

Evergreen Valley College Sports complex grand opening event well attended
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Keep conserving
Santa Clara County remains in a drought emergency despite recent rains – **SEE PAGE 4**

East San Jose community farm receives 25-year extension
SEE PAGE 14



NOV. 19 – DEC. 2, 2021 ■ VOL. 38, NO. 24

EvergreenTimes

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WWII Marine Corps Veteran **Stan Bellou**, 97, was introduced to the Veterans Day audience by Colonel **Christopher C. Starling** (pictured left). Bellou served in the Fifth Division, Second Combat MP's and he lives in Evergreen at the Villages Golf and Country Club.

Veterans Day celebration presented by Veterans Club at the Villages Golf and Country Club

All military veterans and patriots gallantly honored with pride

The Villages Golf and Country Club Veterans Club sponsored a Veterans Day celebration at the Villages Cribari Auditorium which was well attended on Nov. 11.

Captain Robert Semple, U.S.
See **VETERANS DAY**, page 11



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FLYING HIGH

Gymnast Jaisen Shah qualifies for Future Stars National Championship

By William Bellou
Publisher

Seventh grader Jaisen Shah recently participated in a gymnastics competition, *Future Stars* for elite gymnasts, Region 1 (Arizona, Hawaii, California, and Nevada).

Jaisen was one of five boys in the 12 year old age group who qualified (based on all-around score from 9 events) to go to the *Future Stars* National Championships which will be held Nov. 19, 2021 in Colorado. In previous years, this event was held at the US Olympic Training Center.

He is on the Junior Olympic Boys Team at Cal Sports Center Great Oaks. The meet and Nationals are sanctioned by the USA Gymnastics organization.

Jaisen qualified and went to Nationals two years ago when he was 10 (the first year he was old enough to go). He got to train and compete at the US

Olympic Training Center. Last year obviously this event was canceled and this year due to Covid, the Championship is at a different location.

"I love gymnastics because I have so much fun flipping and twisting and learning new skills. I am so excited that I made it to Nationals. I am so happy that I finally get to go again after missing last year because of Covid."

"Jaisen was a dare devil at home, park, just everywhere we were, he had no fear," said Neha Shah, Jaisen's mom. "I realized that he needed a safe place to jump and get his energy out so I started him in gymnastics at age three. He was invited to join

the team at five years old and this has been his passion ever since. We owe a great gratitude to Jaisen's coach, Tyler Evans, for his time and dedication to the Junior Olympic Boys Gymnastic team."



While conducting her research, Claire Zhu also volunteered with the League of Women Voters Fremont Newark Union City (LWVFNUC) Youth Voter Movement.

The Untapped Potential of Young Voters Online presentation to feature research project by Evergreen Valley High School senior Claire Zhu

By William Bellou
Publisher

The League of Women Voters, Fremont, Newark, and Union City is sponsoring an online presentation featuring a fascinating research project by Claire Zhu, a senior at Evergreen Valley High School, on Monday, Nov. 22 from 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Zhu became enthralled with the idea of what would happen if more young people voted. With her will be Julie Dunkle, league member, who will discuss her groundbreaking work in student-led voter registration drives.

The 2020 Presidential election demonstrated that youth voters are beginning to emerge as a powerful force in American politics. Historically young voters have participated significantly less than other age groups in US elections. However, according to the highly respected and non-partisan group, the Center for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement (CIRCLE) at Tufts University, 50% of Americans between the ages 18-29 voted in the 2020 election.

This is one of the highest rates of the young voting since voting rights were extended to 18 year olds in 1972.

A few years ago when Claire Zhu's older sister became eligible to vote she talked a lot about social and political issues, including the importance of voting.

Likewise Zhu tried to talk with her friends about these issues; See **YOUNG VOTERS**, page 9

50 percent of Americans between the ages 18-29 voted in the 2020 election. This is one of the highest rates of the young voting since voting rights were extended to 18 year olds in 1972.

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Santa Clara County remains in a drought emergency despite recent rains

More water conservation is needed to protect water supplies

Santa Clara County remains in an extreme and exceptional drought.

Valley Water reservoirs are at historic lows with total capacity at 11%. State reservoirs are also at historic lows, putting delivery of imported water at risk.

Santa Clara County Valley Water is working to increase our supply of recycled and purified water, giving us a local supply of drought resilient water.

Despite recent rains, a drought emergency remains in Santa Clara County. In June 2021, Valley Water's Board of Directors declared a water shortage emergency and called on all residents, businesses and farms to reduce water use by 15%.

Valley Water is here to aid in water conservation efforts by offering rebates and devices that help homes, yards, and businesses become drought resilient.

Half of the water used in the typical Santa Clara County home is used outdoors. Valley Water's Landscape Rebate Program is designed for residents and businesses to convert high-water use landscape, such as lawns and pools, to low-water-use landscape and retrofit existing irrigation equipment with high-efficiency irrigation equipment. More than two-thirds of participants noticed a decrease in their water bills after transforming their yards. Valley Water's Landscape Rebate Program offers up to \$3,000 in assistance for residential sites and \$50,000 for commercial and institutional sites.

For more info on Valley Water's conservation rebates, programs and tools, visit watersavings.org.

Valley Currents

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

Evergreen Valley College Sports complex ribbon cutting and grand opening event well attended

By Sean Eastwood
Times staff writer

Evergreen Valley College opened its new sports complex complete with futsal, pickleball, basketball, and tennis courts, viewing patios for EVC students and the surrounding San Jose community on Tuesday, Nov. 2.

A community and campus asset, the newly opened EVC Sports Complex is intended for use by students and the surrounding San Jose community.

The event included viewing patios and improved ADA access. EVC logos appear on fields and throughout the modernized landscape of paved walkways, bioretention shrubs, and trees.

The grand opening was well attended with EVC students, staff and the general public enjoying the celebratory gathering. Guests received welcome swag bags and refreshments.

Invited speakers included Tammeil Gilkerson, EVC President; Maria Fuentes, SJECED Board President; and EVC representatives who shared their remarks and cut the grand opening ribbon. Guided tours of the complex were also provided.

"Our new EVC Sports Complex a community-wide asset, is open for use by students and the surrounding EVC community," said Andrea Alexander, Vice President, Administrative Services. "We completed this project with the intention that everyone feels welcome to enjoy athletic activities in this beautiful new state-of-the-art complex."



Evergreen Valley College is putting voter-supported bond dollars to use by executing projects that are transforming the entire campus and enhancing the overall college experience for its students. The Sports Complex is just one of several new buildings on the list; smaller capital and infrastructure projects are in progress and others have recently been completed.

EVC also announced the opening of its new Student Services Complex, Language Arts Building, General Education Building, and Sequoia Nursing Building. Completed projects include the Gullo II multipurpose room, West ADA, North Fire Lane, Student Activities Center, and Cedro Classroom.



Op-ed

Thanksgiving: Have an attitude of gratitude

By Bryan Golden

Thanksgiving is much more than a big meal with family and friends. It's a time to reflect on, and be thankful for, all of the good things you have. It's important to be grateful, not just on Thanksgiving, but each and every day. Rather than lamenting what you feel is lacking in your life, begin each new day by developing an attitude of gratitude. Take inventory of your blessings and you will be surprised at just how

much you have to be thankful for.

If you have enough to eat, a place to live, a way to get around, people who care about you, or people you care about, then you are wealthy. If you lack any of these elements, you must still be grateful for what you do have, while striving to obtain whatever is absent.

Focus on all positive aspects of your life. Take nothing for granted. Every morning, recharge your appreciation. Be happy for everything there is, not upset over what you feel is missing.

Dreams of the future shouldn't diminish appreciation for the present. If all you do is concentrate on what you want, you won't enjoy today. Don't be jealous of others; what they do or have has no bearing on you.

You can feel bitter or resentful for a variety of reasons. Perhaps you feel something is missing from your life, things aren't going your way, or you have been treated unfairly. You may wonder, "why do these things always happen to me?"

Life's problems tend to dominate your thoughts, turning your focus to what you feel is wrong. You may start to resent those who appear to be better off. You're apt to dwell on things you think would make your life better if you had them. If only you had more money, more time, a bigger house, a different car, a different job, a different boss, had picked a different career, etc.

Once your attitude becomes one of deficiency instead of abundance and appreciation, you can become overwhelmed by feelings of frustration and feel like a victim. As this happens, a consuming vicious cycle starts.

Being bitter or resentful blows situations out of proportion. People who are bitter frequently find that their situations deteriorate and their mental and physical health decays.

It's difficult, if not impossible, to achieve your goals while you are bitter or resentful. Regardless

See GRATITUDE, page 7

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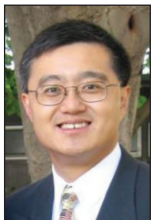
Times Local News

A message for Thanksgiving Day

By Otto Lee

Santa Clara County Supervisor

In 1789, President Washington called for a National Day of Thanksgiving, in 1863 President Lincoln affirmed this tradition, and in 1941 Thanksgiving became an official American holiday.



Today, we continue the celebration of the first Thanksgiving from 1621 between the English Pilgrims settlers and the Wampanoag Natives. Families and friends join together every year to celebrate and give thanks for the blessings they have received.

As we come together for Thanksgiving this year, possibly surrounded by loved ones we haven't seen since the start of the pandemic, we have much to be grateful for and to reflect on in this season of gratitude and giving.

We can gather with our family and loved ones this year because our community has taken the pandemic seriously and gotten vaccinated. Now, as we see more of our youngest members of the community become vaccinated against the deadly COVID-19 virus, we must recognize all of the work of our healthcare professionals and essential frontline workers who have selflessly put themselves and their families in harm's way to protect us and keep us healthy. We must also be grateful for each other. We wore masks, sheltered in place, socially distanced, and got vaccinated. These simple, yet selfless actions, made it possible for more loved ones to be gathered around the Thanksgiving table this year.

During this past year in my first term as a Santa Clara County Supervisor, I am deeply appreciative of the good work we are doing to help our most vulnerable community members. At the November 2nd Board of Supervisors meeting, the Board approved two interim supportive housing sites. These supportive housing sites will help house some of our unhoused families with small children, veterans, and individuals who lost their homes due to the COVID 19 pandemic. I extend my thanks to the County, City, community-based organizations, and other stakeholders who made these projects a reality so that these families can

look forward to stable and safe living environment to get back on their feet this holiday season.

Coming out of a global pandemic, it is more important than ever to make sure that all of our residents have access to quality and affordable healthcare. I am proud to be joining my colleague, Supervisor Joe Simitian, local community health clinics, and Community Health Partnership to expand the Primary Care Access Program (PCAP). PCAP will close gaps for our neighbors who are ineligible for financial assistance through Medi-Cal or Covered California but do not make enough money to cover a medical bill if their elderly parent got sick or if their child got hurt. This expansion of PCAP will help make sure that all of our residents are able to access the medical care that they need in order to maintain our community's health and wellness.

At the October 5th meeting, my colleagues unanimously approved my referral to create a Sustainability Commission. Climate change is an existential threat to all our livelihoods and futures. That is why it is critical that we start finding solutions to climate change now. I am very proud that our Sustainability Commission designates at least two seats for young people. The younger generations are going to directly be affected by the effects of climate change, so it is vital that we ensure that their voices are at the table.

These are just a few of the many important issues that my colleagues and I on the Board of Supervisors have accomplished in the most recent weeks. Please remember to wear a mask, socially distance when out in public and get your booster shot when eligible so that we can keep all of our family members and loved ones healthy this Thanksgiving.

In closing, I would personally like to wish all of you and your families a happy and restful Thanksgiving from me and my wife, Sally, and our three daughters, Aubrianna, Hillary, and Stella.



Gratitude

Continued from page 4

of what challenges might befall you, bitterness makes finding solutions much more elusive.

There is no point to feeling bitter since it accomplishes nothing, harms you and makes things worse. Filling yourself with gratitude on a daily basis makes you feel good, while driving out negative feelings.

Begin your practice of gratitude each morning as soon as you wake. Every day is a great day. If you have any doubts, try missing one. Take inventory of everything, no matter how small or seemingly insignificant, that is good in your life.


If it helps, make a written list of all things

you are grateful for. Read your list every day. As you do this, you will build and reinforce your attitude of gratitude. Don't waste any time with what you feel you don't have.

Keep things in perspective. Consider all the people who have overcome difficulties far worse than yours. Don't be consumed by your problems, there is always a solution. Maintaining an attitude of gratitude allows your mind to devise a resolution for your circumstances.

Make everyday a day of Thanksgiving and you will be amazed how much better your life will become.

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



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This program is subject to change.



This concert is supported in part by a Cultural Affairs Grant from the City of San Jose and by an Operating Grant from Silicon Valley Creates.



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Griffes - Poem for Flute and Orchestra
Hiob - Symphonic Fantasy, Fathers' Land
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Times News

2021 SJYS SEASON OPENER CONCERT

The SJYS Philharmonic Orchestra performs Sibelius, Griffes, Hiob, Wieniawski and Tchaikovsky Dec. 4

The San Jose Youth Symphony's Philharmonic Orchestra, under the artistic leadership of Music Director and Conductor Yair Samet, presents its 2021 Season Opener Concert to be held on Saturday, December 4, 4 p.m., at the California Theatre, 345 S. 1st Street, San Jose.

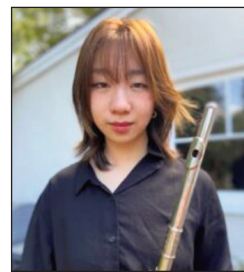
The orchestra will open with Sibelius's stirring Karelia Overture, followed by the work of Estonian composer, Johannes Hiob — Symphonic Fantasy — Fathers' Land, and conclude with Tchaikovsky's spirited Capriccio Italian.

The Dec. 4 concert will also feature two winners from the 2021 Young Artists' Competition, sponsored by the San Jose Symphony Foundation.

Outstanding young soloists, Cindy Chen, flutist, will perform Griffes' Poem for Flute and Orchestra; and Siddharth Navale, violinist, will perform Wieniawski's Polonaise Brillante No. 2.

Cindy Chen

Cindy Chen is a senior at Basis Independent Silicon Valley. She has been playing the flute since 5th grade. This will be her fourth season



with the San Jose Youth Symphony.

Siddharth Navale

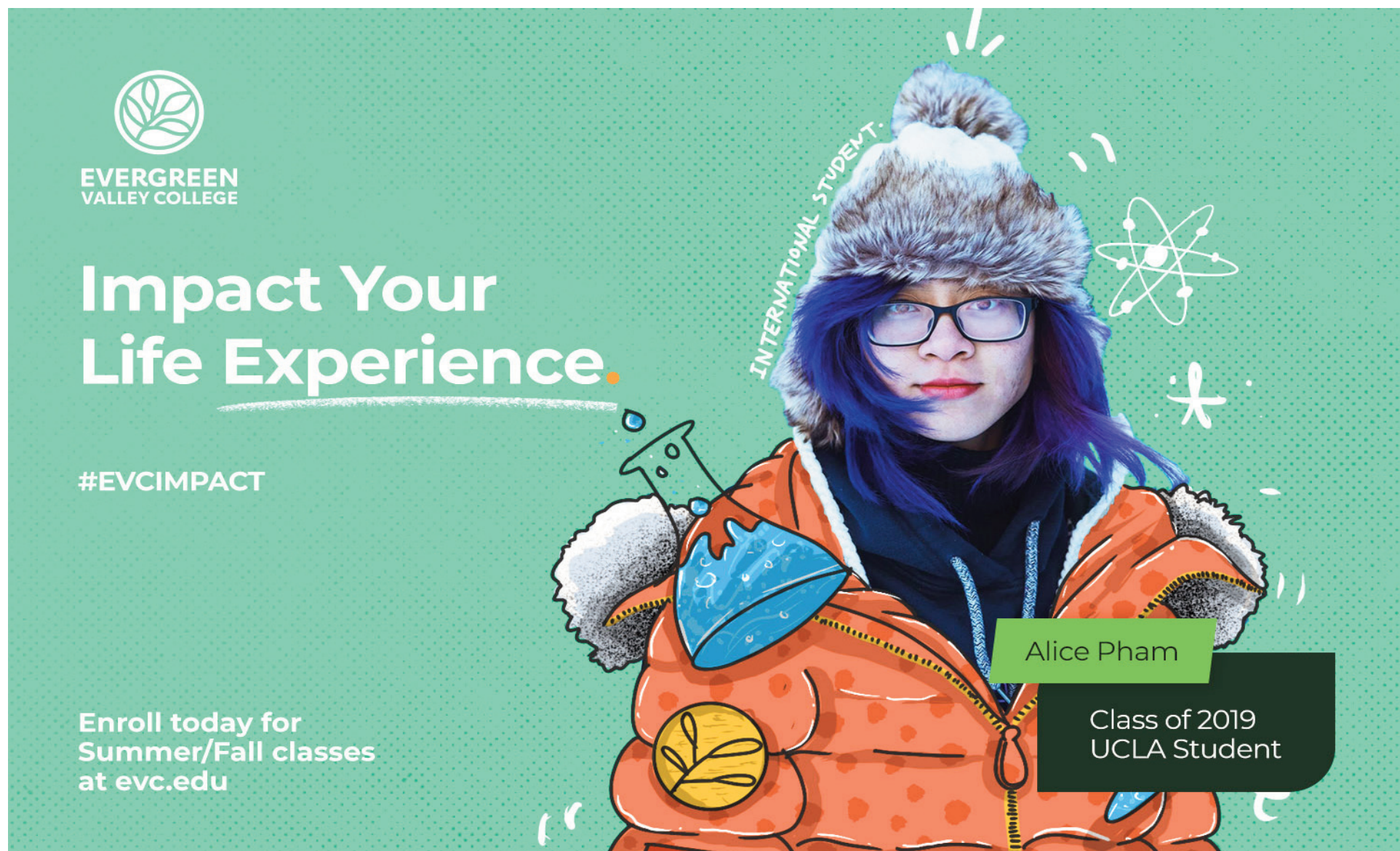
Siddharth Navale is a junior at Cupertino High School. He first joined the San Jose Youth Symphony in 4th grade and is currently in his fourth season with the Philharmonic Orchestra.



The San Jose Youth Symphony (SJYS) is one of the oldest and finest youth orchestras on the West Coast of the U.S. Founded over six decades ago as part of the former San Jose Symphony, SJYS has a rich tradition of musical performance and education.

The musicians of SJYS, all school-age youth, are chosen from more than 650 applicants through our annual auditions. The SJYS comprises 12 distinct performing ensembles: two full orchestras, a Chamber orchestra, two flute choirs, two string ensembles, as well as wind, harp, saxophone, percussion and jazz ensembles.

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Alice Pham

Class of 2019
UCLA Student

Young voters

Continued from page 1

however no one shared her interest in the topic. She then began looking at the consistently low youth turnout in presidential elections and to wonder how the political landscape of our country would be different if more young people voted. So she decided to independently design and implement a research project to answer the question, "How does Youth Turnout impact Presidential Elections?"

Her findings show, indeed, youth turnout can significantly impact Presidential Elections, especially in battleground states. Her research is quite impressive, detailing the factors that influence youth voting behavior, and then goes on to offer five concrete actions to improve youth turnout.

While conducting her research she also volunteered with the League of Women Voters Fremont Newark Union City (LWVFNUC) Youth Voter Movement.

This program, developed and coordinated by league member, Julie Dunkle has been highly successful in registering over 7000 high school students to vote. Ms. Dunkle fosters youth leadership in establishing voter registration events and it serves as a model for communities far and wide. Dunkle states, "Working with youth to register the next generation of voters gives me great hope in the preservation of our democracy".

When asked what was the most important lesson learned from her research project Zhu replied, "I learned how crucial it is for youth to be active and connected, especially in matters where they can make a big difference. By proactively reaching out to experts and civic groups, I not only became more knowledgeable about youth voting but also the importance of taking action and advocating for something you value." Zhu is now applying to colleges for next year with the intent of studying political science with an emphasis on data analysis.

Some believe strongly that after the 2020 Presidential Election, with an attempt to overturn election results, there is a belief in the importance of maximizing voter turnout. Some believe, improving youth voter registration and voting is an important mechanism for assuring a strong democracy.

To join the presentation, visit the website: www.youthvotermovement.org. Time will be allowed for questions and discussion.

Online registration can be made at the League of Women Voters Fremont, Newark, Union City website: www.my.lwv.org/california/fremont-newark-union-city



OPERA SAN JOSÉ PRODUCTIONS

Left: **The Sorcerer's Elf**, disguised as Mercury (center) performs for Aeneas (baritone **Efraín Solís** – second from right) and Dido (mezzo-soprano **Nikola Printz** – far right) in Opera San José's production of Purcell's "Dido and Aeneas," presented at the California Theatre in downtown San Jose from November 13-28. *Photo Credit: David Allen*

Right: Aeneas (baritone **Efraín Solís**) and Dido (mezzo-soprano **Nikola Printz**) are doomed lovers in Purcell's "Dido and Aeneas," presented at the California Theatre in downtown San Jose from November 13-28. *Photo Credit: David Allen*



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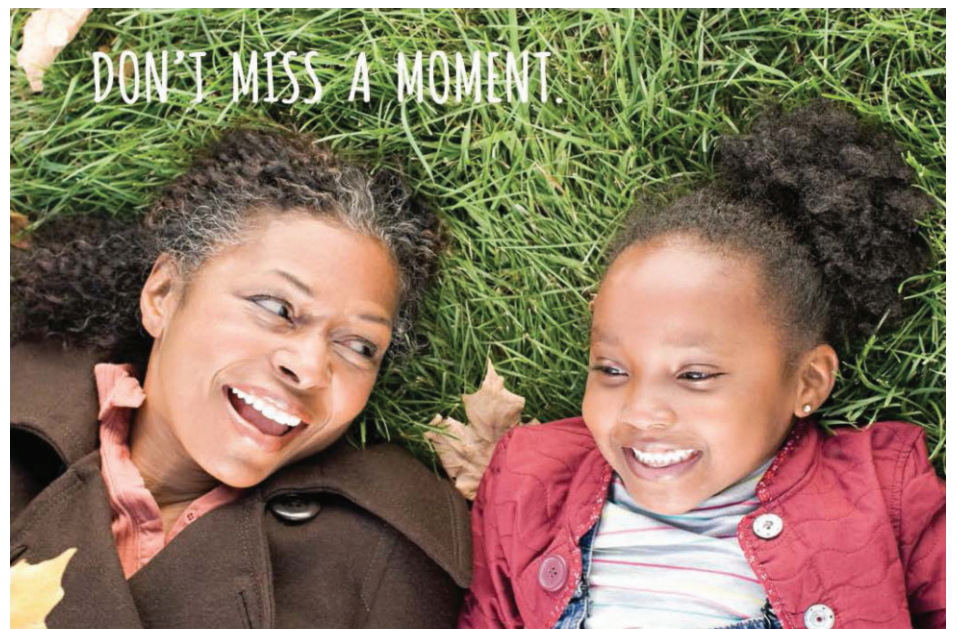
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- Wear a short sleeve shirt to your appointment if possible



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Date: Saturday/Sunday

November 20 or 21, 2021

Ngày: Thứ Bảy & Chủ Nhật, Ngày 20-21 tháng 11 năm 2021

Time: Appointments start at **9AM** and go until **4PM**

Giờ: Các buổi hẹn bắt đầu từ 9 giờ sáng đến 4 giờ chiều

Location: **LeyVa Middle School 1865 Monrovia Drive, San Jose**

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LeyVa Middle School 1865 Monrovia Drive, San Jose, CA

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Times **Local News**

Marine Corps Colonel **Christopher C. Starling** was the keynote speaker at the Veterans Day celebration at the Villages Golf and Country Club.

Veterans Day

Continued from page 1

Army Veteran and president of The Villages Veterans Club, invited all veterans and residents of The Villages to join in the celebration and recognition of all military veterans and patriots to the one hour celebration which began at 2 p.m. and included free refreshments.

The program included keynote speaker Colonel Christopher C. Starling, a 26-year veteran of the U.S. Marine Corps with a distinguished service record.

The event was emceed by former U.S. Air Force Technical Sergeant and soloist for the USAF Band and "Singing Sergeants" Ken Carter.

Starling introduced 97-year-old WWII Marine Corps Veteran Stan Bellou during the celebration. Bellou served in the Fifth Division, Second Combat MP's and he lives in Evergreen at the Villages Golf and Country Club.

COL Starling offered a Q&A period for those having questions about his service, which includes three combat tours, one of which was in Afghanistan, and discussed the Marine Corps' role in today's world.

The Village Voices and a brass ensemble performed several patriotic songs and everyone in attendance sang "America the Beautiful." The program ended with the vocal rendition and instrumental rendition of "God Bless America."

Photos courtesy of Kay Pexton



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a través del enlace de este folleto.**PHÒNG KHÁM TIÊM NGỪA COVID-19 (Pfizer)****cho Trẻ em từ 5 đến 11 tuổi**

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Special interest groups attempting to divide our communityBy Johnny Khamis
Special to the Times

Political special interest groups are using the county redistricting process to divide our community.

The "Yellow" Map (Unity Map) was submitted by South Bay Labor Council and Working Partnerships USA to benefit their political goals while splitting up Communities of Interest in Almaden Valley, Evergreen Valley, Cambrian, Rose Garden, the Vietnamese Community and more.

The proposed map will diminish the already weak voices of South County residents by aligning rural South County with high density neighborhoods all over San Jose and place Almaden Valley and New Almaden in the same district as Palo Alto.

The proposed map, "Yellow Map", violates many state and federal redistricting guidelines like compactness and the preservation of cores of prior districts. This refers to maintaining districts close to as previously drawn, to the extent possible. In fact, in the proposed "Yellow" Map, the shape of District One looks like a pitchfork which does not make any sense.

Please don't let special interest groups



silence our voices by drawing the district to favor their candidates. We cannot allow them to take control of the already scarce resources for our community to spend on things like \$76 million dollar bonuses.

You can send a letter to all the County Supervisors to let your voice be heard:

District1@bos.sccgov.org.

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Cindy.Chavez@bos.sccgov.org.

(District 2 **Cindy Chavez**)

supervisor.lee@bos.sccgov.org.

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Rebuilding Days

Our Rebuilding Day program provides major and minor repairs and renovations resulting in life-changing improvements for the homeowners and organizations served.

Safe At Home

Safe at Home program addresses home repair and maintenance issues that may otherwise present a safety risk or that limit access to or within the home.

Ways to get involved

Volunteers Join us, safely, for Rebuilding Day, April 17 & 24, 2021, as an individual volunteer or with your corporate or community group.

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Times **Feature**

San Jose destiny coach films his eBook in space ahead of Russian movie crew's arrival

Out of this world event

By William Bellou
Publisher

A new eBook is launched into outer space, a first in publishing history.

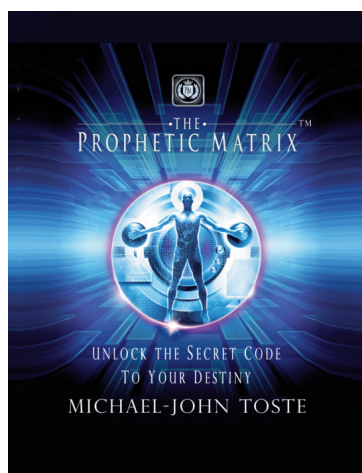
San Jose native Michael-John Toste sent his first new autobiography into space, which was filmed on board the ISS during its 3-million-mile mission.

His revolutionary book, *"The Prophetic Matrix: Unlock the Secret Code to Your Destiny"* fulfilled its own destiny while traveling in the International Space Station's Destiny Module.

Last month, a Russian film crew made headlines by beating Tom Cruise in the race to shoot the first movie in space. Then William Shatner of Star Trek fame recently became a passenger on board Blue Origin's *New Shepherd* starship. Prior to that, however, in a ground-breaking first-ever event, rock star turned author Michael-John Toste's *"The Prophetic Matrix: Unlock The Secret Code To Your Destiny"* became the first commercial literary work in the history of publishing to debut in outer space prior to its global release on Earth.

A digital version of the book was transmitted to the Destiny module of NASA's International Space Station and filmed on a monitor for its interplanetary visual premiere while orbiting the world at approximately 17,500 miles per hour. The nonfiction title traveled over three million miles by the end of its tour in space.

This historic space age release comes amidst a modern-day ren-



naissance of space travel, with Elon Musk of SpaceX, Jeff Bezos of Blue Origin and Richard Branson of Virgin Galactic: all racing to explore the stars. "I'm excited to become a member of an elite group of space pioneers in the 21st Century," says Toste. "This opens a broad door of opportunities for future publications to send their titles to spacecraft filled with celestial travelers touring the stars."

After accomplishing its mission in space, *"The Prophetic Matrix"* made its terrestrial debut in an official global premiere event at Immanuel College in Adelaide, South Australia. *From Earth to the Heavens: An Interstellar Book Release*, hosted by Immanuel College principal Kevin Richardson, featured time-stamped footage of the book filmed and recorded in the Destiny Module that was projected on a large screen for a group of collegiate space enthusiasts. The students in attendance received an honorary certificate documenting the historic ceremony and a commemorative *The Prophetic Matrix: Making Space History in 2021* medallion to mark the occasion.

"The Prophetic Matrix: Unlock The Secret Code To Your Destiny," the first book of The Prophetic Matrix trilogy, chronicles Michael-John Toste's rock star life as the lead vocalist of the concept rock group, the All Sports Band, and the life lessons he learned on his tour de force odyssey exploring the entertainment industry. It also offers greater understanding of how to face the challenges and circumstances of life and discover answers regarding how to unlock the secret code to your destiny. "The fact that the book made its debut on the Destiny module of ISS is serendipitous," says Toste. "In this aspect, it is fulfilling its own destiny."

"The Prophetic Matrix: Unlock The Secret Code To Your Destiny" is now officially available on Amazon, Barnes and Noble and Target.

To view the historic film footage of *"The Prophetic Matrix's"* interstellar debut on the International Space Station, you can visit www.PMLaunch.Space.

About Michael-John

Michael-John Toste is a musician, author and an International Destiny Coach who lives in San Jose's Willow Glen district. He was previously the lead vocalist of the concept rock group, the All Sports Band, who achieved chart success throughout the 1980s, including two Billboard Hot 100 hits in the US and a top 20 hit in Germany. With appearances on MTV, Solid Gold, Nickelodeon, and American Bandstand, the All Sports Band was voted the third most popular group in America. Toste's upcoming album Phenomenon features Grammy award winners including Deniece Williams, Bobby Kim-



Earth, Wind & Fire. Toste hosts a weekly, hour-long radio program called, "Your Day of Destiny," and has released his debut book, *"The Prophetic Matrix: Unlock The Secret Code To Your Destiny."*

For more information about Michael-John Toste and his upcoming ventures, visit www.PMLaunch.Space, www.ThePropheticMatrix.com or www.Michael-JohnMusic.com.

State Superintendent of Public Instruction issues apology

California Department of Education admits mismanagement of \$187M

By Times Media staff writers

State Superintendent of Public Instruction **Tony Thurmond** (inset) said he was wrong for delaying the release of tens of millions of dollars in federal Covid aid to California private schools serving low-income families and apologized to the leaders of the schools.

Promising in a recent webinar to quickly remove the bottlenecks, Thurmond said, "We regret any heartburn or difficulties that you have experienced." He asked for "some grace" as the department fixed the problems he acknowledged it had created.

The breaking point for frustrated school leaders occurred late last month. Administrators from the Education Department had told schools they would be reimbursed for items purchased through Oct. 31.

The California Department of Education admitted to mismanaging \$187 million for 547 private schools



that had applied and were approved for the first round of Emergency Assistance for Non-Public Schools. Congress approved that funding last December and included a second round of \$181 million for California private schools from the American Rescue Plan.

Schools that spent money expecting reimbursement faced a cash crunch and were worried about making payroll.

Schools assuming there would be counseling and mental health services for the reopening of school were told by state officials not to expect them until early February, after a months-long needs-assessment process that would begin in November.

The department had urged patience, claiming that overseeing services for private schools was a new function for states. It's usually done by school districts within whose boundaries the schools are located. Unlike some other states, California has procurement laws that limited the department's ability to hire vendors to handle reimbursements and provide services quickly.



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Times **Feature**

East San Jose community farm receives 25-year extension

By Lloyd Alaban

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

Residents relying on fresh food from an East San Jose community farm won't have to worry about produce anytime soon thanks to a 25-year extension from the city.

The San Jose City Council unanimously approved a 25-year contract Tuesday with Veggielution, a local nonprofit that runs an urban garden at Emma Prusch Farm Park.

Veggielution started in 2007 as part of a nationwide movement to grow healthy and fresh food for marginalized communities in urban spaces. In 2008, the nonprofit opened a space that now occupies six acres at Emma Prusch Farm Park.

"When the pandemic first broke out and we got the initial orders to shelter in place, it became a daunting task for residents who live on the east side of San Jose," said Councilmember Magdalena Carrasco, whose district includes the community farm. "These were families that really depended on their local parks. Veggielution sits squarely in one of those communities... Veggielution was among the first to really meet the challenges we were facing."

Veggielution offers environmental programs that help residents learn about agriculture, grow their business skills and cook new foods—all in the park. The nonprofit,

along with the city's parks department, holds summer youth camps and afterschool programs.

"It's a wonderful thing to see, and we'd love to see it in more parks throughout our city, but this is a pretty amazing start," Mayor Sam Liccardo said. "I'm a little disappointed we don't see more of those... I'm hopeful we can find ways to engage more broadly in these agreements because there are many partners who want to engage with us."

As part of the agreement, Veggielution will continue to teach youth farming, hold health and wellness classes, volunteer programs and cooking classes, among other activities.

"As we reflect on the past few years in the context of the pandemic, a racial reckoning and climate-related disasters, we recognize your partnership and your approval of this item today as an important statement of social, environmental and economic justice," said Cayce Hill, executive director of Veggielution.

Veggielution brings farms, food and family to East San Jose

Eighteen Veggielution workers farm the land, and every first Saturday of the month the garden hosts one of its signature programs such as yoga, planting in the fields, art classes and eating freshly-picked produce from the Veggielution Cocina kitchen.

"Veggielution is an extraordinary example



A volunteer tends to the Veggielution farm. *Photo courtesy of Emily Schwing.*

of utilizing open public space," said resident Mary Helen Doherty. "I'm confident (the city) will continue to support (Veggielution's) use of public land. Twenty-five more years of Veggielution is a continued blessing for our community."

During the pandemic, Veggielution shifted part of its operations to food distribution, handing out up to 5,000 boxes of food weekly, according to a city memo.

According to a city memo, the Veggielution-run farm takes up six acres of a 47-acre city park along Highways 680 and 101. The park's namesake, Emma Prusch, donated the land to the city in 1962.

"I think Emma Prusch should be very proud to see this agreement move forward," Councilmember Maya Esparza said, reflecting on the programming and weekly events Veggielution provides. "When COVID hit, Veggielution stood up in a huge way."

Volunteers maintain hundreds of fruit trees, a native flower garden and a German-themed kitchen garden at Emma Prusch Farm Park. Employees from the city parks department maintain and operate other programs at the site, including providing farm tours and hay wagon rides to elementary students.

Veggielution is also part of the Si Se Puede Collective, a four-organization coalition that provides services to underprivileged residents in East San Jose.

"Every Saturday I saw children's faces light up as they went through our worm bin," said Maricella Fuentes, spokesperson for Veggielution and the Si Se Puede Collective. "It's on days like this that you see how important open space is for children and their families."

Contact Lloyd Alaban at lloyd@sanjos-spotlight.com or follow @lloydalaban on Twitter.

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Times **Feature**

Steinway Society to present revered Russian Pianist Nikolay Khozyainov in All-Chopin program

Virtual Home Concert Hall Series, December 10 - 13, 2021

Russian pianist **Nikolay Khozyainov** (inset) will perform an All-Chopin program in Steinway Society – The Bay Area's "Home Concert Hall" series with a specially recorded performance available online from December 10 - 13, 2021.

Master of Romantic tone

The New York Times wrote that the music world was taking notice of the "stunning virtuosity and prodigious technique" of Nikolay Khozyainov, and audiences agree: they have acclaimed his performances at Carnegie Hall, Wigmore Hall, Lincoln Center, Kennedy Center, and Tchaikovsky Hall in Moscow.

Born in 1992 in Blagoveschensk, a city in the Russian Far East, Khozyainov made his debut at the Great Hall of the Moscow Conservatory at the age of seven and went on to study at the Tchaikovsky Conservatory. Khozyainov has won first prizes in numerous international competitions and was awarded Distinction in the 2010 Fryderyk Chopin Competition, where he was the youngest finalist.



As a special note: Nikolay Khozyainov recently appeared in the prestigious XVIII International Chopin Piano Competition in Warsaw, Poland and made it to the semi-final round of the eighteenth grueling competition.

Tickets Available Now: Tickets for the performances may be purchased in advance by going to steinwaysociety.com/tickets/ or by contacting the Steinway Society box office at 408-300-5635.

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Times Feature

Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors to address problem of homelessness with approval of *Project Homekey* sites

By Times Media staff writers

The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors unanimously approved new *Project Homekey* sites to help end homelessness and build more affordable and interim housing for our unhoused neighbors.

Supervisors approved the purchase of properties in Santa Clara and Mountain View that will increase housing options to address the County's homelessness crisis. These projects brought out a strong response from the community, both supportive and opposed.

"It is integral to hear from the community on every action

we take, but it is also vital that our community has been presented with accurate information. We thank the community for sharing their thoughts and learned that there is inaccurate information being circulated. Continued community engagement will be critical for the success of these projects," said Supervisor Otto Lee. "The future residents of these *Project Homekey* units will not be transient homeless, drug users, or criminals as stated in misleading flyers and on social media."

These projects will require all residents to go through a thorough vetting process. Only the permanent supportive housing projects will require background checks. Future resi-

dents will be families with young children, veterans, and others will be working people who lost their homes due to the pandemic.

The costs of these projects include the construction and renovation of these sites as well as the cost of supportive, wrap-around services that will help stabilize our unhoused neighbors. These wrap-around services will include support for job placement, medical and behavior health counseling, and more. Residents will be required to pay rent, subsidized based on their income level.

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Times **Local News**

Santa Clara County administers first kid COVID vaccines

By Tran Nguyen

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

After months of anticipation from lawmakers and parents, Santa Clara County on Wednesday gave its first COVID-19 shots to some of its youngest residents.

Hand-in-hand with their parents, a few hundred kids flocked to clinics across the South Bay to get the first jabs of the kid-size COVID-19 vaccine. The line for the clinic at Emmanuel Baptist Church in East San Jose has been non-stop since the clinic opened at 8:45 a.m, workers at the site said.

Nate Huynh, 9, and his sister Kate, 7, were among more than 250 kids with an appointment at the church. Mother Tiana Huynh said the family has been waiting anxiously to get their kids vaccinated.

"They have been waiting for this all year," Huynh told San José Spotlight. "We haven't let them do playdates or anything like that. With the vaccines, we'll be much more comfortable letting them do things like normal time again."

Federal health officials gave final approval for Pfizer's kid-size COVID-19 shot earlier this week, opening the way to vaccination for children as young as 5. In Santa Clara County, that's roughly 167,000 kids who are now eligible to get the two-dose pediatric shot, which is one-third the adult dosage.

Nate, sporting a green shirt with characters from the Super Mario Bros. video game, helped his mom comfort his little sister while the family waited in line.

"Every time I get a shot, I cry," Kate said, donning a Queen Elsa shirt and pink Hello Kitty shoes.

Sitting on her mom's lap, Kate took a shot in her left arm. Her brother hovered next to her.

"It's ok to be scared," Huynh told her daughter. Both siblings picked out their band-aids and stickers. They will come back at the end of the month to finish their doses.

The Pfizer kids vaccine is about 90% effective, according to the company.

Getting young kids vaccinated is a crucial step to end the pandemic, health experts say. Santa Clara County has spent weeks preparing for the newly-eligible population in anticipation of the authorization.

"We definitely have seen infections in this age group... and they are disruptive both to the children's education as well as their parents lives," said Dr. Jennifer Tong, associate chief medical officer at Santa Clara Valley Medical Center.

Vaccinating young kids will also help curb the transmission rate and keep others in the community safer, Tong added.

The county is slated to receive 55,000 pediatric shots this week. Officials say they anticipate a high demand for the kid-size vaccines, but are confident in the county's capacity to vaccinate as many children as possible in the upcoming weeks. Families have already booked up the majority of this week's appointments, according to officials.

Aria Shukla, 6, was also nervous for her shot. Sporting her Wonder Woman headpiece, Aria was crying and screaming as it came time to get inoculated.

"We've been wanting to do this because I have elderly parents," father Prakash Shukla told San José Spotlight. "I just wanted all the kids, everybody, to be vaccinated."

Aria proudly showed off her inoculated arm while she waited at the facility.

"I missed sleepovers," she said.

The kid-size vaccines come at a time where infections and hospitalizations caused by the Delta variant are dropping sharply. Santa Clara County is seeing a seven-day rolling average of 148 cases—less than half the average of 364 cases in late August.

As of this week, 85.3% of Santa Clara County residents ages 12 and up—more than 1.46 million people—are fully vaccinated. When children under 12 are included, the overall completion rate for vaccinations drops to 73.3%.



Kate and Nate Huynh wait in line with their mom Tiana to get the kid-size COVID-19 vaccines on Nov. 3. *Photo by Tran Nguyen.*

The county will start bringing mobile vaccine clinics to 80 school sites this week, officials said.

"Starting tomorrow, (the teams) will be vis-

iting multiple schools at our highest risk communities where parents may not be able to take time off work, but have consented for their children to get vaccinated," Tong said.

Shawn Ansari Presents



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Times **Feature**

Evolution of the Carnatic Violin

By **Veena Krishnan**
Special to the Times

Violin, the four-stringed instrument whose melodies enchant many, has made its mark in Carnatic music, too.

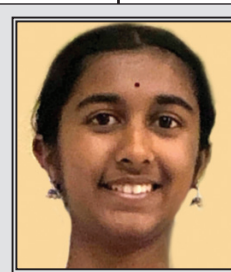
The Carnatic violin style has evolved over the years to produce its own uniqueness and popularity. It has contributed so much to the Carnatic field. As you may know, the violin is an instrument that originates from European classical music traditions. Over the years this instrument made its way into the Carnatic world and still holds strong today. The violin's versatility, size, and tone (which almost mimics the human voice) made it a perfect fit for Carnatic music. Carnatic violin can be performed as a solo, duet, and so on, or as accompaniment.

The violin first made its way into Southern India about 200 years ago when the British ruled India. Through the help of mainly three individuals, the violin was adapted and popularized to the Carnatic field. A minister from the Tanjavur Maratha court, Varahappa Iyer, visited a British governor's house, where he first saw Western instruments. He became fascinated by the violin and started becoming proficient in the instrument when it was gifted to him by the governor. He eventually started playing well enough to accompany Carnatic singers.

Baluswami Dikshitar and Vadivelu were great contributors, too. Baluswami Dikshitar was the brother of the Carnatic composer, Muttuswami Dikshitar. Shortly after hearing a performance, he learned the Western violin for three years. After that, he developed the instru-

ment to fit to the Carnatic style. Vadivelu, the youngest of the Thanjavur quartet, was encouraged by Maharaja Swati Tirunal to learn the violin. Vadivelu eventually learned the violin and his performances helped ignite an initial spark in this new instrument. And so, the Carnatic violin began with these three pioneers.

Now, the Carnatic violin had evolved into a unique style of its own. Carnatic violinists sit on the ground and place the scroll of the violin on their right foot and the top under their neck. They have a unique playing technique, too. Carnatic violinists closely imitate the human voice by gliding their fingers on the fingerboard in a specific way to produce different gamakas (the vocal twists and nuances). The Car-



About Carnatic Music

By **Veena Krishnan**

Carnatic violinists sit on the ground and place the scroll of the violin on their right foot and the top under their neck.

natic violin is tuned differently, too.

There have been many great Carnatic violinists, and I will be naming just a few from the 20th century. Vidwan Lalgudi Jayaraman, Prof. T N Krishnan, and Sri. M.



Prof. T N Krishnan

S. Gopalakrishnan were some of the many great violinists of that time. A present-day legend is Sri. V V Sundaram, and he has contributed a lot to the field. Even now, the violin dominates Carnatic concerts and is one of the first choices for accompaniment. Carnatic violin solos are another treat to hear, too. It's nice to learn about the history of this instrument and know about all the people who have contributed to its growth.

The Carnatic violin has an interesting history and has surely made a huge impact in the field of Carnatic music.



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www.ccavucc.org.

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Night Ministry, Second Harvest Food Bank, Church World Service, and Communities Responding to End Poverty. Worship Sunday, 9:00 AM followed by fellowship and refreshments. 1st Sunday in Worship: Holy Communion

2nd Sunday in Worship: Folks Choir and Potluck Sunday.

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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 holy book that guides Muslims to practice Islam. Please visit our website to learn more.

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Mt. Hamilton Grange - 2840 Aborn Road
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The Villages Gated Community (Cribari Auditorium) Sunday 8:15 AM
For more information, please call or visit us at the Parish Mission Center open M-F 9:00 AM -12:00 PM; 1:00 PM - 4:00 PM. Come join us and share your presence with us so that together we may grow and share our gifts to help build God's Kingdom!

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Evergreen Times

Times Feature

Survey: Nearly 60% of Americans unlikely to travel for Thanksgiving or Christmas

While rising vaccination rates against COVID-19 have increased travelers' comfort levels, most Americans are still opting to stay home this holiday season, according to a new national survey commissioned by the American Hotel & Lodging Association (AHLA) conducted by Morning Consult.

The survey found nearly 30% of Americans are likely to travel for Thanksgiving and 33% are likely to travel for Christmas—an increase from 21% and 24%, respectively, compared to 2020. Those who do plan to travel over the holidays expect to drive, but rising gas prices may dampen those plans.

The survey of 2,200 adults was conducted October 30 – November 1, 2021, by Morning Consult on behalf of AHLA. Key findings include the following:

- Just one in three Americans plans to travel for Christmas (33% likely to travel, 59% unlikely), and even fewer plan to travel for Thanksgiving (29% likely, 61% unlikely)
- 68% of Thanksgiving travelers

plan to stay with family or friends, while 22% plan to stay in a hotel

- 66% of Christmas travelers plan to stay with family or friends, while 23% plan to stay in a hotel

- 52% of Americans say they plan to take fewer trips and 53% plan to take shorter trips due to rising gas prices

- Leisure travelers are making several adjustments to their travel plans based on the current state of the pandemic, including only traveling within driving distance (58%), taking fewer trips (48%), and taking shorter trips (46%)

- Among parents with children under the age of 12, 41% say the availability of vaccines for kids ages 5-11 will make them more likely to travel

- 68% of Thanksgiving travelers and 64% of Christmas travelers plan to drive, compared to 11% and 14%, respectively, who plan to fly

"While vaccines have helped travelers feel more comfortable, rising gas prices and continued concerns about the pandemic are making many Americans hesitant to travel during the holidays. Despite a slight expected uptick in holiday travel this year, hotels will continue to face economic fallout from the pandemic, underscoring the need for targeted federal relief, such as the Save Hotel Jobs Act, to support the industry and its workforce until travel fully returns," said American Hotel & Lodging Association President and CEO Chip Rogers.

Op-ed

Did you know about the secret double standard in the Covid vax mandate?

First, I just love to listen to John Rothmann on 810 KGO radio at 6 p.m. who takes a somewhat liberal view of life.

Then too, it is fun to go to the right on the radio dial and listen to Mike Ghallager on 860 "The Answer."

Both radio hosts have opposite views but it's educational to hear both sides. Also, if you write any radio host into your web search engine and put the word "Sticher" after it, you can listen to any past programs easily without signing up for anything. This could add some fun to your life!

Also, I am not an anti-vax person, I have had the vax and booster of my own volition but no one forced me.

Enter the secret double standard

I have stumbled into something you may not realize or know. It is a hidden secret. There is a double standard in who is mandated to take the Covid shot or be fired.

I found out recently that a police officer in Palo Alto was fired because he refused to take the vaccine. He was a good man with many years of service.

I then found out that some school districts in Santa Clara al-

low teachers to avoid vaccination so long as they take a weekly Covid test (and if they are found infected, they take leave and combat it).

So, I thought to myself and still do that this is a double standard across our land and it is against our rights and U.S. Constitution.

Some Counties and school districts and police departments in California say, you must take vax or be fired where as others say, it is ok for you not to take vax so long as you do a weekly Covid virus check. Our governor already has set dates for things to take place on mandating the vax but is he following law?

The situation is foggy. The law is currently being bent like light in a prism.

I did speak with some youth on this and was told very intelligently, "You don't think like a humanist when you're talking about capitalism." So, some people including youth believe it is good to have a double standard and each organization and business needs to do what it wants to make the organization (group of people with common interest) run the best it can and provide safety too. They say quite eloquently with their

young minds that, "Individual groups have the right to set up unique conditions to best operate."

I disagree and believe that each person has an individual right to not take the vax and not lose their job. Am I wrong? If so, then why do school districts currently not fall under the vax mandate? What is that? Why do teachers at some districts get to secretly say "NO" to the vax but police officers and nurses are fired?

So, right now, in my view there is a double standard on the Covid vax mandated by our president. Also, a double standard for any business of 99 employees or less. That is a double standard too and I suppose any business with 103 employees will fast cut back to 99.

That is my belief and beliefs following attitudes. For example, did you know a breakthrough pill to fight Covid is now being rolled out and some day that will mean it will help to kill off the pandemic.

Time will tell...

I guess we have to figure out a new motto for our country and maybe it can be... GIVE ME FREEDOM OR GIVE ME VAX

Kevin Larsen

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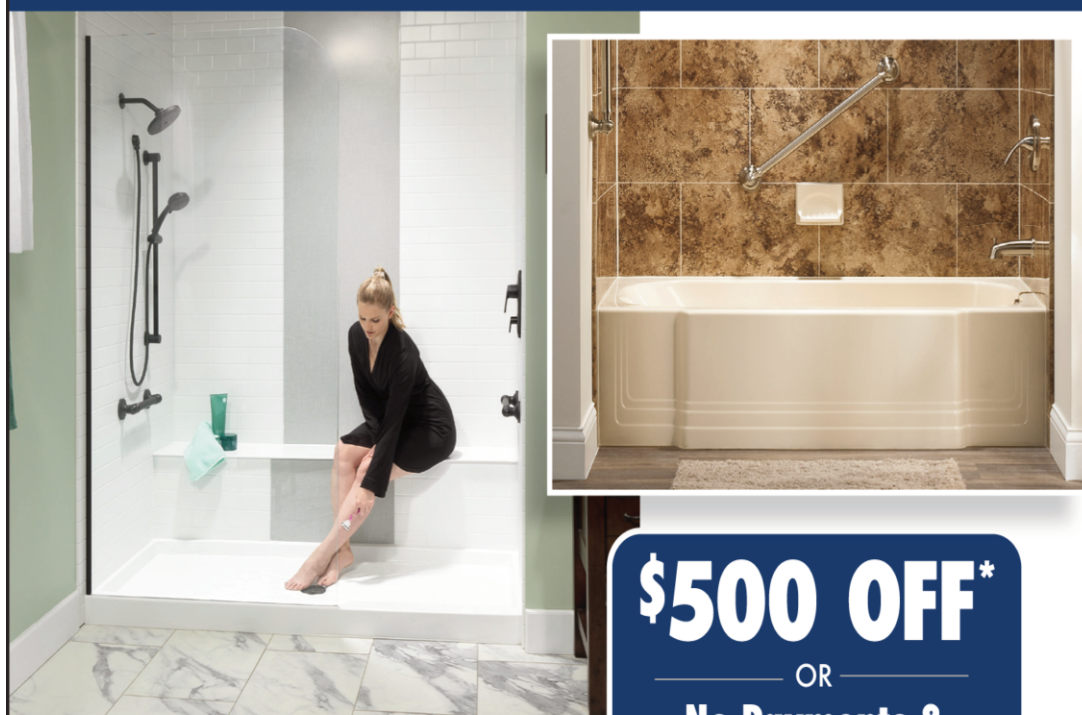
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