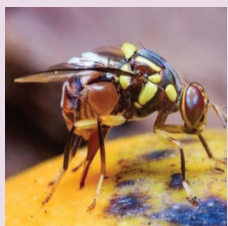


Agriculture officials taking steps to eradicate Oriental Fruit Flies detected in San Jose **SEE PAGE 4**



Educational loss
San Jose school district abruptly cancels home study program
SEE PAGE 14

San Jose approves penalties for those encouraging sideshows
PAGE 15



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JULY 9 – JULY 22, 2021 ■ VOL. 34, NO. 14

Leland High School student Claudius Tewari wins Dean's List Award at FIRST Robotics Championship

By William Bellou
Publisher

Claudius T. Tewari of Almaden Valley has been awarded Dean's List Winner at the FIRST (For Inspiration and Recognition of Science and Technology) virtual championship, June 26.

Tewari, a senior at Leland High School and member of the school's FIRST Robotics Competition Team



San Jose has highest percentage of million-dollar homes

Two U.S. metro areas hold this distinction

San Jose and San Francisco have topped the list of the U.S. metros with the most homes valued over \$1 million.

While paying more than \$1 million for a home in the Bay Area isn't surprising, home prices have grown so much in recent years, it seems almost more uncommon to pay less than that.

The median home price in the Bay Area is now more than \$1.33 million in according to the California Association of Realtors, up more than 8% from the previous month and more than 35% from the previous year.

604 Quixilver, is one of only 10 World Championship winners chosen from the 450 finalists from a total of 1,540 Dean's List semifinalist submissions from teams from around the world. Claudius, who was a junior at the time of the award, was announced a Dean's List Finalist at the San Francisco Regional.

"Students who earn FIRST Dean's List Award status as Semi-Finalists, Finalist or Winner, are great examples of student leaders who have led their Teams and communities to increased awareness for FIRST and its mission," said Helen Arrington, San Jose Unified District Math Instructional Coach and FIRST Team 604 Advisor/Mentor. These students have also achieved personal technical expertise and accomplishment."



Claudius Tewari (center) and his teammates work on a FIRST project.

"I'm really honored to have been chosen as one of the 10 Dean's List winners," Tewari said. "I definitely could not have won this award without the support of all of 604's members and the guidance of its mentors. When I first started FLL (FIRST LEGO League) back in third grade, I could never have imagined I would get to work on six

foot tall 120lb robots, meet people who were just as passionate as me about engineering and robotics, and teach and inspire so many students."

Due to the pandemic, this season's model was modified to allow teams to participate at home. The competitions were replaced with
See TEWARI, page 9

"When I first started FLL ... I could never have imagined I would get to work on six foot tall 120 lb. robots, meet people who were just as passionate as me about engineering and robotics, and teach and inspire so many students."
—Claudius Tewari

LOCAL WINNER

Apoorva wins coveted first place math prize

Steven H. Strogatz Math Communications Award

Gems in STEM founder and writer, **Apoorva Panidapu** from San Jose (pictured), won first place for Steven H. Strogatz Prize for Math Communication award presented to high school students worldwide by the National Museum of Mathematics (MoMath) on Sunday, June 27.

Every year, MoMath, the only math muse-



The Strogatz Prize is awarded to a select group of international high school students for creating projects that uniquely incorporate math in social media, art, literature, videos and performance.

um in North America, located in New York City, awards the Strogatz Prize to a select group of international high school students for creating projects that uniquely incorporate math in social media, art, literature, videos and performance.

"MoMath is delighted to award the second annual Strogatz Prize to talented high school students who have created exceptional projects that reveal their love of math in so many different ways," said MoMath's CEO and Executive Director Cindy Lawrence. "This

See AWARD, page 7

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



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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.

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Valley Currents

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

New methodology lowers reported COVID deaths 25 percent in Santa Clara County

By William Bellou
Publisher

Santa Clara County's COVID-19 reported fatalities dropped by nearly 25 percent as the county recast its methodology for counting deaths throughout the pandemic late last week.

For the last year and a half, health officials have tracked and publicized "deaths with COVID," said Assistant Public Health Officer Dr. Sarah Rudman, meaning that anyone who had the coronavirus when he or she died was considered part of the death toll.

If a county resident had cancer or was involved in a car accident but tested positive when receiving medical care or after being pronounced dead, he or she was added to the county's tally. Now officials only count those for whom coronavirus is listed as part of the cause of death on the death certificate.

Rudman explained there was always an informational lag time of deaths coming in about why or how someone might have died and the need to get real time information to the public to help people understand how to stay safe. "Now we're able to do that deep review of the death certificates to make those detailed assessments."

"The vast majority of deaths that



occurred during the winter and summer surges have been confirmed to be from COVID-19, Rudman said. But in the spring — as COVID-19 rates were lower and many of the most medically vulnerable residents had been at least partially vaccinated — the county has discovered bigger gaps between those who died with COVID-19 versus those who died of COVID-19."

"The county has discovered bigger gaps between those who died with COVID-19 versus those who died of COVID-19."

LETTER

No taxation without representation

Dear Editor,

No taxation without representation. It's one of the key reasons why America fought for its independence. So why do we continue to tax Washington, D.C. residents without giving them proper representation in Congress?

The population of D.C. is comparable to the populations of entire states like Alaska, Wyoming, North Dakota, and Vermont. Each of those states gets two senators apiece and a voting House member to advocate for their needs in Congress. But because of its status as a district, D.C. has no senators and its one representative in the House is prevented from voting. Yet, residents of the District still live, work, serve in the military and on juries—and yes, pay federal taxes.

Denying hundreds of thousands of Americans a voice in our democracy goes against what this country claims it stands for. But we can easily change this by making Washington, D.C. the 51st state. And it's not as difficult to do as it sounds! Statehood for the District can become a reality by making its way through Congress like any other bill—and that bill has already passed the House.

Adding D.C. as the 51st state would be a huge win in giving full congressional representation to hundreds of thousands of Americans. That's why I'm urging my senators and my community to support D.C. statehood.

Courtney Gartin
Almaden Valley



Fruit flies lay eggs inside fruits, shown here. Photo by Shutterstock

Agriculture officials taking steps to eradicate Oriental Fruit Flies detected in San Jose

By William Bellou
Publisher

The recent detection of two Oriental Fruit Flies a half mile apart in the city of San Jose has prompted state and federal agriculture officials to mobilize the eradication of the yellow spotted destructive bug.

The California Department of Food and Agriculture and the U.S. Department of Agriculture announced it has begun an extensive survey and eradication project in response to the detection of two Oriental Fruit Flies on June 22 and June 23.

The eradication treatment is "not harmful" to people and other animals according to officials. Trained state workers attach an attractant to trees and also telephone poles approximately 10 feet off the ground and out of public reach to an area of about 15 square miles. The targeted attractant is a mixture of OFF pheromone and an organic pesticide that attracts male flies to the mixture, and they die soon after consuming it.

Crops in danger

California crops at risk from the Fruit Fly infestation include apples,

pears, citrus, dates, avocados, tomatoes, peppers, and a variety of vegetables, officials said. More than 230 different fruits and vegetables could be affected when the female lays eggs inside produce hatching into damaging maggots.

The state will declare a quarantine, that could negatively affect local growers, if a mated female, eight or more adult flies, or any larvae are detected.

"Fruit flies can be extremely destructive to our robust agriculture economy in Santa Clara County, as well as harmful to community and backyard gardens," said County of Santa Clara Agricultural Commissioner Joe Deviney.

Deviney is urging everyone to not bring, or ship, plants or fruits into the state without first checking with the Agriculture Department.

Bicycle Safety Stop & Freedom to Walk Act pass CA Senate Transportation Committee

The Bicycle Safety Stop bill AB 122 and the Freedom to Walk Act AB 1238 both passed out of the California Senate Transportation Committee.

Bicycle Safety Stop AB 122

AB 122 will replace the requirement that people on bikes stop at stop signs with a requirement to yield and slow and stop if necessary for safety, including to yield the right of way to pedestrians.

More than 75 organizations across the state signed a letter in support of the bill. The California Bicycle Coalition created a video that explains how bicycle safety stops work in the real world. The bicycle stop-as-yield is proven to increase safety for people on bikes.

"The Bicycle Safety Stop Bill doesn't change existing right-of-way laws. Instead, AB 122 reforms the rules of the road to accommodate the safe and logical bike riding that people are already doing. It also removes a pretext for police to harass Black Californians," said Dave Snyder, Executive Director of CalBike.

Freedom to Walk Act AB1238

AB 1238 will make it legal for pedestrians in Cal-



ifornia to cross mid-block and against traffic lights, provided they don't interfere with traffic. The bill is authored by Assemblymember Phil Ting of San Francisco. CalBike and a coalition of more than 90 groups and individuals support the repeal of jaywalking laws.

"The incredible rate at which pedestrians are dying from crashes should compel us to understand why fellow Californians navigate as such, not criminalize them. This is just the first of many steps in our fight to provide all those who walk and roll with a little more dignity," shared John Yi, Executive Director of Los Angeles Walks.

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Times **Community News**

Free curbside junk pick up

Unlimited cardboard and recycle pick up

By Kevin Larsen
Times Staff Writer

Who knows how long free programs will be around, especially free curbside junk pickup?

It is a wonderful opportunity to have your junk and recycle items picked up at no cost. Just call your San Jose recycle company and they will schedule free pick up of allowed items.

The city has a list of items you can set out-side your house on the curb with appointment for pick up. They will pick up sofas, mattresses, countertops, doors, air conditioners, lawn mowers, play structures, rain

gutters, trampolines, wheelchairs and more than 400 other things for free!

Did you know you can bag and strap to set out extra trash?

This is kind of a secret you may be unaware of with regard to weekly recycle bin pick up.

Without a phone call, you can bag your trash strap your cardboard to put out alongside your trash bin and the driver will get out and throw the items into the garbage truck. Remember, the bag must be white so they can see what is inside when they pick up. Large white bags can be found at hardware stores.

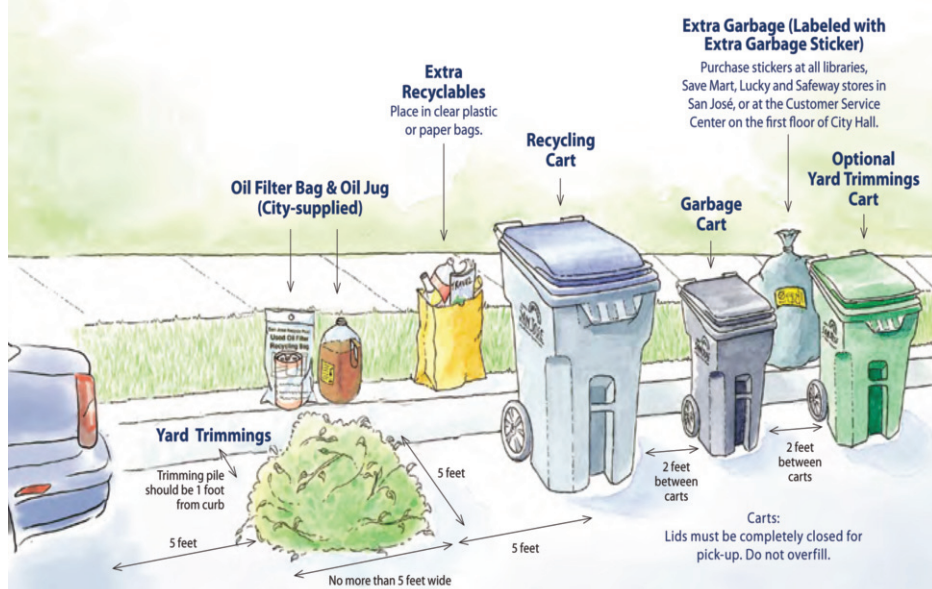
Times may change but for now there are many free opportunities to get rid of trash and junk. It might be good to take advantage of this situation before new changes take place.

Editor's Note: There are a myriad of items that the City of San Jose helps pick up with the help of the garbage and recycle companies. To learn more, use this abbreviated link: tinyurl.com/eypa4xsa

Curbside Setout Instructions

Para obtener esta información en español, llame al (408) 535-3500.

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Times **Community News**

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JULY 19-23
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FREE



Joey Chestnut of San Jose downs his 76th frank at Nathan's Famous Hot Dog Eating Contest held on Sunday, July 4th. Photo Credit: Daily Advent

Chestnut wins 14th hot dog eating title; sets new record

San Jose's chow-down champ Joey "Jaws" Chestnut broke his own record by gulping his way to a 14th win in the men's Nathan's Famous Hot Dog Eating Contest on Sunday, July 4th.

Chestnut downed 76 franks and buns in 10 minutes; one additional dog when he set the men's record last year.

"It just felt good," Chestnut, said in an ESPN interview after his win Sunday. "Even if I was uncomfortable, having everybody cheer me and push me, it made me feel good."

This year's event was held at the minor-league baseball stadium, Maimonides Park, with 5,000 spectators.

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Award

Continued from page 1

friendly competition celebrates students of all backgrounds who, through their unique talents, inspire others to appreciate the beauty and wonder of mathematics in the world around us.”

Apoorva Panidapu is a 16-year-old mathematics student, artist, and advocate for youth and gender minorities in STEAM. She writes a blog called “Gems in STEM” and frequently posts the essays on Cantor’s Paradise, the #1 math site on Medium.com. She sees her blog as “a place to learn about math topics in an accessible, light-hearted manner. I assume no more than basic math knowledge and include fun tidbits for learners of all experience levels. For both my own fun and for readers, I weave in pop culture, pick-up lines, and over-the-top stories to let people into the fantastical world of math, and to show them that anyone can enjoy anything.”

The judges were very impressed with Apoorva’s joyful, elegantly written blog posts on a wide range of math topics, from the liar’s paradox and partitions to tessellations and fractals. Combining clear explanations with an appealing layout and well-chosen graphics, Gems in STEM is itself a gem. The judging panel loved the wide range of Apoorva’s blog posts. They touch on history, etymology, and puzzles, and make connections to everything from art and architecture to science and nature. Apoorva’s uplifting message is that math is everywhere and approachable by anyone from any background.

The Steven H. Strogatz Prize for Math Communication is awarded based on content, creativity and communication. This year, MoMath received 63 entries from 15 states and 11 countries, including Brazil, Czech Republic, China, India, Korea, Mexico, Philippines, Saudi Arabia, Spain, Turkey and the United States.

“It’s a thrill to see the creative work of these students,” said Steven Strogatz, American mathematician and Jacob Gould Schurman Professor of Applied Mathematics at Cornell University. “The winners are all so imaginative, and their projects reflect such great effort to communicate clearly and even entertainingly. Bravo to all of them.”

“A huge, heartfelt thank you to the *Almaden Times* and William Bellou for publishing my articles and allowing me to share the beautiful world of math with my local community,” Apoorva added.

California expands Golden State Stimulus program

By Erica Yee, Frida Qi and Jackie Botts
Image via iStock

California is expanding its Golden State Stimulus program for low-income households to middle-class families.

Under a new budget that Gov. Gavin Newsom is expected to sign, state lawmakers agreed to spend \$8.1 billion to help out millions of working families. That comes on top of \$3.8 billion sent out earlier this year to low-income families, including undocumented workers, bringing the total package to \$11.9 billion — unprecedented for any state.

What does that mean for you?

Generally, households earning up to \$75,000 in adjusted gross income will qualify for some state stimulus. The governor says it should cover 78% of California taxpayers and will benefit two in three Californians.

Families with at least one child or other

dependent will get an extra boost. And undocumented workers will get an assist too since they were excluded from recent federal stimu-



lus packages. But some residents receiving disability benefits through Social Security Disability Insurance, a federal program, were left out of

the state’s stimulus program.

State officials stress the need to file your taxes to get your California stimulus — you won’t get a check without it. The stimulus checks are \$600 or \$1,200 per tax return.

The state tax agency plans to send out the second round of payments in September.

The Legislature approved a record \$262.6 billion spending plan for the fiscal year that began July 1. It was fueled by a \$76 billion state surplus and \$27 billion in federal aid.

In addition to expanded stimulus checks, California committed to increasing health care for undocumented immigrants, spending billions to alleviate homelessness and helping renters still struggling through the pandemic.

This article is part of The California Divide, a collaboration among newsrooms examining income inequity and economic survival in California.



State Legislature approves funds for litter abatement in Santa Clara County

Senator Dave Cortese (D-San Jose) has secured \$2 million to assist local jurisdictions with the removal of trash and debris from local streets and along state highways in Santa Clara County.

The Budget Act of 2021 (SB/AB 129) that the State Legislature passed this week included Senator Cortese’s proposal under which the Santa Clara County Consumer & Environmental Protection Agency (CEPA), in collaboration with the County’s 15 cities, would identify and prioritize beautification areas and litter abatement opportunities in Santa Clara County.

Senator Cortese issued the following statement on his proposal’s inclusion in the Budget Act of 2021:

“Trash accumulation and littering is a mounting concern in our community that has placed an unfair burden on our residents.

“This is an issue I have gotten to know well during my time as a City Councilmember and County Supervisor, including the cross-agency collaboration that is necessary for alleviation.

“I would like to thank my colleagues in the State Legislature for recognizing this concern and prioritizing local community investments such as this in our state budget.

“By expanding an existing program, this funding can swiftly and effectively address litter and debris hotspots across all neighborhoods in Santa Clara County that need abatement or pose safety concerns.”

The funding would provide resources to implement cleanup programs including trash, debris, and overgrown vegetation throughout the county. Priority would be given to hotspots along freeway interchanges and Caltrans right of ways. Additionally, funds may be used to address hotspots that pose a safety concern in neighborhoods.

Currently, CEPA manages a multi-year agreement with Caltrans and San Jose Conservation Corp (SJCC) to cleanup Caltrans right of ways Countywide. The agreement provides that SJCC, overseen by CEPA, will be responsible for the removal of waste from CalTrans right of ways. The agreement has led to the efficient cleanup and beautification of numerous areas in the county, and will be expiring in the 2022 fiscal year.

CEPA has developed the relationships and processes needed to successfully expand cleanups to more areas across the 15 cities located in the County and outside of the CalTrans right of ways.

For more information, contact Tara Sreekrishnan, Office of Senator Dave Cortese, at 408 480 7833 or tara.sreekrishnan@sen.ca.gov.

Editor’s note: Senator Dave Cortese represents State Senate District 15 which encompasses most of Santa Clara County, including the cities of Campbell, Los Gatos, Cupertino, Saratoga, Monte Sereno, and much of San Jose, stretching from the Santa Cruz Mountains to the west and Mountain Hamilton Range to the east.

Anderson Dam drained and not to be used for 10 years

Construction starts on Outlet Tunnel Project

Valley Water was joined by Federal, state, local elected officials, and community leaders gathered at Anderson Dam for a groundbreaking ceremony of the Anderson Dam Tunnel Project July 7.

The groundbreaking ceremony kicks off Valley Water starting work to build a larger

outlet tunnel next to Anderson Dam, which will allow more water to be released safely during major storms or emergencies.

Santa Clara County is currently dealing with a drought emergency, and further challenging our local water supply, the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission ordered Anderson Reservoir to be drained for public safety

County’s largest drinking water reservoir shut down

Water strengthens the dam. This means the County’s largest drinking water reservoir will be down – and unable to store drinking water – for the next 10 years during the construction of the Anderson Dam Tunnel Project and Seismic Retrofit Project. Completing work at Anderson Dam is critical as the County contends with climate change and the inevitability of future droughts, according to Valley Water officials. The Anderson Dam Tunnel Project is the first step in our work to strengthen the dam.

The contractor for the Anderson Dam Tunnel Project began mobilizing at the site in June, and construction of the 1,700-foot long tunnel is expected to begin this summer and continue until completed in approximately three years.

The tunnel project is part of the larger Anderson Dam Seismic Retrofit Project to strengthen the existing dam and spillway so it can safely withstand a large earthquake.

That Seismic project is estimated to start in 2024 and will last about seven years. Once completed, Valley Water will again be able to fill Anderson Reservoir to capacity.

About the Water District

The Santa Clara Valley Water District manages an integrated water resources system that includes the supply of clean, safe water, flood protection and stewardship of streams on behalf of Santa Clara County’s nearly 2 million residents.

For updates on the Anderson Dam Seismic Retrofit Project visit the project webpage at: www.valleywater.org/anderson-dam-project. You can also connect with the new online engagement site at beheard.valleywater.org.

Times **Local News**

Library vital to San Jose State University students remains closed

By Lorraine Gabbert

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

The San Jose Public Library welcomed back eager patrons at 23 branches earlier this week. But Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library, a critical resource to the local community, will remain closed a little longer.

The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library is a significant resource to the community, especially for students who have access to books, laptops, study spaces and free Wi-Fi.

But library managers elected to open weeks after other branches out of respect for employee safety, even though public demand for re-opening is high. “We have people every day calling us, asking when we’re going to be open,” said Victor Luu, a librarian. “We want the library to be open as much as they do. We are trying our best.”

Located in downtown San Jose at 150 East San Fernan-



do Street, the eight-story library is a partnership between San Jose State University and the city, serving as a public and university library. Summer session at the university started June 1. “San Jose State University and the San Jose

Librarian **Victor Luu** said the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library receives daily calls from people asking when it will open.

Photo by Lorraine Gabbert

Public Library will establish a reopening date as soon as possible,” said university spokesman Kenneth Mashinchi.

Luu said opening the library system was complicated. “We slowly phased in clusters of branches,” he said. “We’re the last to open mainly because of our connection with the university. We had to work with them to figure something out.” The library’s continued closure is difficult for students and faculty who depend on it. San Jose State University professor Scott Myers-Lipton said he wants the library to open “as soon as it can in light of safety.”

Related Stories

Students count on the library for printing their papers, Myers-Lipton said. It’s such an essential resource that in 2015 students led a campaign for more access to free printers. Access to computers and reference books, as well as help from librarians, are also important to students, he said. “Some research can be online,” he said. “But when I’m doing historical research, I look through old newspapers on microfiche, pulling out hidden information from history.”

12 Emergency beds

Myers-Lipton said some of his students slept at the Martin Luther King Jr. Library when they didn’t have a place to go. “It’s a safe place for students,” he said. “My students fought for 12 emergency beds, so they didn’t have to sleep at the library. We want it to be safe health-wise, but we want it to open.”

University students and faculty can borrow laptops and iPads from the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Library at no charge.

While the library is closed, librarians like Luu help patrons through a program called Express Pickup. To use this, a patron chooses a book online from the public library system, places it on hold and indicates which branch they would like to pick it up from. When they are notified it has arrived, the patron goes to the table in front of the library and calls 408-808-2304 or texts “PICKUP.” A staff member brings the item out. Returns are accepted without an appointment.

Express Pickup is not available at library branches with limited indoor services. At the open branches, the capacity limit is 50% and people are expected to wear masks and practice social distancing. Hand sanitizer is provided. The public library system is first-come, first-served. If a branch is at capacity, patrons will have to wait in a socially distanced line outside.

Luu said being able to provide pickup service is important to the library’s employees. “It means a lot to us,” he said. “As a staff member, as a library, our biggest element is customer service. We tried to figure out a way to still be able to at least lend out books while also being safe and following county guidelines.”



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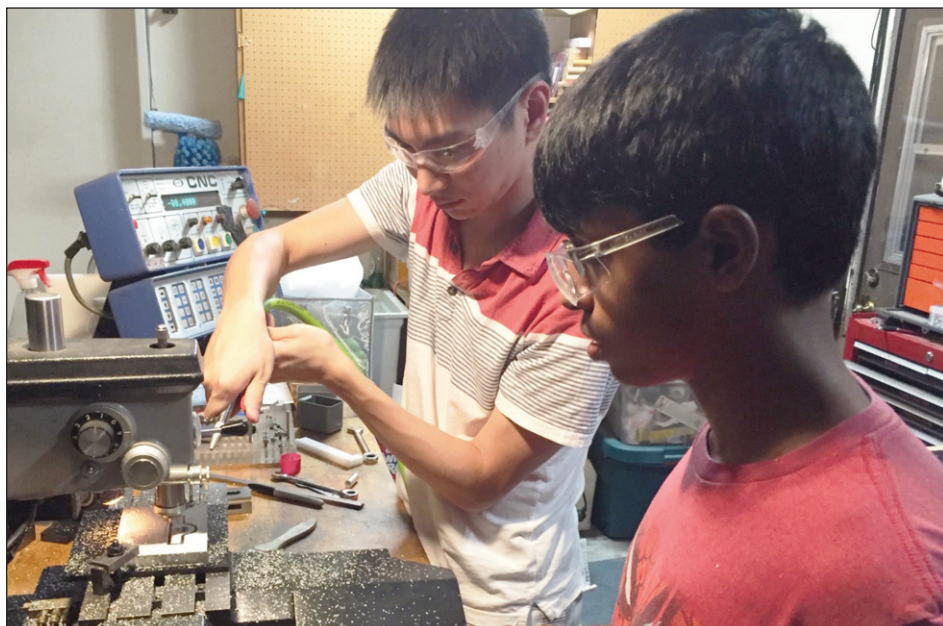
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Times **Local News**

Tewari

Continued from page 1

a game design challenge, an innovation challenge, and a robot performance challenge. The game design challenge involved creating a novel FRC game that would be judged on practicality, detail, and presentation. The innovation challenge involved identifying a real-world problem related to the “game changers” theme, designing a solution, creating a business model, and pitching your idea to judges.

The robot performance challenge (also called Infinite Recharge At Home) involved designing and programming a robot that could navigate an obstacle course (both autonomously and through human control) and launch balls fast and accurately into a goal. Teams had to record videos of their robot performing these tasks for judging.

Tewari currently serves as the VP of Engineering on Team 604, with experience in Java, C++, Python, and CAD. His interests include: controls theory, trajectory planning, and mechanical design.

Team Leader

“As VP of Engineering, I lead my team in the construction of the robot,” Tewari explained. “This all starts with teaching new members before the 6-week season about the tools and processes we use to design, manufacture, and program the robot. Once the season starts I lead the many sub-teams working on different parts of the robot to ensure that all the different parts come together to create a functional robot. I also worked on some of the design and programming elements, such as helping create the 3D model of the robot and developing the robot’s autonomous driving functions. Finally, I volunteer at many of 604’s demos and workshops, teaching kids ‘Scratch’ programming or LEGO ‘Mindstorms’ to promote STEM in my local community.”

Tewari said since he could not work at school due to the pan-

demic, he took the robot home and kept it in his garage, which allowed the entire team the ability to continue their virtual work on it by designing parts to be 3D printed or developing new software.

“When it came time to record the videos for the robot performance challenges, we set up a small field outside of my house and ran the robot there,” Tewari said. “At the end of the season we did really well, ranking third in our group and also winning the robot Autonomous Award.”

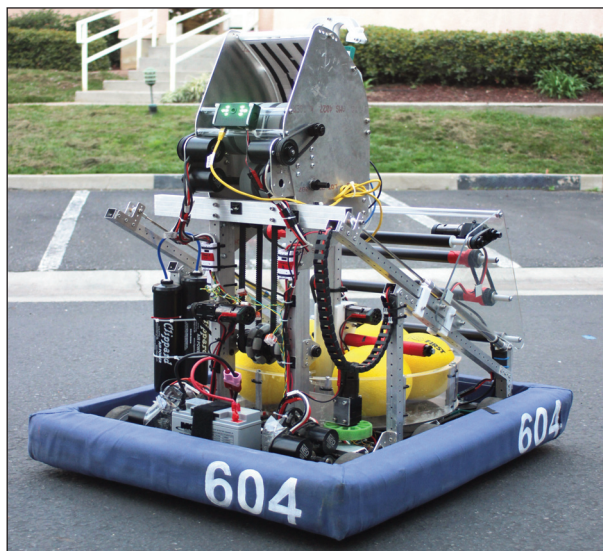
When not working on 604 projects, Tewari makes significant contributions to open source software libraries used by FRC teams around the world. He also helped start a Scratch programming club at Williams Elementary school in Almaden.

What is FRC

FRC stands for FIRST Robotics Competition. In a

normal FRC are given a challenge near the beginning of January and 6 weeks to design, manufacture, and program a robot from scratch. After that 6 week period teams attend regional or district competition events and play matches against other teams.

During these matches teams are randomly paired with two other “alliance partners” and compete against an alliance of 3 other teams. The random selection means that a team who is your partner one match could be your opponent. If a team performs well at the regional or district events they can qualify for one of the world championships



held in Houston, Texas and Detroit, Michigan.

However, FRC is more than just building robots: teams also organize demos, teach workshops, and hold other events to help spread the FIRST message of inspiring interest in science and technology throughout their communities. Teams also compete to win the Chairman's Award for their outreach work. The Chairman's Award is the most prestigious award in FRC. Team 604 Quixilver has won 11 Chairman's Awards.

Dean's List Award

In an effort to recognize the leadership and dedication of FIRST's most outstanding secondary school students, the Kamen [FIRST founder Dean Kamen] family sponsors awards for selected 10th or 11th grade students known as the FIRST Robotics Competition and the FIRST Tech Challenge FIRST

Dean's List Award. Since its introduction in 2010, the FIRST Dean's List Award has attracted the attention of prestigious colleges and universities who desire to recruit FIRST Dean's List students.

The Dean's List award starts with a nomination of an exemplary student in 10th or 11th grade to be a Dean's List semifinalist. After the nomination the semifinalist goes through an interview process (usually in person at a competition but due to the pandemic the interviews were conducted online) to determine if they will become a Dean's List finalist. From each event (60 teams) two Dean's List finalists are chosen. These finalists from competitions all around the world have the chance to become one of the 10 Dean's List winners chosen at the championship.



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VTA to get \$20M from state after recent San Jose mass shooting

By Tran Nguyen
Article courtesy of
San José Spotlight

State lawmakers are set to give \$20 million to VTA to help it recover from the deadliest shooting in Bay Area history.

The funding is included in the state budget and will allow the transportation agency to provide mental health resources to employees and their families, resume light rail service and improve safety upgrades at the Guadalupe Rail Yard in downtown San Jose, state Sen. Dave Cortese said at a news conference Monday.

“Having served on the board for 17 years, this has hit close to home for me,” Cortese said. “I want to thank Governor Newsom, and the Senate leadership... for recognizing the urgent need for taking action.”

The additional funding, proposed by Cortese, came late in the budget process and after nine VTA workers were gunned down by another employee at the rail yard in late May. Nearly 100 workers witnessed the shooting and many are still struggling to find resources, Cortese said.

The state funding will go directly to VTA to decide how to spend between personnel needs and capital projects, Cortese said.

“This immediate injection of resources to keep the trains running and to make sure we’re able to help workers get through this very difficult time... is a great sense of comfort for all of us,” Assemblymember Ash Kalra said at the news conference.

As workers are still reeling from the shooting and with light rail service suspended indefinitely, the funding will address damage at the rail yard and make sure buildings are safe for workers to return, ATU Local 265 President John Courtney said Monday. VTA will also implement more safety trainings.

“One of the biggest pieces to bring light rail back is our mental condition,” Courtney said. “These families are very scared and afraid... but we absolutely have to let them know that there was a process in place to take care of all the family members and all the grieving families.”

It’s still unclear when light rail will resume operations, Courtney said, as buildings, equipment and computers necessary to the service were damaged during the shooting.

VTA is also considering demolishing the building where the shooting happened, said Santa Clara County Supervisor and VTA board member Cindy Chavez, adding that there are existing safety concerns with the facility. The Guadalupe Rail Yard has been home to VTA’s light rail maintenance service and equipment since



A VTA bus is pictured at Diridon Station in this file photo.

1987. About 379 VTA employees worked there prior to the shooting.

“This is a very important location and so making sure that location is hardened and protected long term is going to be very important so that employees feel safe going back to work,” Chavez said, adding that the plan will need additional funding from the state.

The \$20 million in state funding is split into two bills. One will go on the Senate floor and one will go through the Assembly before reaching the governor’s desk.

“Without the support, it could have put VTA in a position of having to reprioritize,” Chavez said of the agency’s suffering budget. “Now we can prioritize our employees and the future of VTA, and frankly in my perspective, to come back better than ever.”

Contact Tran Nguyen at tran@san-josespotlight.com or follow @nguyenntn on Twitter.

Marisa Trevino of Almaden Valley named to the spring 2021 Dean's List at Aurora University

Aurora University has named **Marisa Trevino** (inset) of Almaden Valley to the Dean's List for the spring 2021 semester.

Trevino is majoring in Human-Animal Studies and is a member of the 2020-2021 Women’s Hockey (NCAA) Roster playing for the Aurora Spartans.

The Dean's List recognizes full-time undergraduate students who have earned a 3.6 GPA or higher. Students recognized with high honors have earned a perfect 4.0.

Aurora University is a four-year, private, nonprofit, accredited higher education institution offering students an excellent education while maintaining one of the lowest private school tuition rates in Illinois. The university serves approximately 6,000 undergraduate and graduate students across more than 50 majors and programs.



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Times **Feature****OP ED****Racism and sexism in the music industry**

By Sachi Uttarwar
"The Voice of Gen Z"

Music is universal. It is poetic, raw, tranquil, gut-wrenching, heart-racing, passionate, intoxicating, electrifying, and plain beautiful.

Music can move us and transport us into another place and time of our lives. While sitting in our homes, music can send us to a field of flowers and wild grass in the middle of nowhere or a high-energy party in the suburbs. Music has no bounds and can connect people who speak different languages and live across the world from each other.

We connect with artists who pour their truth into music and sometimes find a role model in them or relate to their background and experiences or struggles they've faced. While music may be straight to the point and simple, the music industry is not, and we're going to unpack how race and gender play a role in the industry. It should be noted that there are other ways the industry discriminates against people, like based on sexuality, but for now, we are going to focus on race and gender.

With the 2021 Grammys came a lot of news of racism and xenophobia. The Weekend had a very successful past year with one of the biggest albums of the year, *After Hours*, and the most popular song of the year, "Blinding Lights." After his exponential success, his lack of Grammy nominations didn't make sense. He spoke out about the lack of transparency of the Grammys, to which many other artists added on their own experiences and opinions. Nicki Minaj spoke out about not winning the "Best New Artist" award in 2012 despite having seven songs on the Billboard Charts and having a bigger first week than any other female rapper with her album, yet she lost to a white male artist, *Bon Iver*. BIPOC artists have been snubbed numerous times, year after year while having the immense success that is well-deserving of nominations and wins. We saw a similar pattern with the well-known and loved K-Pop group, *BTS*. *BTS* had a great past year, along with the Weekend, and beat YouTube records while getting their first Grammy nomination for "Best Pop Group/Duo Performance."

What's unfortunate is that *BTS* only received some recognition from the Grammys and other award shows now, even though they have been killing it in the music world for years. What is also something to consider is that generally, when artists or groups are nominated for music that isn't in English, they are nominated in a separate category.

For example, Latinx artists are always nominated under categories like "Latin Pop" instead of "Pop." This makes it seem like their music is good but not good enough to compete with English-based artists, which is completely wrong. The music industry, including but not exclusive to these award shows, needs to actively broaden its coverage of music to include places outside the US and recognize non-Western artists for their talent and contributions to the music world. They also need to stop being racist and promote diversity instead of suppressing it and acknowledge the amazing BIPOC voices in music.



But what about gender? We have covered some of the racism and xenophobia of the industry, but not the gender biases. Like every other field, inequality between men and women exists in the music industry. One artist who has faced a lot of sexism in her career is Nicki Minaj. Nicki Minaj is one of the most successful female rap artists since the late 2000s and what is most admirable about her

success is the fact that she is ruling a male-dominated genre. In 2017, she took to Twitter to talk about how many musicians in the industry were glad to work with male rappers like Drake, J. Cole, and Kendrick Lamar, but did not want to collaborate with her and other women. For women to succeed in the music industry, she mentioned that they have to work twice as hard as men to garner recognition, and even after doing so, they are still not viewed at the same level as men.

Taylor Swift is another artist who has faced immense sexism in her career. She is one of the most famous artists today and is highly applauded for her songwriting ability, but it's her songwriting that attracts the haters. Taylor writes about her exes like every artist, but she discussed in an interview that no one hates Ed Sheeran, Bruno Mars, or other male artists for doing the same thing. When women do this, they are villainized for it and given sexist labels.

People are always finding the smallest reasons to hate female artists while excusing the problematic behavior of male artists. There is also the fact that with working harder; women have to keep reinventing themselves to hold onto people's interests, while men can explore the same kind of music for years and still be successful. The industry should be encouraging more female producers and artists to pursue music instead of bringing in more sexist and misogynistic people.

In regards to all of this, while there is nothing we can do to fix the industry from the inside, we can still make small impacts. We can listen to music from artists that are female, BIPOC, outside the US, and part of the LGBTQ+ community to support artists who face discrimination by sexuality, gender, and race in this industry. We will be supporting their careers and everything they stand

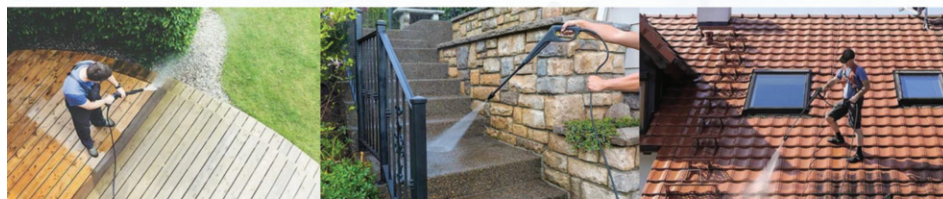
for, which is fighting racism, sexism, and other types of discrimination in the industry. We can also spread awareness about these issues that plague the industry and educate ourselves more on the reaches of racism and sexism.

Make sure to use your VOICE for good! You can find the Voice of Gen Z on Instagram (@thevoiceofgenz,) on YouTube (the Voice of Gen Z,) and our website (<https://thevoiceofgenz.squarespace.com/>)! See you next month!

Editor's note: Sachi Uttarwar is a junior at Evergreen Valley High School and the creator of The Voice of Gen Z, a website and YouTube channel where she uses her voice, both literally and metaphorically.

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Times News

Rep. Eshoo secures \$1.2 Million for wildfire mitigation

U.S. Rep. Anna G. Eshoo (CA-18) announced she was successful in securing the inclusion of \$1,200,000 for wildfire mitigation in California’s 18th congressional district in the 2022 Appropriations legislation.

This funding includes \$500,000 for a demonstration forest that aims to reduce wildfires in Santa Cruz County, and

\$700,000 to mitigate wildfires through improved vegetation management on roads in Los Gatos.

“Last year, the CZU Lightning Complex Fire burned 86,000 acres in my congressional district over 37 days, destroyed 1,490 homes and buildings, and evacuated 77,000 of my constituents from their homes. Congress needs to do everything possible to take proactive steps to avoid this destruction,” said Rep. Eshoo.

“This funding is welcome news as the Town and the State enter another wildfire season with drought conditions and



large amounts of dry fuels in our hillsides. The Town can’t express its gratitude enough to Congresswoman Eshoo and the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies,” said Los Gatos Mayor Marico Sayoc.

Rep. Eshoo has submitted several Community Project Funding requests for communities in California’s 18th congressional district to the Appropriations Committee. Information on the status of additional requests will be announced in the coming weeks.

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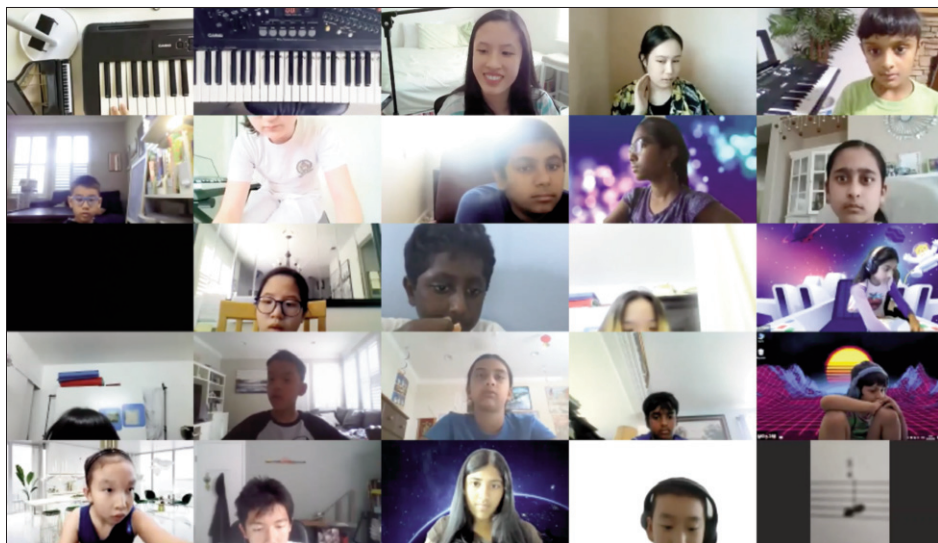


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Times **Feature**

Young Music Theorists committed to teaching young students the power and importance of song

Jaimie Nguyen and Hailee Henny, two incoming high school sophomores in San Jose, have spent over nine years learning music and playing instruments.

From jamming out to songs on the radio to playing a classical excerpt on the piano, both Jaimie and Hailee developed a deep passion for music.

Wanting to create an environment where others could experience the same feelings, Jaimie and Hailee implemented Young Music Theorists throughout their community, where this organization committed to teaching young students the power and importance of song.

This summer, Young Music Theorists completed their first music theory camp, Camp Treble. Throughout this camp, they have taught their students the fundamentals of music that are needed to play any instrument and analyze music.

Although all students started as beginners, with some not having any musical experience, all Camp Treble students were able to compose their own pieces by the end of camp. Hailee and Jaimie aimed to foster a creative outlet for students to express themselves through music.

When asked about the reason that Jaimie and Hailee started this organization, Jaimie responded, "Through Young Music Theorists, we've been able to spread our love of music to young people the same way our own piano teachers have. I have always looked up to my piano teacher as a role model and admired him for sharing his knowledge of music with me in such an engaging way. I hope to be the same role model he was for

me to our students and share what I know about music with more people."

Responding to the same question, Hailee stated, "We know firsthand how frustrating learning music can be. At the same time, being able to use our skills to play or create something beautiful is so rewarding. By encouraging our students to push through the frustration and hard work, we can share with them the rewarding feeling of being able to finally play that challenging piece, or understanding a difficult concept and being able to incorporate that into their own compositions."

Young Music Theorists' second camp, Camp Bass, is focused on teaching more difficult and advanced concepts in music theory. Students attending will learn more about the topics covered in the first camp, as well as many new concepts integral to the music learning process. At the end of Camp Bass, students will have the skills necessary to produce complex pieces and understand all of the components that go into their compositions.

Jaimie and Hailee hope to expand Young Music Theorists to provide their students more opportunities to perform their original compositions and become passionate musicians. They are excited to witness the musical development of all of their students in the future. With only one camp being completed so far and the organization being in its early stages, this is just the beginning for Young Music Theorists.

For more information about registering for Young Music Theorists, head to their website tinyurl.com/youngmusictheorists.



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Times **Community News**

LETTER

Scales tilted too far toward offenders

Dear Editor,

Violent crimes are skyrocketing; many caused by repeat offenders, according to police reports. Leaders are looking for ways to decrease the violence but propose solutions that address the symptoms, not the root cause.

New gun laws are proposed that tax gun owners, hoping to reduce gun violence. Unfortunately, recidivism, the efficacy of

state rehabilitation efforts and premature release of inmates is overlooked.

California has passed numerous laws aimed at relieving overcrowded prisons. Propositions 36, 47, 57, AB 109 and AB 117, made prisoner release easier. Early releases impact our society, especially when there are limited services for the previously incarcerated.

Former San Jose Police Chief Eddie Garcia said, "The pendulum of justice has swung too far to the side of the criminal." Let's look at our criminal laws, our mental health care system, and re-entry services before passing laws that won't stem the rise in violence.

Johnny Khamis
San Jose



San Jose Unified School District offices are pictured in this file photo.

San Jose school district abruptly cancels home study program

By Lorraine Gabbert

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

Some South Bay students are scrambling to figure out what's next after the San Jose Unified School District abruptly ended its home study program.

Home-based education allowed students to go at their own pace and excel in areas of special interest. They could be completely home-schooled or have a combination of home-schooling with school classes or college coursework.

Students could also be involved in extracurricular activities.

This learning option worked well for students who struggled in traditional classroom settings, said parent Jill Borders.

But the district is ending the program, citing government directives. District spokesperson Jennifer Maddox said the Legislature is positioned to remove distance learning as an option and is tightening up the independent studies program. Maddox said she expects lawmakers to pass legislation in July.

"As California finalizes legislation for the 2021-2022 school year, including changes to existing independent studies programs and the end of distance learning, and as we continue to prepare to return all students to in-person learning, San Jose Unified has determined that we can no longer offer the home school program," said Deputy Superintendent Stephen McMahon in a letter to parents.

Program will no longer be offered beginning in August

Maddox said the current education code does not mention home studies as an option for learning. It also specifies that independent studies programs have uniform curriculum supervised and graded by credentialed teachers. Right now, Maddox said some home study parents are evaluating and grading coursework.

"We need to make a couple of changes to be in full compliance with the law," she said, adding the state Legislature will likely close a lot of the loopholes on independent studies as they want kids back in the classroom with teachers following the pandemic. "With this change likely coming, we have to take action."

But the home study program has been around for three decades — long before the pandemic. And abruptly ending it came as a shock to parents involved in the program.

"Parents are very distraught," Borders said. "This program is a lifesaver. You have a gem on your hands and you're about to lose it."

Borders' daughter Annie, who recently graduated from the home study program, said kids have enormously benefited from it.

The only home-based study program the district can offer in compliance with state law is an independent studies program, McMahon said. Students in this program meet with their credentialed teacher once per week to check-in on assignments and progress. All K-12 students participating in long-term independent studies will be enrolled at Liberty Alternative School.

The district gave parents of students in the home study program the option to enroll in the independent studies program, attend school in person full-time at a district school, enroll in a private school or charter school or do home schooling. If parents don't select an option by July 1, their children will be enrolled in the program at Liberty Alternative School.

"By going to Liberty, you're taking away the kid's ability to participate in their neighborhood school," said parent Rob Wirecinski, who has three children in the home study program. "That's actually a very big deal. We were looking forward to water polo and orchestra next year at Leland High School...You are kicking us out of our own community."

About 450 district students are enrolled in the independent studies program, and 100 are enrolled in home study program. There are 28,000 students in the district.

With home study, parents choose curriculum and are involved in the assessment and grading of students. Independent studies uses district curriculum and students meet with credentialed teachers weekly.

Parent Lisa Charpontier said the district canceled the program without notice or input from any of the families affected. They only had two weeks to reorganize their children's education plans for the next school year.

Until now, home study students enrolled at their neighborhood schools and could take some classes there, as well as participate in extracurricular activities.

Cynthia Teeple said the home study program enabled her child to excel.

"For kids who can't sit in a classroom all day... you've given them an option to be with their peers, be social, be part of the community," Teeple said. "It's very heartbreaking they're getting rid of it."

Maddox said she understands the frustration families feel, but the district can no longer offer home schooling. "Their transcript when they graduate is indistinguishable from a student that attended class full-time for four years," Maddox said, "and we don't feel like that's an accurate reflection of the work the students have done."

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AlmadenTimes.com

Times **Feature**

San Jose approves penalties for those encouraging sideshows

By Lloyd Alaban

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

Posting about sideshows and street races in San Jose on social media can now cost you up to \$1,000 and six months in jail.

The San Jose City Council unanimously approved a new ordinance Tuesday that will make it illegal to encourage or promote people to show up to a sideshow event.

San Jose already targets sideshow audiences to combat the illegal gatherings. But Tuesday's ordinance will now allow the city to penalize people who encourage others to organize or go to sideshows.

Violators can be charged with a misdemeanor and fined up to \$1,000, serve up to six months in jail or both. "There are other agencies that are watching us and watching how we created the toolbox on how to handle sideshows," said Capt. Todd Trayer of the San Jose Police Department.

San Jose police will track promoters through methods like witness testimony and social media. "I think promoters and anyone that further shares the information (about sideshows) should be held accountable, and I'm glad we're moving in that direction," Trudy Ellerbeck, secretary of the Mount Pleasant Neighborhood Association, told San José Spotlight on Monday. She added that

the city could do more to mitigate traffic and says the city could be more assertive to stop people from outside the city from coming into San Jose and participating in sideshows.

Ellerbeck says she can hear sideshows where she lives in East San Jose on Fridays and Saturdays, though she says they are more than a mile away.

"This touches every part of the city. Our residents are dealing with this day in and day out," Councilmember Maya Esparza said. "And I can hear it. It's not just about the dangers of street racing and the sideshows, which are dangerous enough in and of themselves. But it's also the increasing amount of incidents of gunfire at sideshows that really take the endangerment of the community to the next level."

Councilmember Sylvia Arenas says residents in her district have gone as far as creating their own speed bumps to try to stop speeding. Her colleague, Councilmember Magdalena Carrasco, shared a similar story, saying she often hears sideshows outside her house until 1 a.m. "It's sheer insanity to hear rubber burning and then gunshots," she said. "I hope folks finally get the message. ... Folks should be able to go to bed at a decent hour at 1:00, 2:00, 3:00 in the morning."

The approval Tuesday comes after a discussion March 30 and the council directing the city attorney's office to draft a law. A sideshow is an illegal gathering of cars in a parking lot or intersection. Drivers perform donuts and other stunts, which attract large crowds that spill into busy intersections, putting the lives of spectators and drivers at risk. Many sideshows take place at night, drawing complaints from neighbors about loud noises and racing cars.

When police arrive at sideshows, racers and spectators flee the site and gather at another loca-



New yellow dividers were added to Yerba Buena Road to discourage sideshows and racing. *Courtesy of the city of San Jose.*

tion. Responding to sideshows pulls resources from other emergencies, city officials said.

According to SJPd data, from September 2020 to February 2021, the department received 2,421 calls about illegal car-related gatherings. A residence in South San Jose received a staggering 157 calls during that time period.

A resident, Chris, who didn't give his last name, voiced concerns about a recent sideshow at Stevens Creek and Winchester. "Our community was very dismayed about the lack of police actions to reel that in," he said. The most common intersections for calls include East Capitol Expressway and Tully Road with 24 calls, Story Road and South King Road with 21 calls, East Capitol Expressway and Quimby Road with 20 calls and three locations along Yerba Buena Road.

In an effort to prevent the illegal gatherings, San Jose will begin designing several quick-build projects later this summer intended to address unsafe driving at five intersections identified by SJPd, including 10th Street and Phelan Avenue, Hillsdale Road & Communications Hill Boulevard, Little Orchard Street and Barnard Avenue, 5550

Hellyer Avenue and 2121 Ringwood Avenue and Lundy Avenue and Concourse Drive. The city expects to complete the projects by next year.

The city installed yellow dividers at another sideshow hotspot, Yerba Buena and Verona Roads earlier this year. The SJPd is also looking at other technology, such as cameras, according to Trayer. The city closed down Roosevelt Park ahead of Cinco de Mayo in anticipation of sideshows to celebrate last month's holiday.

High-speed races are another problem the city hopes to solve with the new policy. Just two weeks ago, a 19-year-old man died after crashing into a tree on Capitol Expressway in South San Jose.

"We've seen too many tragedies in our city," Councilmember Matt Mahan, whose district includes South San Jose. "My message to street racers is that it isn't worth losing your life. These new measures help reinforce that point."

San Jose already passed a law in 2019 that bans audiences at sideshows. Gathering at a sideshow or street race is a misdemeanor and can carry up to a \$1,000 fine. Tuesday's proposal will make it illegal to encourage or help people gather at sideshows and street racing events.

According to Police Chief Anthony Mata, the city will use social media and newsletters to warn residents against participating in sideshows and racing.

Ellerbeck says she understands that SJPd is understaffed, and likely won't get to every sideshow in the city.

"There's got to be more of a regional approach so that those who are engaging in these activities won't be able to travel so quickly from one city to the next," Ellerbeck said.

To report a sideshow, dial the SJPd's non-emergency line at 408-277-8900.



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TENNIS TIPS

Tennis tie breakers can make you or break you

By Ken DeHart

The tennis tie breaker can be one of the most pressurized situations you'll find in tennis.

Tie breakers are where a player's psychological edge plays a big role.

Stay in the moment and stick to your strengths.

So what techniques will help to take the pressure off?

First, STOP. You've made it to six-all tie (for a set tie breaker) or 1-1 (for a match tie breaker). Take some time before the tie break begins to gather yourself and decide on your game plan.

Second, GO SLOW. Take your time between points. Separate each one as the unique point it is, and don't let the points run together, especially when you are losing a series of points.

Third, PLAN. Have a plan for every single point before it starts. Talk with your partner and get on the same page or make a mental plan as you coach yourself. Be aware of what's been working and what hasn't been working to get to this point in your match.

Fourth, BE PRESENT. The finish line or closing out a match can be a huge distraction for any level of competitor. Forget about that and be aware of how you want to play the next point and stay engaged with each ball you play. Stay in the moment of every shot. Counting balls as you contact them can be a way to stay focused on each shot, breath and improve your timing of where to move and when to swing.

Fifth, STAY CONFIDENT. Breath, play your game and don't put extra pressure on yourself by focusing on the score or anticipation of the outcome. Be alert and take advantage of what your opponent gives you as far as shots to be aggressive on and when to neutralize your opponent. Be ready to make adjustments as your opponent is feeling the pressure too and will try different things.

COMAN TIE-BREAK PROCEDURE (endorsed by USTA for Club players):

1. This procedure will be used for the Set Tie-Break (when the set score reach-



es 6-6) and for the Deciding Match.

2. In the Coman Tie-Breaker: Players change ends after the 1st point of the tie breaker, and then after every 4th point (i.e., change ends after the 1st, 5th, 9th, 13th, points)

3. The player whose turn it is to serve shall serve the first point of the tie-break from the Deuce side. The following two points (points 2 and 3) shall be served by the opponents, starting from the Ad side. After this, each team shall serve alternately for two consecutive points until the end of the tie-break game.

4. In doubles, the rotation of service within each team shall continue in the same order as during that set.

5. The player/team whose turn it was to serve first in the tie-break game shall be the receiver in the first game of the following set.

3 KEY ADVANTAGES OF THE COMAN TIE-BREAK

1. In doubles, the players will serve from the same end of the court from which they have been serving throughout the match.

2. A team is not stuck fighting sun or wind factors for the first six points of the tie-break. This creates a more "level playing field" during this critical part of the match.

3. Keeping score and keeping track of who is serving is easier.

Ken DeHart, USA High Performance Coach, serves as Director of Racquets, Alpine Hills Tennis & Swimming Club. He is a PTR Hall of Fame, PTR International Master Professional, and USPTA Master Professional. You may contact Ken at 408.892.3806; or email: kendehart@aol.com; ken@alpinehills.us



Times **Local News**

Our City Forest grant from the Rotary Club of San Jose provides free tree planting

Our City Forest has received a grant from the Rotary Club of San Jose which allows the non-profit organization to provide free tree planting for any residence in Districts 5, 7 & 8.

These districts are neighborhoods with less tree canopy coverage than other neighborhoods of San Jose and so the Rotary Club grant is helping to provide the benefits of trees/greenery to all residents of San Jose.

Residents are able to apply for any type of tree species they would like that Our City Forest carries at its nursery, and can plant the tree anywhere on their property (frontyard, backyard or street).

To apply, for a free tree planting email our tree planting coordinators at street-trees@ourcityforest.org.

We have ten trees left to give away for



free, and are operating on a first come first serve basis. Residents may visit our community nursery to check out our tree species/availability. Our community nursery is open to the public every Friday and Saturday from 9am to noon.

If you have any other questions, please do not hesitate to reach out!



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2021 Assessment Roll Growth slows to \$25.4 billion, but escapes worst Covid projections

'Homeowners have been the biggest beneficiary,' says Assessor Larry Stone

Tested by the worst pandemic in 100 years which shuttered many businesses, Silicon Valley's economy has rebounded, exceeding expectations.

The strength of the regions underlying fundamentals were reflected in the annual assessment roll released by Santa Clara County Assessor Larry Stone last week.

The assessment roll, which reports the total net assessed value of all real and business property in Santa Clara County as of January 1, 2021, reached \$576.9 billion, a 4.6 percent increase over the prior year.

"This time last year the nation appeared to be on the precipice of the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, triggered by the Covid-19 pandemic," said Stone. "Medical and business regulations designed to bridge the fiscal gap until vaccines were available, prevented a major collapse of the U.S. economy. Santa Clara County companies, including Google, Apple, Intel, Zoom, Microsoft and Adobe, benefitted as the nation turned almost overnight, to a remote working economy." The "Great Recession", starting in 2008, lasted nearly eight years. The Covid recession may last as little as 18 months.

The growth in property assessed values is attributed to multiple factors. The leading contributors are changes in ownership and new construction, which accounted for 61% and 29% of the total increase in assessed values. Not surprisingly, the pace of new construction was delayed somewhat, due to the uncertainty over the economic and business outlook during Covid. A notable exception was construction on Google's new Bayview campus which accounted for \$720 million of the County's total \$6.69 billion in new construction. This provided Mountain View with a significant boost in roll growth to 8.06% compared to the County total of 4.66%. Overall, the Silicon Valley office market has emerged relatively strong. Major acquisitions of office and commercial buildings contributed to the overall growth in property assessments compared to the prior year.

The assessment of business property; i.e. machinery, equipment, computers, and fixtures declined by 1%, to \$40.4 billion. The final component of the 2021 assessment roll growth is the increase in the assessed value of properties with no activity or transactions. Proposition 13 mandates that the assessment of those properties is limited to the California Consumer Price Index (CCPI) or 2 percent, whichever is lower. A struggling economy throughout 2020 limited the CCPI to

See ASSESSMENTS, page 21

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Times **Community News**

New rule to limit lawn watering 2X a week

San Jose Water Company declares extreme drought and asks customers to reduce water usage by 15%

Due to extreme drought conditions, the San Jose Water Company initiated new suggested rules to try to create less usage of water.

SJW will continue to monitor water usage. If the desired level of conservation is not achieved by August 31, 2021, the Company may need to adjust its response. This could include the imposition of drought surcharges if required by the California Public Utilities Commission or other government agencies.

New Rules

- **Limits on Watering Days:** Watering or irrigating of lawns, landscape or other vegetated areas with potable water is limited to two days per week. Irrigation will be allowed Mondays and Thursdays for odd numbered and numberless addresses and will be allowed on Tuesdays and Fridays for even numbered addresses.

- **Limits on Watering:** Watering or irrigating of outside plants, lawn, landscape, and turf areas with potable water using a landscape irrigation system or a watering device that is not continuously attended is limited to no more than 15 minutes of watering per day per station, with no watering between 10:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m. This provision does not apply to landscape irrigation zones that exclusively use drip-type irrigation systems. This provision also does not apply to low precipitation sprinkler systems that apply water at or less than 1.0 inch per hour. This provision also does not apply to watering or irrigating by use of a hand-held bucket or similar container, a hand-held hose equipped with a positive action



shut-off nozzle or device that causes it to cease dispensing water immediately when not in use, or for the express purpose of adjusting or repairing an irrigation system. However, no irrigation can occur regardless of method that results in runoff.

- **Use of potable water for watering outside plants, lawn, landscape, and turf areas during and up to 48 hours after measurable rainfall.**

- **The use of potable water in a fountain or other decorative water device that does not have a fully automatic recirculation system, or the filling or topping off of decorative lakes or ponds, except where the water is part of a recirculating system.**

- **Limits on Filling Decorative Fountains or Ornamental Lakes or Ponds:** prohibition of the use of potable water for filling or re-filling decorative fountains, ornamental lakes or ponds more than one foot, except when fountains or ponds/lakes are drained for repairs, and except to the extent needed to sustain aquatic life in

ponds/lakes, provided that such animals are of significant value and have been actively managed within the water feature prior to declaration of a supply shortage level under this Rule.

- **Limits on Washing Vehicles:** Washing of vehicles, except at a commercial car washing facility that utilizes recycled water or re-circulating water system to capture or reuse water.

- **Operation of commercial car washes that do not recycle the potable water used as required by the California Water Code Sections 10950-10953.**

- **Use of potable water for washing buildings, structures, sidewalks, walkways, driveways, patios, tennis courts, or other hard-surfaced, non-porous areas, except to protect the health and safety of the public.**

- **Use of potable water for construction purposes, including washing streets, backfill, and dust control, if other actions to accomplish the same purposes without water are feasible and/or permitted or if recycled water is reasonably available as determined by a government agency.**

- **Obligation to Fix Leaks, Breaks, or Malfunctions:** Use of water through any broken or defective plumbing fixture, sprinkler, watering or irrigation system on the customer's premises when the utility has notified

See WATER, page 21

Watering or irrigating of outside plants, lawn, landscape, and turf areas with potable water using a landscape irrigation system or a watering device that is not continuously attended is limited to no more than 15 minutes of watering per day per station, with no watering between 10:00 a.m. and 8:00 p.m.



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Times **Community News**

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TECH JARGON OF THE WEEK

Hashtag

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:

Hashtag

Most people are familiar with how to use hashtags on social media platforms like Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn, and YouTube etc. But not many people understand the concept behind it, as well as how it is used in the tech industry. Sometimes it is good to understand the concept, to use it properly.

If you are a social media novice, hashtags – those short links preceded by the pound sign (#) – may seem confusing and unnecessary. But they are integral to the way we communicate online, and it’s important to know their importance.

Hashtags are used to categorize content, making the discovery of new or related articles and insights easy to do. Whenever a user adds a hashtag to their post, it’s able to be indexed by the social network and

becomes searchable/discoverable by other users. Once someone clicks on that hashtag, they’ll be brought to a page that aggregates all the posts with the same hashtags, in real-time.

Once a keyword picks up enough momentum, it becomes ‘trending’. Each user’s trending topics are unique, based on their location, social connections, and interests.

15 years ago first hashtag created

The first use of a hashtag in social media can be traced to Chris Messina, a former Google employee who worked in developer relations and as a designer on Google+. He’s been officially credited as the first person who tweeted using a hashtag. This famous tweet happened back in 2007, so it took a while for the practice to catch on.

Beyond simply organizing your content, hashtags can help craft your voice while joining in a larger discussion. You can use multiple hashtags in one tweet, and they can help provide colorful context to convey humor or sarcasm.

Here are some sample tweets from Twitter that use hashtags:

- Let the weekend begin! #TGIF
- I hate when people smoke e-cigarettes indoors. #annoying #rude #whygodwhy
- The movie #Gravity is beautiful, but so terrifying! #nevergoingtospace

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



Press day: July 21, 2021

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Assessments

Continued from page 18

just 1%.

“Homeowners are major beneficiaries of the hot residential market, taking advantage of the stunning appreciation in market value of their homes, while their assessment increased only one percent,” said Stone.

Consequently, the difference between the assessed value and the market value of most residential properties in Santa Clara County provides an unanticipated financial benefit to all homeowners, often at the expense of funding for schools and local governments.

Silicon Valley was not entirely immune to the pandemic recession. Many sectors such as hospitality, non-grocery brick and mortar retail, restaurants and entertainment, all suffered financially.

“The Assessor’s Office has launched multiple programs to help property owners and businesses seriously impacted by Covid,” said Stone. The Assessor’s Office has requested information and data from businesses to determine the financial impact of declines in market value of commercial properties, and are using that information to make proactive assessment reductions where warranted. “As Assessor, my job is to get it right. I am not a revenue agent for local govern-

Report: 2021's best and worst states for Summer road trips

With 59% of U.S. families saying they are more likely to drive than fly for their next trip, the personal-finance website WalletHub has released three key reports to help people maximize both savings and fun: 2021’s Best & Worst States for Summer Road Trips, 2021’s Best Gas Rewards Credit Cards; and 2021 Gas & Travel Survey.

WalletHub’s road trip report found that California ranks 31st nationally for summer driving, and you can find out why below.

Road Tripping in California (1=Best; 25=Avg.):

- 1st – Number of Attractions
- 25th – Lowest Price of Three-Star Hotel Room
- 50th – Avg. Gas Prices
- 10th – Nightlife Options per Capita
- 9th – Vehicle Miles Traveled per Capita
- 45th – Car Thefts per Capita
- 2nd – Access to Scenic Byways
- 46th – Lowest Price of Camping
- 1st – Driving Laws Rating
- 23rd – Fatalities per 100 Million Vehicle Miles Traveled

Survey Key Findings and Best Gas Rewards Cards

- 63% of people want rewards on gas more than any other type of travel purchase.
- 54% of people consider the price of gas when making summer travel plans.
- 84 million people think each individual should have to take a test to get a credit card, just like a driver’s license.
- 12X more people want gas rewards from a credit card than rewards for Uber/Lyft rides.
- 37% of people need to save at least \$30 at the pump monthly to get a gas credit card.
- The PenFed Platinum Rewards Visa Signature® Card is the best gas rewards credit card of 2021, offering 5 points per \$1 spent at all gas stations, along with 3 points per \$1 on supermarket purchases and a \$100 initial bonus. It has no annual fee.

ment. When the market value of a property declines below the original purchase price, we lower the assessment,” said Stone.

The major beneficiaries of property tax revenue are public schools, community colleges, cities, and Santa Clara County. Fifty percent of local property tax revenue generated in Santa Clara County goes to fund public education.

More information is available from the Clerk of the Board by calling (408) 299-5088, or going to their website: www.sccgov.org/assessmentappeals

Water

Continued from page 19

the customer in writing to repair the broken or defective plumbing fixture, sprinkler, watering or irrigation system, and the customer has failed to make such repairs within 72 hours after receipt of such notice.

- The serving of water, other than upon request, in eating and drinking establishments, including but not limited to restaurants, hotels, cafes, bars, or other public

places where food or drink are served and/or purchased.

- Operators of hotels and motels are to provide guests with the option of choosing not to have towels and linens laundered daily and/or to require hotels and motels to prominently display a notice of this option in each guest bathroom using clear and easily understood language.
- Other restrictions on use of potable water as prescribed by the Commission, SJWC, or another governing body or agency.

Editor’s Note: To learn more, go to sjw.com.

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- Bible study on the second and fourth Wednesday of every month, at 6PM.
- A Food Pantry serving anyone in need—open Tu/Th/ Sa 10:00 AM to Noon.
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tures, and even an occasional karaoke night—all in a wholesome environment. Our activities flow from our core values:

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2nd Sunday in Worship: Folks Choir and Potluck Sunday.
Tuesdays, AA Meetings, 8:15 - 9:15 PM.
Wednesdays, 9:30 AM, Women's Study Group.

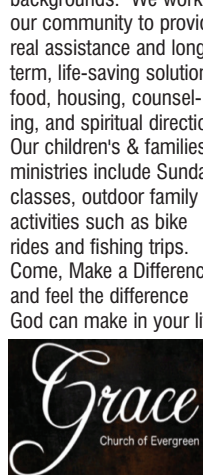
CHURCH OF CHRIST
5351 Carter Ave., San Jose 95118
408.265.5837
www.bibleroad.org
We strive to be a group of Christians that love and honor God and Jesus Christ in our daily lives. We assemble each Sunday to encourage each other through singing, studying, praying and sharing in the Lord's supper. Simple—just like what one reads about in the New Testament. Bible class at 9:30 AM
Worship at 10:30 AM
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
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.eicsanjosel.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 Waeayilatakh" 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
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
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 Sixty 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.



thepoint.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. Fr. Larry Hendel, Pastor.



God is One
ਰੱਬ 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 or www.stfranciscatholicpreschool.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
Contact via email: 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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Call: (831) 232-8182

By appointment only during Covid

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Full Service Dry Cleaners 5965 Almaden
Wash & Fold Expwy #160
MON - FRI 6:30 AM - 6:30 PM 408-997-6144

Driving School



Advantage Driving School is the premier driving school in northern California. Advantage Driving School has trained more than 300,000 students to drive safely since 1994. We offer complete programs for both traditional classroom and online courses.

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

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

Clocks

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Notices

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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.



6214 Paso Los Cerritos

Offered at \$1,899,000

4 Bed

2.5 Bath

2054 Sq Ft

9148 Sq Ft Lot

This meticulously updated home with stylish finishes is on a peaceful tree-lined street in Almaden Valley. New French white oak hardwood floors and wide baseboards throughout the main level. Solid Alder wood front door. Anderson dual pane, wood-framed windows. Vaulted ceiling. Totally remodeled gourmet kitchen. Amazing park-like backyard is an ultra-private sanctuary with mature landscaping, pool, wood-burning stone fireplace and an outdoor kitchen.



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

DRE 01355719



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