a significant amount of time searching for the right job.

Occasionally, one would pop up that would seem almost right. It would have a great job description. The company seemed stable. The team seemed interesting. But, there was something about the hiring manager that was off – or perhaps the company wasn't offering a competitive salary. Many parts of the job would be great, but something would be off.

I would meet with my mentor to tell him about the jobs I was considering, and discuss the pros and cons of each. If a job seemed like the wrong fit, he would encourage me to walk away. The thought of turning down an offer without another in hand was nerve-wracking. My mentor would then remind me, "Jobs are like busses. Just wait; another one is always coming."

He felt it was more important to find the right fit, than to hope you could take every job that came along. Looking back, these were wise words. Who else in your life do you spend as much time with as your boss and co-workers? For most, the answer is your spouse. You typically don't choose to marry your first date. Why would you expect that at work?

Often, we want to take every job when we're feeling desperate. We're miserable in our current position and we think that anything would be better – even if it were just for a short time.

The problem with this strategy is complex. First, your next job may have just as many problems as your current job, if not more. As the saying goes, sometimes the devil you know is better than the one you don't.

More importantly though, planning to take a job for a short time forces you to explain why you're looking for a new job just after accepting one. This means that you'll be explaining all the dirt on your old company, including the ways that you didn't get along with your boss or co-workers.

When you choose to wait and select the right job, you'll find yourself there for more than just a short time. While you're interviewing, you'll be able to focus on the positives of what you want in the future rather than the negatives from the past. Whether it comes to interviewing or negotiating your offer, focusing on the positive puts you in a much stronger position.

When you're having a tough day, just try to remember that jobs are like busses. Just wait. Another one is coming, and you want to be sure you get on the right one.

Look around to see if you find remote jobs that are posted in other locations. You may be able to do them from your current city!

Angela Copeland, a career expert and founder of Copeland Coaching, can be reached at [copelandcoaching.com](http://copelandcoaching.com).



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Amy L. Horowitz Attorney at Law

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# Santa Clara County violates Unruh Civil Rights Act with latest emergency order

*Public health mandate is “blatant and nonsensical” civil rights violation*

By Sean Eastwood  
Times feature writer

Civil Rights advocates’ email boxes are filling up with concerns after Santa Clara County Public Health officers issued a new Covid mandate that violates California’s landmark Unruh Civil Rights Act.

The order, issued May 18, sets different mask requirements for those who have received their Covid vaccine and those who haven’t. It’s unclear how the county could enforce such an order, or whether such an order is enforceable at all.

The Unruh Civil Rights Act, California’s anti-discrimination law, states that, “All persons...are free and equal, and no matter what their sex, race, color, religion, ancestry, national origin, disability, medical condition, genetic information, marital status, sexual orientation, citizenship, primary language, or immigration status are entitled to the full and equal accommodations, advantages, facilities, privileges, or services in all business establishments of every kind whatsoever.”

By setting two different rules for different classes of people based on medical condition or religious beliefs, the order violates the Unruh Act. As has been extensively reported, there are people, who cannot receive the Covid vaccine, due to already weakened immune systems.

By law, employers also have to accept religious exemptions to vaccination. Employees are allowed to decline to share their medical information, thereby giving medical privacy, but they are also considered “unvaccinated”. The Santa Clara order would force all those “unvaccinated” individuals to be visibly unequal (wearing a mask) when going to work – a clear violation. The order could lead to probing conversations about medical conditions when someone in a group is masked, or if someone without proof of vaccination (but who has already had Covid) chooses

to go unmasked.

In that manner, the order also makes little sense. A person who recovered from Covid is naturally immune for several months. The order would lump that person into the “must wear a mask” category, even though studies have shown that vaccinated people can still get infected and spread Covid, whereas those with natural immunity almost never spread it. In any event, it’s irrational to eliminate those with antibodies, acquired naturally, from the benefits of the order.

“This order is a blatant violation of California’s Civil Rights laws, which prohibit discrimination based on medical condition and religion,” said Christina Hildebrand, founder of A Voice for Choice Advocacy, a health advocacy group. “As an owner of multiple businesses in Santa Clara, I worry about discrimination lawsuits from my employees similar to those filed by nurses in the past over “vaccinate or mask” policies for the flu vaccine. California is better than this. We needn’t let the pandemic create discrimination, segregation and inequity.”

## TECH JARGON OF THE WEEK

# AI Assistant

By Shubhi Asthana  
Special to the Times

Have you ever stumbled into a conversation where everyone is speaking around this “techie” word – and even after you’ve broken in, it is difficult to understand the unfamiliar jargon and acronyms?

Well, there’s no need to sweat it. Let me teach you the meaning of some commonly used tech words:

### AI Assistant

Google announced all kinds of goodies at last year’s Google IO, and one of the most interesting one was the AI assistant, Google Duplex.

It is an Artificial Intelligence agent that can make phone calls for you – and I don’t mean just dialing the number. It can hold actual conversations with real life people, complete with a natural-sounding human voice instead of a robotic one.

Google Duplex isn’t designed to replace humans altogether. It’s designed to carry out very specific tasks in what Google calls “closed domains”. So, for example, you wouldn’t ask this AI assistant to call your mum, but you might ask it to book a table at a restaurant.

For the beta version, the assistant will focus on three kinds of tasks: making restaurant reservations, scheduling hair appointments, and finding out businesses’ holiday opening hours.

From the tech perspective, the AI uses recurrent neural network (RNN) built using Tensor flow Extended (TFX). RNN’s are useful in processing sequential, contextual information and that makes them well-suited for machine learning, language modelling and speech recognition.

See TECH JARGON, page 11





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# Where are the worst roads in San Jose?

By Lloyd Alaban and Sonya Herrera

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

San Joseans have a lot to say about their roads: It's one of the most common complaints levied against the city.

"There are lots of pockets in the city with bad roads that I just don't feel safe biking," said Bobby Gonzalez, a San Jose resident and avid cyclist. "Downtown's roads are designed differently so you feel a little safer than the East Side."

Rough road conditions have resulted in 76 claims against the city in the last 12 months, with about 20 of those claims filed over damage caused by potholes.

The city scores its streets with the pavement condition index (PCI),



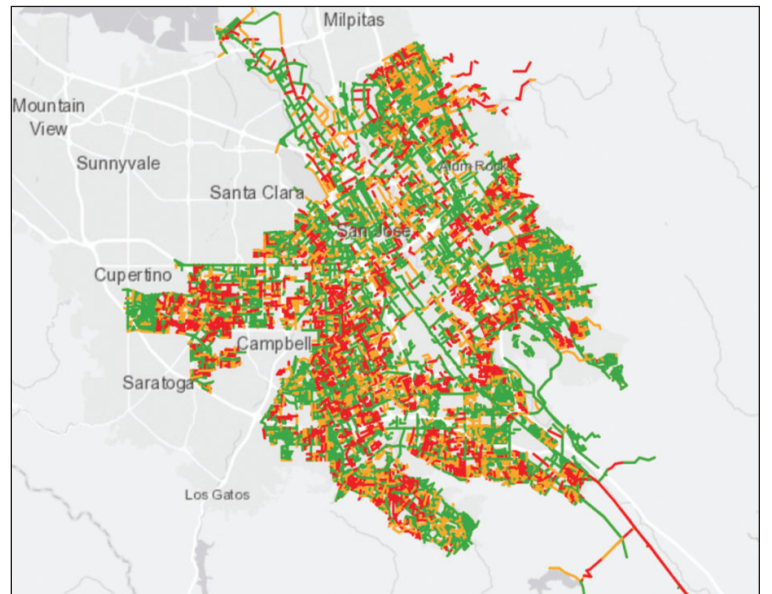
Drexel Way in East San Jose. Photo by Lloyd Alaban.

a system that ranks roads from zero to 100. According to data from the city, San Jose has an average pavement condition index of 67, which puts it in the "fair" category.

But according to a 2018 study by TRIP, a nonprofit industry-funded

transit advocacy group, 64% of the city's roads are in bad shape.

While the city doesn't keep a running list of its worst roads, it does have a map that shows road conditions in red (poor), orange (fair) and green (good) (see next page).



Map showing condition of local roads in red (poor), orange (fair) and green (good).

There isn't one neighborhood that's home to the city's worst roads, but there are some pockets of green and red across the city. That seems to track with what Gonzalez and other cyclists are seeing: Better roads are found near the central and southern portions of the city and along its border as it approaches the nearby hills. Red roads can be found in East San Jose in the McLaughlin neighborhood, with other red areas in the central and western parts of the city.

One of the worst roads, Drexel Way near McLaughlin Avenue, has a PCI of just 12. One of the city's longest roads, Monterey Road, is almost entirely graded poor with a PCI of 42. Another pocket, tucked into District 10, has a series of poor roads in a residential area.

"Our office works closely with the city's Department of Transportation to keep the community informed of road paving plans," said District 10 Councilmember Matt Mahan.

But Mahan is concerned about the city's maintenance backlog, which has grown to approximately \$93 million a year.

San Jose has tried to stave off a backlog of poorly-kept roads throughout the city. In 2007, the city's total infrastructure and maintenance backlog stood at about

\$900 million. Since then, the backlog has ballooned to \$1.7 billion as of this year, with \$845 million related to roads and roadway lighting. About \$526 million is attributed to pavement maintenance, down from \$580 million reported in 2018.

The city projects that will drop to \$389 million in 10 years when the PCI average is expected to rise to 70.

"Before we spend on new programs, we need to address this backlog. Failure to do so puts lives at risk and costs us more in the long run," Mahan said.

The maintenance backlog doesn't bode well for residents—especially cyclists like Gonzalez and avid biker Mayor Sam Liccardo.

"Like other cyclists, I've hit plenty of potholes over the years while riding along favorite routes to climb the East Foothills. Fortunately, key stretches along Mabury, Piedmont and White have all been recently repaved," Liccardo told San José Spotlight. "We're now repaving more miles of streets annually than we have in at least two decades as a result of our successful 2016 and 2018 ballot measures, and residents are starting to see the results."

The two measures Liccardo refers to, Measure B and Measure T, are expected to generate hundreds of

See ROADS, page 13

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Drexel Way in East San Jose has a PCI score of 12 out of 100. Photo by Lloyd Alaban.

Times **Feature**

## San José Public Library officially reopens select branches

*SJ Library welcomes back members of the public for limited indoor services*

The San José Public Library (SJPL) reopened a number of select branch libraries this week and welcomed San Joseans back to browse its shelves, check out materials, access public computers and printers, pick up holds and tech devices, and get answers to reference questions.

Now half of SJPL's buildings are now reopened providing limited indoor services at 50-percent capacity, with hours of operation from 1-6 p.m. Monday-Friday and 10 a.m.-6 p.m. on Saturday.

The SJPL's locations that reopened its doors are: **Alum Rock, Biblioteca Latinoamericana, Joyce Ellington, Tully Community, Alviso, Evergreen, West Valley, Bascom, East San Jose Carnegie, Educational Park, Edenvale, Hillview, Pearl Avenue, Seven Trees, and Vineland.**

"The day we were forced to temporarily close was a hard day for so many of our staff, residents, students and their families, especially for those who depended on the library's public computers and internet access during the pandemic," said Jill Bourne, City Librarian. "We have been waiting for the day we could start to safely reopen to the public. This is the beginning of a new chapter in SJPL's history and a promising future ahead for our city."

Since the library was forced to temporarily close due to the COVID-19 pandemic on March 17, 2020, it had to quickly adapt its services to online only. A few months after, in June 2020, SJPL introduced Express Pickup to provide residents a safe and contactless way to access items from



its physical collections including SJ Access tech devices and educational activity kits; and on April 9, 2021, select libraries started to provide limited indoor computer use only.

Library officials are continuing to work alongside the City of San José's Emergency Operations Center to ensure more library locations are prepared to open safely based on the Santa Clara County Health Orders and the City's safety guidelines. In the meantime, residents can still access the Express Pickup service at closed locations, indoor Tech Access at select locations, virtual programs, online chat services, and phone assistance, 7-days per week. During this time, the library will continue to not assess any late fines on overdue materials.

For more information and details about the Library's reopening, visit [www.sjpl.org/reopening](http://www.sjpl.org/reopening).

## Tech Jargon

*Continued from page 9*

So, what's so different about this Assistant?

Duplex talks like a normal person, and that makes it a natural extension to the existing Google Assistant functionality. For example, supposed you want to book a table for eight in any Greek restaurant in your vicinity for Saturday. The assistant would call restaurants on your behalf, hold a conversation and check whether there is any availability for eight people for Saturday. If not, the assistant would call another Greek restaurant and hold a conversation again. It would arrange the booking and let you know the confirmation. The key here is that this is all happening in the background. You tell Google to do something, and it goes and does it, only reporting back after the task is complete.

The benefits of using this assistant are

many. People with hearing disabilities can use duplex to get some chores done. Also, sometimes when you travel, you might not know the local language, but the duplex knows – so it can converse in a language you don't speak. And it can be asynchronous, so you can make the request and then go offline while Google Duplex gets on with the job: it will report back when you're online again. That's useful in areas of patchy connectivity, or if you're just really, busy.

Artificial Intelligence has come a long way, and Google duplex is just one more example of how technology can be used to save our time and make it perform some of our tasks.

### About the Author

Do you enjoy reading this column? Send in your comments or feedback to the author at [shub.saxen@gmail.com](mailto: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 News

**State Farm Neighborhood Assist returns for tenth year**

*Forty causes will each win a \$25,000 grant to assist their neighborhoods*

Neighbors across the country will soon have an exciting opportunity to help change their communities for the better through State Farm Neighborhood Assist®. The program awards \$25,000 grants to 40 non-profit organizations to help fund neighborhood improvement projects.

According to a recent State Farm research

study, one-quarter of respondents say that they are “extremely” or “very” involved in trying to improve their neighborhood and six-in-ten are trying to improve their neighborhood in some capacity.

State Farm Neighborhood Assist can be a catalyst for that change. Here’s how the program works:

**Submission Phase: Starts June 2 and ends when 2,000 submissions are reached**

Individuals can submit a cause at [www.neighborhoodassist.com](http://www.neighborhoodassist.com) starting June 2. You can prepare now by going to the website and downloading the submission guide. We will accept



the first 2,000 submissions. The State Farm Review Committee will then narrow the field to the Top 200 finalists using a scoring rubric.

**Voting Phase: August 18-27**

Ultimately, voters will decide which community improvement projects win big. The public will have a chance to vote 10 times a day, every day for 10 days, from August 18-27, for their favorite causes from the list of finalists. Voting will take place at [www.neighborhoodassist.com](http://www.neighborhoodassist.com).

**Winners Announced: September 29**

The 40 causes that receive the most votes

will each win a \$25,000 grant. Winners will be announced on Wednesday, Sept. 29, at [www.neighborhoodassist.com](http://www.neighborhoodassist.com).

“State Farm is pleased to bring back Neighborhood Assist for its tenth year,” said Rasheed Merritt, Assistant Vice President at State Farm. “This program is all about building stronger neighborhoods together. Last year, 145,000 people cast 3.9 million votes in support of their favorite causes, selecting winners from small towns and big cities.”

Since the program began, more than 340 causes have received a total of \$9 million to enact change in their communities.

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Times **Feature****Roads***Continued from page 10*

millions of dollars for Santa Clara County and San Jose, respectively. Measure B, a 30-year, half-cent sales tax will generate \$6.5 billion over the next 30 years to be used for county infrastructure. Measure T, approved in 2018, sets aside \$650 million for fixing roads, preventing floods and improving emergency response times.

San Jose's transportation department picks which streets to repair by aggregating individual roads into "zones" based on PCI. The city has 135 such zones. The scores are noted from a laser-equipped truck that drives around the city and measures street surfaces.

The city recently adopted a new metric for deciding which streets to pave: the Metropolitan Transportation Commission's "communities of concern" map.

The map identifies areas occupied by low-income people of color and those with limited English proficiency. The city prioritizes those zones each year for service.

Some of the highest areas of concern are the Evergreen area in District 8, northern portions of District 6, portions of District 2 and portions of the city that straddle Districts 7 and 9.

District 9 Councilmember Pam Foley said she's coordinating with the transportation department to build safety improvements along with repaving streets in her district. Two streets—Hillsdale and Pearl avenues—will receive significant safety improvements, according to Foley.

"District 9 has 22 zones and DOT, with my guidance, has been prioritizing first zones with lower PCI scores," Foley said. "My staff also works with residents to identify low-quality streets that may be in high PCI zones for more targeted treatments until the street is ultimately repaved."

Colin Heyne, spokesperson for the city's transportation department, said 207 of the 325 miles of streets that San Jose plans to pave in the next three years fall within these communities of concern.

"More miles of streets with bad conditions fall in council districts that, frankly, tend to be more affluent," Heyne said. "If we solely went that direction, then we may not be paying atten-

tion to low-income neighborhoods."

San Jose plans to use Measure T dollars to repave 140 miles of streets this year, with 83 of those having a PCI score of 49 or lower.

Some work only requires quick pothole filling, where newer, smoother asphalt is poured into potholes and then stamped down by machinery. Heyne estimates the city filled around 8,000 potholes last year.

There's also stamp patching, which covers a larger area and is more durable than typical pothole repair.

"Sometimes we do that, and (residents) haven't gotten our fliers and they think we did a terrible job repaving their street," Heyne said. "It's really just a Band-Aid until we get out there in a year or two."

Those road repairs bring the city closer to its goal of lifting its average PCI score from 67 up to 70, which would move it from the "fair" to "good" category.

"When you're talking about 2,500 miles of street (total), that average is pretty significant," Heyne said.

Most of the city's problem streets won't be addressed through at least 2023. City officials expect it will take until 2028 for all of the city's repaving projects to be completed.

The budget for pavement maintenance has ballooned over the past decade from \$19.3 million in the 2012 financial year to \$120.3 million in the 2021 financial year, with the most significant jump from 2019 to 2020 where the budget increased from \$51.1 million to \$125.2 million. The increase came as a result of Measure B funds in 2020.

Roads are usually maintained on a cycle of eight years in a process called "sealing," where a top coat of asphalt is applied to a road. Resurfacing, a more thorough process that removes and replaces the top two to four inches of asphalt, is performed on streets that rank "poor" or "failed" and can extend the useful life of a road as long as 15 years.

But that process is about four to five times more expensive than sealing, according to Heyne, so the city tries to resurface well before a road's PCI falls into "poor" or "failed" conditions.

To report faulty roads, residents can call 311, use the city's 311 website or app or call the Department of Transportation directly at (408) 794-1900.

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Everyone gives rave reviews on the professionalism and too, there are many workers to properly take care of those coming in to take their Covid-19 vaccination.

As far as what type of vaccination you get goes, the center is allocated different vaccines so all you can do is drive up and ask and find out if it the one you like and can get that day.

It is easy to schedule on line by doing a web-search: "Aloha Roller Rink Vaccination." Or, you can also schedule by phone Monday to Friday, 8:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. by calling (650) 498-9000.

*Editor's Note: You can learn more with a computer web-search; Aloha Roller Rink Vaccination. Also, our Times Media staff has checked the appointments for this week and they are vast, meaning there are plenty of openings and you can go any day you choose! There is a map too. The address for Aloha Roller Rink Vaccinations is Aloha Roller Rink – Eastridge Mall 2190 Eastridge Loop #1402 San José, CA 95122.*



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*Plant-based burgers and Smart Dogs can taste just like the real thing.*

# 3 Grilling Hacks for Delicious, Plant-Based Summer Menus

**FAMILY FEATURES**

Cooking and entertaining outdoors can bring friends and family back together, but it doesn't have to be complicated. Simple, flavorful recipes can be easy on the home chef yet still tasty and enjoyable for those at the table.

One of the best parts of the season is grilled fare like burgers, hot dogs and fresh vegetables. This year, consider adding a plant-based option to your menu. Made with simple, recognizable ingredients, Lightlife offers vegan, non-GMO options that are made for the grill, like Plant-Based Burgers, Smart Dogs and Italian Smart Sausage. These products can help satisfy the craving for protein and are made with ingredients you can feel good about serving your friends and family.

"Food brings people together, and now more than ever, grilling season and dining al fresco is one of the best ways to do that," said Tommy McDonald, executive chef at Greenleaf Foods. "Think of the grill as an additional seasoning element – a zero-fuss way to add miles of flavor. One of my favorite products is Lightlife's Smart Dogs, which have been reformulated to taste better than ever. Try topping them with a freshly made onion jam or quick-pickled relish."

Consider these tips from McDonald to properly grill plant-based variations of your favorite meals:

**Be mindful of cook times.** Plant-based protein products typically taste best when cooked properly, usually over a low, open flame. When you're almost ready to dish them out in recipes like Grilled Pineapple Burgers with Honey Garlic Barbecue Sauce or Avocado Toast Dogs, give them a quick sear. If you're unsure, reference the recommended cook times on the packaging.

**Keep it separate.** During these seasonal celebrations, there's often some people who want traditional meat and others who crave plant-based options. To satisfy your group, drop a cast-iron skillet on the grill and allow it to heat up. Put your favorite plant-based proteins in the skillet, along with veggies, to keep the grill organized.

**Top it off.** Don't skimp on the toppings. The next time you're looking to jazz up burgers, sausages or hot dogs, make an easy DIY onion jam to spread on top. While the burgers and dogs are on the grates, prepare some extra coals; once they've burned down a bit, bury foil-wrapped onions in the coals. After the onions are soft and warmed through, pull them out and enjoy a smokey onion jam.

For more simple summer recipes, visit [Lightlife.com/Recipes](http://Lightlife.com/Recipes).



## Grilled Pineapple Burgers with Honey Garlic Barbecue Sauce

Total time: 30 minutes  
Serving: 2

- 2 rings freshly cored pineapple
- 2 Lightlife Plant-Based Burger patties
- salt, to taste
- pepper, to taste
- 2 sesame seed burger buns, lightly toasted
- 1 cup baby arugula
- 1/4 cup crispy fried onions
- 2 tablespoons honey garlic barbecue sauce

Heat grill to medium. Grill pineapple slices 4-5 minutes per side until grill-marked and slightly caramelized. Cut slices in half and set aside. Wipe down grill.

Season burger patties with salt and pepper, to taste. To grill burgers from refrigerator, grill 4-5 minutes per side until evenly browned with internal temperature of 165 F.

To assemble burgers, layer toasted bottom buns with arugula then top each with burger patty and two slices grilled pineapple. Sprinkle with crispy fried onions and drizzle with barbecue sauce. Top each with top bun.



## Avocado Toast Dogs

Total time: 15 minutes  
Servings: 4

- Oil**
- 2 medium avocados
- 1/2 lemon, juice only
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon pepper
- 4 Lightlife Smart Dogs
- 4 hot dog buns
- 1/2 teaspoon everything bagel seasoning
- sriracha

Lightly coat grill grates with oil and preheat to medium heat.

In small bowl, mash avocados, lemon juice, salt and pepper. Cover and rest in refrigerator.

Grill dogs 6-7 minutes, turning frequently.

While dogs are grilling, lightly toast buns.

Spread avocado mixture on one side of toasted buns. Sprinkle each with everything bagel seasoning. Add dogs and drizzle with sriracha.

Times **Feature**

## Masks

*Continued from page 1*

must keep a readily available supply of N95 masks for unvaccinated workers. But unvaccinated workers aren't required to use the N95 masks - they can use a cloth mask or other face covering.

Last month, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention said fully vaccinated people can resume most indoor and outdoor activities without face masks - even if they are around unvaccinated people. Newsom said the state would adopt those guidelines June 15. The mandates create confusion as one they set a set of standards for people dining out, attending movies, and going to school as well as another set of rules for people at work.

### What about schools?

The CDC recommends schools continue to require face masks and implement social distancing, for now. Many young people have not been vaccinated and/or are not able to be vaccinated yet - children between the ages of 12 and 15 only became eligible for vaccinations May 12, and younger children still aren't eligible. Most Universities have not changed their requirement that face masks must be worn when inside campus buildings, even for those who have been vaccinated.

## SUMMER IS JUST AROUND THE CORNER

### Kids will have a blast making new friends and tackling S.T.E.A.M. projects

Who's ready to have the best summer ever? Snapology is ready to get kids back to being kids this summer with a full season of quality STEAM-themed Summer Camps in Almaden Valley!

The camps are the perfect mix of creativity, activity, teamwork, and hands-on learning experiences for children ages 4-14.

"Campers will be having so much fun participating in popular programs like Minecraft, Animation, Robotics, STEAM Survivor, and Movie Favorites that they won't even realize how much they are learning," said Amita Dhingra, Owner of Snapology Los Gatos.

Kids will have a blast making new friends and tackling S.T.E.A.M. projects with Snapology all summer long. The camps keep kids' brains engaged and active all summer, but shhh don't tell them it's educational!

The Snapology Summer Camps will be following all local Covid-19 guidelines to make sure children have a safe and enjoyable summer.

To learn more, visit: [www.snapology.com/location/losgatos](http://www.snapology.com/location/losgatos) To register, visit: [bit.ly/ASA-Snap-SummerCamp2021](https://bit.ly/ASA-Snap-SummerCamp2021)



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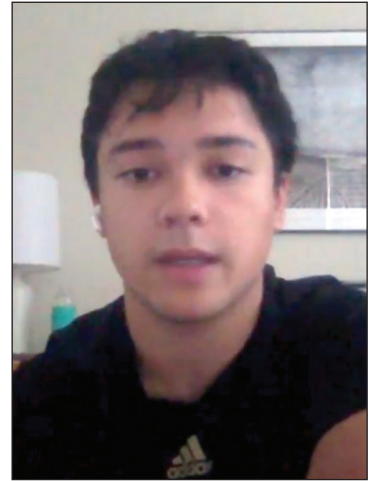


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## Pinewood School student selects East San Jose for his little free library

By William Bellou  
Publisher

Jacob Tidalgo, a senior at Pinewood School in Los Altos Hills in Social Entrepreneurship, created and placed a little free library in East San Jose.

In his two-year Social Entrepreneurship class, students focused on creating projects for the well being of the surrounding community. For his project, Tidalgo decided to construct a little free library.

"After seeing lots of little free libraries

around my neighborhood and others that I would visit, I decided I wanted to place a library where it wasn't so common," Tidalgo said. "I placed a little free library in East San Jose and then one at my own school."

Tidalgo's motivation was driven by the prospect of others being able to share and exchange books where they might not have otherwise.

While the new little free library was an instant success, most of the books were specialized books and novels. Tidalgo decided he needed to also add children's books to the collection.

"Now more than ever in the pandemic and while people have been stuck at home, reading is a great way to pass time while stimulating your brain at the same time and to those who don't have as easy access to literature these libraries are most valuable," Tidalgo explained.

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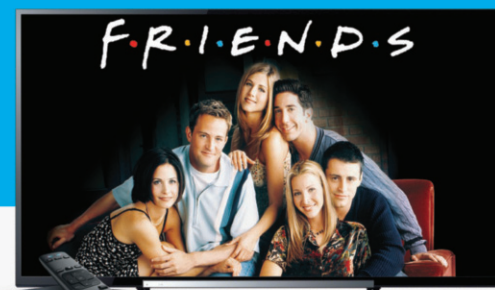
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Times **OpEd**



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 lead-

ing to higher 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.



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Times Feature



## Report: 2021's Best & Worst Cities for Staycations

With around 33% of Americans not planning to take a trip this summer, the personal-finance website WalletHub today released its report on 2021's Best & Worst Cities for Staycations.

To identify the best spots for staying local, WalletHub compared more than 180 cities across 46 key indicators of a fun-filled yet wallet-friendly staycation. Our data set ranges from parks per capita to restaurant-meal costs to the share of residents who are vaccinated.

### Best Cities for Staycations

1. Honolulu, HI
2. Orlando, FL
3. San Francisco, CA
4. Charleston, SC
5. Las Vegas, NV
6. Portland, ME
7. Chicago, IL

8. Seattle, WA
  9. San Diego, CA
  10. Cincinnati, OH
- Worst Cities for Staycations**

173. Columbus, GA
174. Garland, TX
175. Newark, NJ
176. Chesapeake, VA
177. Montgomery, AL
178. Aurora, CO
179. North Las Vegas, NV
180. Hialeah, FL
181. Chula Vista, CA
182. Fremont, CA

### Best vs. Worst

- New York City has the most parks (per square root of population), 1.478147, which is 23.1 times more than in Hialeah, Florida, the city with the fewest at 0.064011.

- Orlando, Florida, has the most zoos & aquariums (per square root of population), 0.013209, which is 38.3 times more than in New York, the city with the fewest at 0.000345.

- To view the full report and your city's rank, visit: [wallethub.com/edu/best-cities-for-staycations/4341](http://wallethub.com/edu/best-cities-for-staycations/4341)

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Times **OpEd**

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*

## 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 evictions 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 lockouts during the pandemic. At 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 [that are] in danger by the traumatic threat of lockouts and evictions.

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



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Times **Community News**

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## Khushboo

*Continued from page 1*

podcasts with experts, and campaigns to reach the public.

While there are several other organizations with similar missions, Edupod enhances their goal by emanating the voice of their generation through a simplified but accurate lens. They're known to provide credible information with their 3+ source fact check. Their podcasts with other medical experts help to educate their generation in a way most situated for them. For instance, Khushboo's interview with Dietician Kamini Kelkar on the correlation between Dietary Needs and Cancer educated people around the world on the importance and impact of diets.

With the breakout of COVID-19, Edupod was quick to switch its focus on the emerging virus and its effect on communities. The organization helped more than 250+ medical workers at the Good Samaritan Hospital with a Thank You Lunch and recognized their selfless work through thank you cards, funded by money earned by their fundraiser. The event celebrated and saluted the hard work of the COVID-19 warriors.

Edupod was one of the earliest organizations to recognize the inevitable downfall trend in the mental health of the public with the rising COVID-19 cases. To target this issue, the Edupod team re-oriented their efforts towards the mental health of students at high schools with the media usage of webinars.

Edupod recently assisted and educated students of Andrew Hill High School by presenting significant research, assessed populations with similar symptoms, and gave treatment choices. They have continued to spread this idea of media and medicine through their local, national, and international expansions: Los Angeles, Irvine, and Berkeley are a few chapters located in California while they have members located in Maryland and Texas along with their chapters in the process in Vietnam, Canada, and Philippines, to name just a few.

"With such a strong and bold movement, it is important to recognize the reason behind such an initiative, Khushboo said. "I made this organization so it is efficient and easier for others at any age to learn about their health and people's health. It is important to educate our-



**Khushboo Teotia**, Founder and President of National, 501(c)3 nonprofit organization- Edupod Inc.

selves on diseases because we hold the power to change a survivor or victim's life. By educating individuals, we are able to raise money for specific causes; by the community, for the community."

When asked what makes her organization unique, Khushboo responded, "Edupod is one of the only organizations that continues to educate others in a creative and advanced way. It is rare to see an organization merge media and arts with medicine; however, I believe we have and will continue to do our best to cater towards this precise mission and merge."

Khushboo and her organization Edupod Inc. have continued to make an everlasting impact on societies around the globe. And, to express this recurring theme, they are preparing to launch their biggest event yet, the USA National "Edupod's Young Research Creativity Contest." With support from media companies, sponsorships from business, and support from school districts, they're hosting a 3-division contest- elementary, middle, and high school that urges children to express their disease research through a creative lens. (For example, high schoolers are given a choice to design a website full of research information of a specific disease subtopic.)

To learn more about this competition, the organization, and to join its team check out <https://edupodorganization.wixsite.com/edupod> and follow them on @edupod.inc for weekly updates and infographics.

## Consumers inching their way towards embracing new vehicle technology

*Survey finds only 14% of drivers would be comfortable riding in a self-driving vehicle*

AAA's latest automated vehicle survey finds more than half --58% -- of drivers want to see Advanced Driver Assistance Systems (ADAS), like automatic emergency braking and lane assistance, in their next vehicle, with a majority (80%) looking for advancements to these systems.

These findings signal that people are open to more sophisticated vehicle technology, which opens the road to boosting public acceptance of autonomous vehicles.

"Consumers will likely have at least one type of ADAS in their next vehicle, and in many cases, this will provide their first interaction with advanced vehicle technology," said Matt Alfano, Vice President, Mobility Innovation for AAA Northern California. "This experience will influence driver opinion of future vehicle automation and reinforces the need for automakers to

improve vehicle technology by expanding testing and focusing on real-world scenarios."

While Americans' interest in owning a car with more advanced technology grows, they are still struggling to warm up to the idea of full-vehicle automation. Similar to last year's results, AAA's 2021 annual automated vehicle survey found:

14% of drivers would be comfortable riding in a vehicle that drives itself

86% of drivers would be afraid to ride in an automated vehicle

AAA Northern California believes the key to overcoming these fears is with information and education.

"It's critical to educate consumers about the benefits of the technology and where there's room for improvement," Alfano said. "With consumer safety in mind, GoMentum is ready to help vehicle manufacturers improve this available technology while paving the way for the future of all mobility."



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# Almaden Times

Times **Community News**

# 'Wheelie' good news from Lake Cunningham sports park

## Skatepark, bike park reopen for members

Following a temporary closure due to the pandemic, the Department of Parks, Recreation and Neighborhood Services' (PRNS) Lake Cunningham Action Sports Park in Evergreen is welcoming back skaters, scooter-riders and bikers. All guests must have a membership to make a timed reservation in advance.

The 68,000 square-foot facility is home to California's largest skatepark with the world's largest full pipe and vert wall, and an 8.5-acre bike park with seven diverse riding zones to challenge riders of all skill levels. The Park is designed for skateboards, scooters and bikes.

Action Sports Park is following all City, County and State health and safety guidelines, including timed reservations, wearing masks at all times, a health screening upon entry, social distancing protocols and enhanced disinfecting measures throughout the facility.

"The pandemic really brought to light how critical outdoor recreation is for physical and mental wellness," says Parks Facilities Supervisor, Joe Albayalde. "We want all of our visitors to feel safe when they come to visit, which is why Action Sports Park is reopening in COVID-modified phases."

During the first phase of reopening, the Pro Shop will remain closed. Guests must bring their own refreshments and safety gear. Safety gear, including helmets, knee pads, and elbow pads are required to enter the skate park. While riding in the bike park, a proper helmet is required.

"It's exciting to get the park back in action," says Parks Specialist, Kyle Lussier. "Our members are eager to get back to shredding the park, and our staff are thrilled to host our Action Sports Camp this summer."

### Action Sports Camp

Action Sports Camp provides youth ages 6-12 with an unforgettable camp experience in skateboarding, scootering and biking from June 14 to August 13, Monday through Fri-

day from 8 – 11 a.m.

Summer camps are modified to follow all state and county health and safety guidelines. All camps require face coverings, daily health screenings will be performed, and all programs are limited to 12 or fewer children. The City of San José will continue to monitor all state and county health and safety guidelines and will make any necessary adjustments.

Scholarships are available for families and

individuals who meet the qualifications for both memberships and camps. Families must apply in-person at Action Sports Park's information booth or a community center. Scholarships can be used at any program location.

For more information about Lake Cunningham Action Sports Park, to purchase a membership or register for Action Sports Camp, please visit [bit.ly/sj-lcasp](https://bit.ly/sj-lcasp) or contact Action Sports Park directly at 408-794-7574.



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Located in south San Jose near Kooser Rd. and Camden Ave. (behind the Almaden Valley Athletic Club). Come make new Christian friends!

**THE EPISCOPAL CHURCH IN ALMADEN**  
6581 Camden Ave. San Jose, CA 95120. The Rev. Shelley Booth Denney, Rector Phone: 408-268-0243  
Web: [www.eca-sj.org](http://www.eca-sj.org)  
At the Episcopal Church in Almaden (ECA), we are joyful followers of Jesus Christ. Through worship, study, fellowship and outreach, we strive to nurture and grow a strong faith community of believers, a family of all ages, where each member feels welcomed, loved, valued and empowered to serve. Children are especially welcomed and cherished as an important part of God's family. All junior high and senior high students are welcome to participate in our Youth Groups. During the school year we have joint Sunday School with our sister church, the Congregational Church of Almaden Valley, UCC. The Episcopal Church in Almaden offers the following regular opportunities for worship: Sunday at 7:30AM and 10:45AM, Holy Communion service. Each Sunday service is followed by a coffee hour for friendship and conversation.



**EVERGREEN ISLAMIC CENTER (EIC)**  
<http://www.eicsanjose.org>  
2486 Ruby Ave, San Jose CA 95148.  
(408) 239-6668  
"As-Salaamu-Alaikum" the English meaning is "Peace be upon you".  
Q) What is Islam, who are Muslims, and what is the Quran?  
A) Islam is a faith and way of life. Islam began in the 7th century. People who follow Islam are known as Muslims. The Quran is the Divine book that guides Muslims to practice Islam. "Hufazik Allah Waeayilatak" the English meaning is "May Allah (swt) protect you and your family". Please visit our website to learn more.

**FIRST CHURCH DOWNTOWN**  
Worshipping at 55 N. 7th Street, in downtown San Jose. (Horace Mann school) [firstchurchdowntown.com](http://firstchurchdowntown.com)  
Telephone: (408) 294-7254 x310. We are a community serving the Christ from the heart of the City, working to know Jesus and make Jesus known by serving, worshipping, and learning together. Worship services are at 10:00 AM at the Horace Mann Community Center (7th and Santa Clara Streets). Worship includes both contemporary and traditional music, a message that is relevant to real life, based in the Bible, and meaningful to people of all ages and backgrounds. We work in our community to provide real assistance and long-term, life-saving solutions: food, housing, counseling, and spiritual direction. Our children's & families' ministries include Sunday classes, outdoor family activities such as bike rides and fishing trips. Come, Make a Difference and feel the difference God can make in your life!



**GRACE CHURCH OF EVERGREEN**  
[www.GraceChurchSJ.net](http://www.GraceChurchSJ.net)  
See you on Facebook  
2650 ABORN ROAD at Kettmann, across from Evergreen Public Library. Serving Evergreen for over 50 Years. John S Goldstein, Pastor  
Christian Worship every

Sunday at 11.00 am  
Together let us build lives toward excellence!  
Music Institute  
(408) 791-7772  
After School lessons on Piano, Violin, Viola, Flute  
PreSchool, Age 2-6 years. Caring for your child with God's love and affection.

**HOLY SPIRIT CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
Faith.Knowledge. Community - this is our promise to our members. If you are looking for an active Christian faith community, we invite you to experience Holy Spirit Parish Community. All are welcome! We are located at 1200 Redmond Avenue, San Jose, CA 95120. Mass is celebrated at 8:30 a.m. Monday - Friday. Our weekend Mass schedule is Saturday 5 p.m., Sunday 8 a.m., 9:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m. and 6 p.m. Rite of Reconciliation is every Saturday at 4 p.m. or by appointment. Our Parish Office is open Monday - Thursday 8:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. and Friday 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. Call 408-997-5100 for recorded information or 408-997-5101 to speak with someone in our parish office. Information on Faith Formation for children and adults can be obtained by calling our Catechetical Office at 408-997-5115. Get in the loop with our 3sixty High School Youth Ministry by calling 408-997-5106. Holy Spirit School serves grades Pre-K through 8th, and is located at 1198 Redmond Avenue. You can reach the school office at 408-268-0794.

**the point.church**  
**THE POINT CHURCH**  
3695 Rose Terrasse Cir  
San Jose, CA 95148  
(408) 270-7646  
English Service:  
Sundays at 9:30 & 11:00 AM  
Spanish Service:  
11:00 AM  
Cambodian Service:  
11:00 AM  
Cantonese Service:  
11:00 AM  
Mandarin Service:  
11:00AM  
Youth Extreme Point (7th-12th grade):  
Every Saturday at 6:30 PM - 8:30 PM

**SAINT ANTHONY CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
We invite you to become a part of our hospitable, intimate Catholic parish. We are a caring commu-

nity, promoting spiritual growth, reaching out to people in need and wherever you get to know people by name. We offer children's religious education (CREATE); Youth Ministry (BLAST & X-STATIC); Scripture Study (day & evening); Senior's Group and many other adult ministries as well. Saint Anthony parish is located in Almaden Valley at 20101 McKean Road, San Jose, 95120. Our weekend Masses are at 4 p.m. on Saturday at our historic church at 21800 Bertram Road in New Almaden, CA 95042 and on Sunday at 8:30 a.m., 10:30 a.m., and 5:30 p.m. at the McKean Road location. Our Parish Office is open Monday 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. and Tuesday thru Thursday, 9 a.m. - 12 p.m. and 1 - 4 p.m. For more information, stop by the Parish Office or call (408) 997-4800, or visit our website at [www.churchstanthony.com](http://www.churchstanthony.com). Fr. Larry Hendel, Pastor.



God is One  
ਰਬ ਇਕ ਹੈ  
Rab Ik Hai

**SAN JOSE GURDWARA**  
3636 Gurdwara Ave.  
San Jose, CA 95148  
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.San-JoseGurdwara.org>

**ST. FRANCIS OF ASSISI CATHOLIC CHURCH**  
5111 San Felipe Rd., San Jose, CA 95135  
408-223-1562.  
[www.stfrancisofassisi.com](http://www.stfrancisofassisi.com) or [www.stfrancisofassisipreschool.org](http://www.stfrancisofassisipreschool.org)  
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!

**For Worship listing ads, call 408.483-5458**

*The Almaden Senior Association members are a diverse group of enthusiastic, active, 50+ adults who enjoy new learning opportunities, new experiences, and new adventures.*

**Membership in the Almaden Senior Association offers discounts and opportunities to enjoy . . .**

- exercise classes for all levels of ability;
- lunches and other social programs organized and run by members of the Association;
- book clubs, cooking, computer and photography classes;
- trips to local and not so local places of interest such as the Steinbeck Museum in Salinas, Whale Watching in Monterey, casino trips and more.

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

**Connected**

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

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

Join us today, meet new people and get involved with classes and programs that will enhance your life and open new doors.

**For more information, go to [www.almadenseniors.org](http://www.almadenseniors.org)  
Contact via email: [alamadenseniors1@gmail.com](mailto:alamadenseniors1@gmail.com)**



**Notice**

**Notice of Nondiscriminatory Policy as to Students**

The Agape Schools admit students of any race, color, national and ethnic origin to all the rights, privileges, programs, and activities generally accorded or made available to students at the school. It does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national and ethnic origin in administration of its educational policies, admissions policies, scholarship and loan programs, and athletic and other school administered programs.

SJMN#6547945; January 28, 2021

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**Location: 5440 Thornwood Drive, Suite F;**  
**Hours: 9 am-5 pm M-F 9 am-12 noon S-S; Phone: 408.363.4182; Email: info@advantagedriversed.com | Website: advantagedriversed.com**

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The COVID crisis has cost us all something. Many have lost jobs and financial security. Have \$10K In Debt? Credit Cards. Medical Bills. Car Loans. Call NATIONAL DEBT RELIEF! We can help! Get a FREE debt relief quote: Call 1-650-383-1785

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**Singles**

**Almaden Valley (Senior) Singles**

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

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

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*The Swan has been the #1 Agent in Almaden Valley each year for the last 12 years as measured by Dollars per Agent Per Year. And 2020 was no exception. She is the only Almaden Valley specialist to have been nationally ranked and recognized twice by The Wall Street Journal/RealTrends for being in the Top 250 Agents in the US. Additionally, Swan is consistently among the Top 100 Agents in the SF Bay Area.*

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

**Therese Swan**  
 408.656.8240  
 tswan@tswan.com  
 AlmadenValleyRealEstate.com  
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