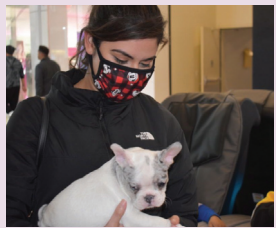


The COVID pandemic still ranks as the No. 1 issue for Silicon Valley **SEE PAGE 4**



Surprising move
Final congressional map splits San Jose into four districts
— **SEE PAGE 11**

California's new composting law: what you need to know
SEE PAGE 10



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Free COVID-19 testing returns to Valley Water HQ in January

'Walk ups welcome although appointments are preferred'

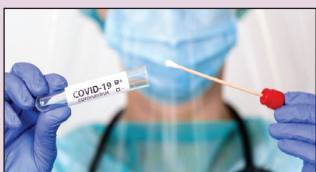
Free COVID-19 testing will return to Valley Water headquarters in January with the Santa Clara County testing bus available every Wednesday during the month of January for free voluntary test.

The first bus visit of the New Year will be on Jan. 5 from 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. at Valley Water offices located at 5750 Almaden Expressway in San Jose.

To register, please visit the website at <https://lhi.care/covidtesting>. Walk-ups are also welcome, although appointments are preferred. Please be aware there are a limited number of slots available.

At the bus, Valley Water will also provide FREE water-savings devices, information on reducing water use to testing participants while supplies last.

For other resources to help you save water inside and outside your home, please visit watersavings.org.



The Almaden Times Year in Review

Lorraine Gabbert
Senior Staff Writer

The past year continued to be overshadowed by the COVID-19 pandemic and was fraught with tragedy, but still held some hope.

As noted by Mayor Sam Liccardo during his 2021 State of the City address in December, residents suffered the loss of loved ones to COVID, shared the horror of nine VTA workers slain in a mass shooting, struggled to pay rent or find affordable housing and experienced unparalleled homelessness. But through it all, friends, families and government programs lent their support.

While some businesses and restaurants closed their doors for good, others opened. Some San Jose Unified School District students returned to school in April and more in August after a

year and a half of distance learning. And Santa Clara County residents lined up to be vaccinated and receive booster shots. As of Dec. 30, almost 87% of residents ages 5+ have been vaccinated and 54.5% of residents ages 16+ have received booster shots.

In local politics, in January 2021, Councilmembers David Cohen and Matt Mahan were sworn in virtually, joining the existing City Council. Mahan is now running for mayor—along with Councilmembers Dev Davis and Raul Peralez and Santa Clara County Supervisor Cindy Chavez—as Liccardo terms out at the end of 2022.

Mahan held District 10's first State of the District address in February. During the address, he said the pandemic left many without work and income for basic necessities like food.

"The pandemic has upended life as we knew

it and evolved from being a public health crisis...to being a larger economic and social crisis," Mahan said.

A bright spot in his discussion was plans for Almaden Lake Playgarden, an all-inclusive playground for people of all ages and abilities planned for Almaden Lake Park. Construction is scheduled for September 2022 with completion in spring 2023.

The pandemic also affected neighborhood events like Leland Bridge Night and the Almaden Art & Wine Festival. Leland Bridge Night, created by Chinese American parents as a bridge between cultures, celebrated its 20th anniversary in February with a virtual event including music, martial arts and a Lion dance. Although the Almaden Valley Women's Club postponed its annual festival until 2022, it provided a

See YEAR IN REVIEW, page 17

Fire destroys Almaden Chabad House synagogue



Synagogue not equipped with fire alarms

By William Bellou
Publisher

Almaden Chabad House synagogue was heavily damaged by a fire that started in the carport.

Security camera video showed the fire starting in the synagogue's carport around 2 a.m. Dec. 23, according to Rabbi Mendel Weinfeld.

"The fire burned for several hours, died down and then reignited,

Weinfeld said. "The rekindled flames then spread through the interior of all sides of the building," Weinfeld said. "The whole building is a loss."

Weinfeld said the synagogue, at 1088 Branham Lane, was not equipped with fire alarms. Several people walked past the building while the fire was burning, the rabbi added, but the fire was not reported until shortly before 7 a.m., when waste collectors arrived to pick up the garbage.

The synagogue's Torah scrolls *See FIRE, page 21*

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



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Valley Currents

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



Reid Hillview Airport (Photo: facebook.com/SaveReidHillviewAirport)

County will conduct more testing for lead at airports

By William Bellou
Publisher

As a result of a study that found San Jose's Reid-Hillview Airport has high levels of lead, Santa Clara County will conduct soil testing at Reid-Hillview and its other county-owned airport in San Martin.

The new round of testing will look into how contaminated the soil is at each airport to determine whether the ground needs to be dug up and replaced with new earth.

County Executive Jeff Smith said that he's concerned that what the airborne lead study found also may be showing up in the area's soil.

"We've got a piece of property (and) we have reason to believe that there may be contamination," Smith said. "We need to figure out if there's something we need to do about it. If the levels are minimal, that's pretty much the end of it. If they are high, we need to dig up surface soil and replace it with non-contaminated soil."

The August lead study offered

further evidence for county officials and nearby residents who long have advocated for the closure of the airport and its relocation 23 miles southeast to San Martin, citing health and noise concerns, as well as a need for more housing in a region already short of potential development sites.

Unleaded fuel solution

Flight school owners and pilots at Reid-Hillview and San Martin believe that relocating the San Jose airport would put a strain on the San Martin airport which is smaller than Reid-Hillview. The best solution, they argue, is to switch all planes at Reid-Hillview to unleaded fuel, a county-led initiative that will start in January 2022.

Efforts to close Reid-Hillview started in 2018 when county supervisors voted to end federal grants for the airport, allowing for its closure by 2031. The County has owned Reid-Hillview since 1961. The Airport was founded in 1939.

Kenneth Cavers of Almaden named to MSOE Honors List for Fall Quarter '21

Kenneth Cavers, from Almaden Valley, was named to the Milwaukee School of Engineering's Honors List for the 2021 Fall Quarter.

Cavers is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering.

Undergraduate students who have earned a GPA of 3.20 or higher (out of 4.0) for this quarter are on the Honors List.

Milwaukee School of Engineering (www.msOE.edu) is the university of choice for those seeking an inclusive community of experiential learners driven to solve the complex challenges of today and tomorrow. The independent, non-profit university has about 2,700 students and was founded in 1903.



Brianne Ross with Felice Lopiccolo and a friend. Photo by Lorraine Gabbert.

The COVID pandemic still ranks as the No. 1 issue for Silicon Valley

By Lorraine Gabbert
Article courtesy of
San José Spotlight

As 2021 draws to a close, San Jose residents share their hopes for the coming year.

Many want to see an end to the COVID-19 pandemic, which has negatively affected their health, work and travel. They also would like to see people treat each other with more kindness.

Retiree Felice Lopiccolo said although vaccination levels are high in Santa Clara County—more than 91% of residents ages 12+ and 81% of people of all ages are vaccinated and 50% of residents ages 16+ have received a booster shot—she wishes more people would step up. She is tired of COVID-19 hot spots requiring schools and businesses to close.

For student Nicholas Mino, 16, the pandemic is personal. Mino lost his grandfather to COVID-19 and much of his family were infected as well.

"One thing that I'd like to change in the following year is definitely more vaccinations and more booster vaccinations," he said.

Pandemic fatigue was expressed by many at Westfield Oakridge shopping mall and downtown Willow Glen in San Jose last week.

Nancy Biltran, 27, who works in human resources and was visiting from Texas, said she'd like to say goodbye to COVID and have life get back to normal. She is tired of people having to wear masks.

Accountant Tao "Cathy" Ning, 25, wants to be able to return to China to visit her homeland and family.

"I miss my family a lot," Ning said. "I haven't seen them since before the pandemic happened. In the new year, I hope I can focus on important things: the people that I love and care about."

Adriana Perazzo, 17, would like life to be less stressful. "I want to see my mental health change for the better," she said, "and be able to look at things in a more positive way."

Some spoke of how COVID has affected the economy from jobs to affording rent. Family nurse practitioner Brianne Ross, 29, said due to the pandemic, working in health care has been tough these past couple of years.

"I'm seeing a lot of good providers change professions or

quit completely," Ross said, "because they're frustrated and fed up with the inability to get COVID (fully) dealt with."

Service technician Reynaldo Salazar, 31, who has a two and three-year old, said more and better paying jobs are needed to improve living conditions for families. He said the pandemic made finding work even more difficult. "I'm always looking for better work," he said. "Hopefully COVID goes away."

The lack of affordable housing became a critical problem for families faced with less income from cut hours or being laid off work during the pandemic. Essential workers also risked or contracted COVID-19 while working on the front lines, making it even more challenging to stay afloat.

See PANDEMIC, page 10



Nicholas Mino.
Photo by Lorraine Gabbert.

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Times **Local News**



California's new composting law: what you need to know

By William Bellou
Publisher

On Jan. 1, a new law requiring Californians to separate organic waste from the rest of their trash will start being phased in.

The groundbreaking new law will forever change the way we dispose of our organic waste, in particular, kitchen scraps.

Senate Bill 1383 requires all residents and businesses to separate such “green” waste from other trash, but the program will be rolled out gradually for homes and businesses in the coming months.

Fines can be levied for failing to separate organic refuse from other trash. But those charges aren’t scheduled to begin until 2024. CalRecycle, the state agency overseeing the change, has lots of information about the new requirements on its website: www.calrecycle.ca.gov/organics/slcp/education

Beginning in 2024, state law will allow fines for those who contaminate their organic waste. A first offense could cost you \$50 to \$100, with third and subsequent offenses costing up to \$500.

Here are some frequently asked questions about the new requirements.

Isn’t garbage just garbage? Why are California lawmakers requiring us to separate organic waste from the rest of our trash?

Scientists have found that organic waste dumped into traditional landfills decomposes and creates methane, a super-pollutant with as much as 80 times the Earth-warming potency of carbon dioxide.

When do I need to begin separating my kitchen waste from other trash?

The opening date for organics diversion varies, depending on where you live.

Are there alternatives to having the kitchen and yard waste trucked away?

Yes. Food scraps can be composted at home or taken to friends or family who compost or to a community compost location.

What about food that’s still edible? Where should it go?

SB 1383 proposes increasing by 25% the amount of edible food that supermarkets and other large outlets preserve. (It does not require residents or small businesses to recycle edible food.) The surplus goes to food banks. Businesses can learn more about donations by visiting FoodDropLA.com.

Who’s going to pay for all this?

You are. A survey by the League of California Cities found that most local governments expect refuse collection rates to increase less than 20%, with 1 in 5 cities saying they expect charges to go up more.



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IN MEMORY

Michael Paul Lescroart

Oct. 7, 1949-Dec. 18, 2021

Worked for 15 years as a Realtor in Almaden Valley

Michael Paul Lescroart passed away on December 18, 2021 from complications of stroke and vascular dementia. It was his 44th wedding anniversary.

Mike was the third of eight children of Maurice and Loretta Lescroart, and lived most of his life in the Bay Area. He was a graduate of Serra High School and UC Davis.

He worked 25 years in corporate finance and 15 years as a realtor serving Almaden Valley.

A big man with a big personality, Mike delighted in hearing complete strangers' life



stories (and in sharing his own). He often gathered with a group of local retirees at Maple Leaf Donuts, where he swore he only drank coffee.

Mike was a devoted brother, husband, father, and grandfather. He is survived by his wife Ginny, his three children, Mark, Annie, and Steve, and his four grandchildren, Elliott, Claire, Benjamin, and Daniel.

Donations may be made in his memory to the Alzheimer's Association (www.alz.org).

A memorial service is planned for the spring.

Health

Eye drops offer new option to reading glasses

A new eye drop could make misplaced reading glasses a thing of the past.

The new eye drop, called Vuity, is now available by prescription that improves close-range vision without affecting long-range vision. The application is a once-a-day treatment.

"For anybody who doesn't want to fiddle with reading glasses, this might be a really helpful alternative," said Dr. Scott Mac-Rae, an ophthalmologist at the University of Rochester's Center for Visual Science.

The new drug was approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration in late October.

More than 88% of adults 45 years or older in the US have problems with close-range vision, a condition known as presbyopia that typically worsens over time.

To focus on close objects, the eye's lens must change shape, yet it becomes less flexible as people age, making this process difficult.



Minimum wage in Silicon Valley going up in January

Paychecks for minimum wage earners will increase effective Jan 1, 2022 in San Jose when hourly rates go from \$15.45 to \$16.20.

After voters approved Measure D to bring

wages from \$8 to \$10 in 2012, six other cities in Santa Clara County also adopted their own increases. A decade later, San Jose is trailing behind all of them—almost \$1 less than the highest rate in the region.

Palo Alto will hike its minimum wage to \$16.45, while Santa Clara, Los Altos and Cupertino all raise the pay floor to \$16.40. Both cities had a minimum wage of \$15.65 in 2020.

Seven other cities in the county—Campbell, Morgan Hill, Gilroy, Monte Sereno, Los Altos Hills, Saratoga and Los Gatos—are lockstep with the state's wage hike, which bumps the \$14 hourly rate to \$15 at businesses with 25 or more employees.

While the increased wages might help local businesses hire and retain more people, the new wage increase could also drive some employers to cut positions to accommodate the increase expenses. Others are worried about an increase in prices due to higher wages, adding to the recent rise of inflation.

Shea Cooke of Almaden named to Dean's List at University of MD Global Campus

Shea Cooke of Almaden was named to the Dean's List for the fall semester at University of Maryland Global Campus.

To be eligible for the honor, a student must complete at least six credits during the term, earn a grade point average of at least 3.5 for the term, and maintain a cumulative GPA of 3.5 at UMGC.

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Times **Community News**



Reach your New Year's resolutions on a budget

Whether your New Year's Resolutions include eating healthier, exercising more, or devoting more time to self-care, having a plan can help you reach your goals on a budget.

This new year, consider the following tips from the experts at Dollar General:

Healthier Eating

Preparing food that is healthier, tasty and affordable is easier when sticking to recipes and a budget. To help customers make healthier decisions, Dollar General partnered with a registered dietician and nutritionist to create "Better For You" recipes from ingredients available at every Dollar General store. The complete collection can be found at dollargeneral.com, and includes simple, budget-friendly recipes, such as loaded egg muffins, roasted broccoli almondine and secret ingredient brownies, making it easy to whip up something delicious and nutritious at each meal.

Self-Care

A healthy dose of self-care can make you happier and healthier. Self-care may include adopting a new hair care routine, experimenting with skin care products, or learning a new recipe. It may also mean taking time to meditate, read new books or spend less time on electronics and more time with friends and family. Be sure to dedicate time on the calendar every day to self-care.

Smart Saver

To begin 2022 with a fresh perspective on finances, make a budget that includes household essentials. While food is one budget line

item that can fluctuate, you can be sure to save by taking advantage of retailers' apps that help you shop savvy. For example, the Dollar General app includes digital coupons, a Shopping List feature so you can take note of needed items and calculate the estimated total before going to the store, and a Cart Calculator feature, which keeps a running total of purchases while you're in the store. Understanding budgets, sale items and available digital coupons before shopping can help keep you from overspending and hopefully support your financial stability goals.

Regardless of your plans for the new year, adopting a few smart strategies can help ensure you meet your goals affordably. (State-Point)

Photo: (c) HAKINMHAN / iStock via Getty Images Plus

Political fund-raising gates open

Almaden Valley's supervisorial district changes

Yes, candidates for San Jose mayor and City Council can officially begin raising money now that the redistricting process has been resolved with a compromise.

Now you can legally send money to your favorite candidate!

The new county supervisorial district was a surprise to many, as District 1 no longer hosts Los Gatos, Monte Sereno and Almaden Valley. These communities are now in District 5 which includes Los Altos, Los Altos Hills and Palo Alto.

Evergreen Valley has now changed from supervisorial District 3 to District 1, which includes South County.

The new county map passed on a 3-2 vote, with District 5 Supervisor Joe Simitian and Los Gatos resident and District 1 Supervisor Mike Wasserman voting no.

Zoe Lofgren's district has picked up the farmland communities all the way to Salinas, while Rep. Jimmy Panetta' lost much of his rural area resulting in his picking up more population in his newly mapped San Jose district.

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We have three programs to help our neighbors in need

Critical Repairs

Income-eligible owner-occupied properties (single family or mobile homes) are eligible for critical home repairs that, if not corrected, would make the home uninhabitable.

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.

Contractors We work with contractors that possess CA contractor specialty (Class C) in painting, plumbing, HVAC, roofing or electrical.

Donate Sign up to sponsor an upcoming neighbor in need build or donate at www.rtsv.org today.



Rebuilding Together Silicon Valley

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Times **Community News**

Pedestrian injured in serious collision on Almaden Expressway

A pedestrian is in serious condition from injuries sustained Monday morning, Dec. 27 after being struck by a driver at the intersection of Almaden Expressway and Cherry Ave. just after 11 a.m.

The San Jose Police Media Relations Twitter account posted about the incident at around 11:47 a.m. Monday.

The pedestrian was transported to a local hospital and the driver involved in the incident stayed at the scene and cooperated with San Jose police.

The two southbound lanes of Almaden Expressway were closed to traffic in the area for a couple of hours and drivers had to use alternate routes.



Nancy Biltran. Photo by Lorraine Gabbert.

Pandemic

Continued from page 4

Fast food worker Melanie Juarez, 17, said rents are extremely high and not sustainable. She recalls when apartments rented for \$600 a month, rather than the \$2,000 per month her family currently pays.

"I'd like to see rents go down," she said. "Not a lot of people can afford it."

During the last few years, the number of homeless people has multiplied with encampments popping up in San Jose and throughout the Bay Area. In his State of the City address Thursday, Mayor Sam Liccardo said homelessness is the city's biggest failure.

Lauren Garcia, 66, who lives in Santa Clara, said she'd like to see more shelters for the unhoused.

For some, the Christmas season brought the need for human kindness to mind. Personal trainer Joe Williams, 45, would like to see people "take it back to loving each other."

Dan Leund, 58, hopes people have more tolerance and humanity both in person and on social media.

"You've got to treat others how you want to be treated," Leund said. "Opinions come across as confrontations"

Dr. Mark Gonnerman, 63, hopes people slow down and take time to really listen to one another and connect more, especially following the trauma of the pandemic.

"We've all gone through this together, but some generations have suffered more than others, the elders and the young," he said. "We need that kind of awareness and more empathy."



Reynaldo Salazar with one of his two children. Photo by Lorraine Gabbert.

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Tao "Cathy" Ning (right). Photo by Lorraine Gabbert.

Final congressional map splits San Jose into four districts

By Eli Wolfe
Article courtesy of
San José Spotlight

In a surprising upset, the state commission charged with redrawing California's political boundaries drew San Jose into four districts after briefly considering an option that would have limited it to three.

The California Citizens Redistricting Commission voted last week to approve a map that places San Jose in four congressional districts: 16, 17, 18 and 19.

Mayor Sam Liccardo celebrated when the commission advanced a map that would have allowed San Jose to retain a city-majority congressional district. When it became clear the commission was considering a four-way split again, Liccardo made impassioned pleas on social media for residents to testify against the map.

He didn't immediately respond to a request for comment.

The commission adopted the four-way split for San Jose in part to avoid a district that sprawled from San Mateo to San Luis Obispo counties.

"I think that was the first point in which we started to evaluate what the impacts of a three-split within the city of San Jose would do to the general area,"

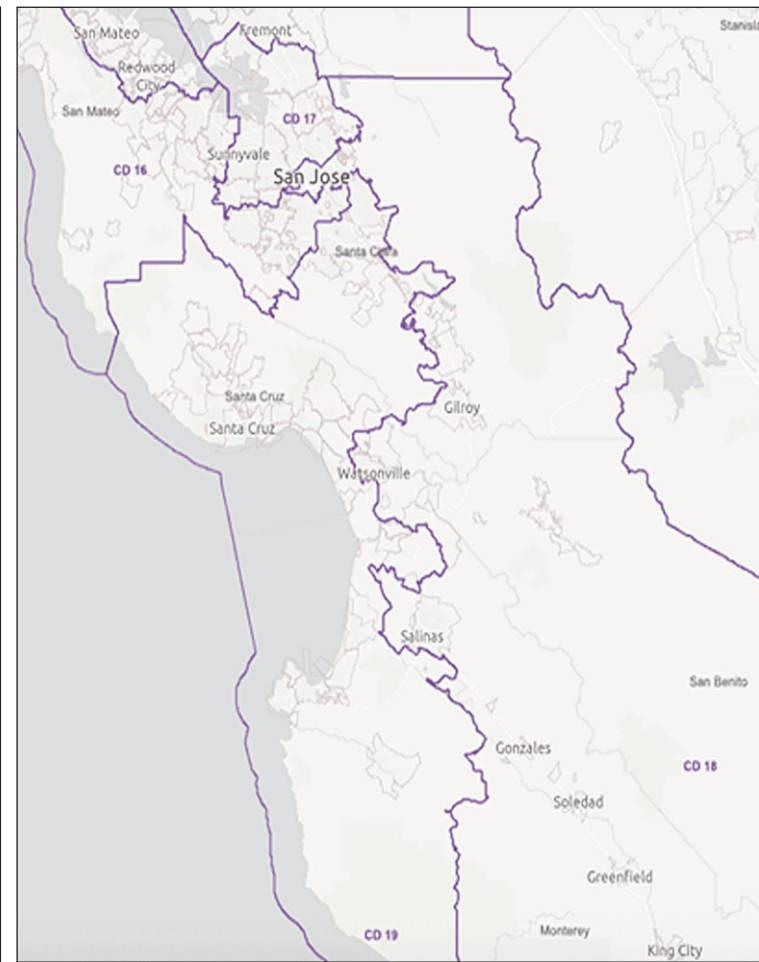
Commissioner Isra Ahmad said, "The commission fell back to the four-split in San Jose with the mind of trying to make as many communities of interest as whole as possible."

Proposed congressional boundaries could split San Jose

The new congressional lines make some other changes in Santa Clara County. Santa Clara, Cupertino, Sunnyvale and Milpitas are now in District 17. Mountain View, Palo Alto and Los Gatos are in District 16. Evergreen and Edenvale are in District 19, which stretches to Santa Cruz and all the way down the coast to Paso Robles. A chunk of Alum Rock is in District 18, which sweeps south to include Morgan Hill, Gilroy, Watsonville and King City.

Terry Christensen, a retired San Jose State University political science professor and host of Valley Politics, is somewhat optimistic about the new boundaries.

"Best spin we can put on this is that San Jose could have not one but (four) representatives if candidates get their act together," he said.



Final congressional boundary lines in Silicon Valley. Image courtesy of California Citizens Redistricting Commission.

The state commission must follow six criteria for redrawing congressional boundaries: maintain equal populations in districts; comply with the federal Voting Rights Act; ensure contiguous borders; minimize the division of cities, counties and neighborhood communities of interest; ensure districts are geographically compact; and ensure each Senate district has two complete and adjacent Assembly districts. The commission does not consider how maps will affect incumbents or

candidates.

Ahmad noted San Jose, like much of the South Bay, is densely populated, which makes it challenging to create districts that don't divide communities of interest.

She added the split was also necessary to preserve a Latino-majority district to comply with the Voting Rights Act. This district includes a portion of San Jose in the Alum Rock area that contains Latino essential workers.



OP-ED

I saw them kissing

I always wondered why Paris is considered the city for lovers.

As I get older, I begin to realize that perhaps many in our world forget the wonder of kissing.

Holding hands in some ways fades as each decade passes and sometimes partners walk behind one another.

At the local shopping mall, looking up while going down an escalator I happened to view a chance encounter which made me smile.

It was a girl and guy both in their teens, going up the moving stairs and she turned around to hold her man. You see, their heights seem to match as she stood a stair above him. It was all unexpected for him and one could visibly see he was dazed in this somewhat out of place experience.

How I admire her courage to plant a kiss on him while pressing in and all the while facing backward while traveling up.

It was a sight to see and she and he both measured the time of the kiss as they rapidly reached the top peaking once to not fall down and have a kissing catastrophe, while all the while smiling at each other and going back to kissing each other for one more time on the way up.

But of course, such mail written in ink, is perhaps a thing of the past. I only know for sure, that it's good to witness girls and guys kiss in 2021 and hold hands without masks too.

You see, I saw them kissing and it made me smile.
Kevin Larsen
Evergreen Valley

take place.

I did not want to spy as they walked to the right out of sight but my eyes took in how gleefully he took his arm and like a square-dance tethered it into hers. The girl started a chain reaction of happiness with an innocent boy who perhaps had never been kissed before and he certainly could not have found a better tutor.

My memories I am afraid have become numbed over time but I could reflect decades ago of my personal experiences to find my smile once again.

As I get older, my leg bones seem to need oil to move, I understand more clearly now why in Paris the act of public kissing is applauded. Maybe secret glances by passers by have the strength to reawaken fond remembrances of long-ago romantic interludes inside their sacred souls.

Such chance sights bring hope and joy in our world to know that people can find happiness in connecting with someone they might fall in love with and know that such things cost no money but only take simple courage to achieve.

Holding hands is most important followed by kissing. Perfume and after shave take command of all air particles. There is no better joy in being with the one you love and having the inner mechanisms of emotions not follow directions, teasing mercilessly the logic in one's mind while writing the simplest of love letters to come.

But of course, such mail written in ink, is perhaps a thing of the past.

I only know for sure, that it's good to witness girls and guys kiss in 2021 and hold hands without masks too.

You see, I saw them kissing and it made me smile.

Kevin Larsen
Evergreen Valley

Times **Local News**

VTA recovers nearly half of pre-pandemic weekday ridership

Shortage of bus drivers keeping VTA from offering full services

VTA's weekday transit ridership has reached 47% of pre-COVID levels as of November 2021 – a marked increase over the 30% recovery rate this time last year.

The improvement in ridership comes after the agency fully restored daytime weekday operations in its October 11 schedule update.

The bulk of recent ridership growth is concentrated on VTA's Frequent Bus lines, which are seeing nearly two-thirds of normal rider

counts back onboard. Weekday bus ridership overall has risen to 52% of pre-pandemic levels. The rates of weekday ridership recovery broken down by service category are as follows:

- Frequent: 59% of pre-COVID weekday ridership recovered
- Local: 50% of pre-COVID weekday ridership recovered
- Rapid: 49% of pre-COVID weekday ridership recovered
- Light rail: 31% of pre-COVID weekday ridership recovered
- Express: 25% of pre-COVID weekday ridership recovered

ership recovered

"The need for reliable, safe public transit has continued to ring true throughout the pandemic," said VTA Chief Planning and Programming Officer Deborah Dagang. "And the trajectory for VTA's service restoration aims to improve service for everyone, especially those who rely on it most."

The rate of VTA's weekday ridership recovery is accelerating. While most years see a dip in riders between October and November, this year saw an increase in that timeframe as bus ridership remained steady and light rail increased by nearly 1,000 passengers.

The accelerated recovery speaks to the

effectiveness of investing in the system's core service, which was a cornerstone of the New Transit Service Plan that launched in December 2019.

This ridership return is both local and regional. Routes like the Rapid 500 between Berryessa BART and Downtown San Jose/Diridon saw weekday ridership nearly double in September 2021, compared to June 2020 when BART service launched in North San Jose.

To date, the amount of transit service VTA is offering is at 90% of pre-pandemic levels. A shortage of bus operators is keeping VTA from running full service.

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Times News

2022 Hiring Trends

By Angela Copeland
Special to the Times



The New Year is here! Just like last year, the world has changed.

Our personal lives and our work lives will continue to look much different than they did in 2019. We've found a new normal. So, what does this mean for hiring in 2022? There are a few trends you should be on the lookout for.

Find Your Style: One of the great things that has come out of the pandemic is remote work. But, remote work isn't for everyone. The good news is, not every company is remote. This means that you, the job seeker, have an opportunity to decide which working style works the best for you. I firmly believe this split of in office, remote, and hybrid work environments will stick around long after the pandemic is over. This is the time to pick your perfect work environment.

Extend Your Search Area: In the past, if there were no jobs in your local area, you had two choices. You could stay with your current employer, or you could move. But, remote work breaks down the barrier of distance. If you're in a small market, you can now fish for jobs anywhere in the country. This opens up the possibilities. In some cases, it can also mean an increase in salary. If you're looking for

remote opportunities, look beyond your local market. And, just because a job posting has a city attached to it does not mean there's no chance of remote work.

Try New Roles: The job market is tight right now. Companies are having a tough time finding talent. This means that when a company tries to find a perfect candidate, they very likely will come up empty handed. For the job seeker, this is great. If you've thought of trying a new career field, this is the time to try. Hiring managers are much more likely to give an underdog applicant a shot when it's hard to find the perfect candidate.

Remote Learning: For years, companies have expected their employees to take charge of their education. When employees stay at an organization for fewer years, the company has less incentive to invest in training. They expect you to show up, ready to work. The problem is, in a remote world, it can be hard to increase your skills and knowledge. It's like you're on an island, focused only on your existing work. But, there are many free online courses available. Use them to keep yourself up to date while you're growing your career.

Whatever you do, don't sell yourself short in 2022. I know that the last two years have been scary. We've faced a lot of unknown together, and in quite an isolated fashion. But, companies are still hiring. And, you are still valuable. Accept that what is normal has changed. Make a new set of goals for the New Year, and let's move forward together.

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

LETTER TO THE EDITOR Does cherishing life require abolishing abortion?

Dear Editor,

Life begins at the point of conception. No one can deny that after a human being is conceived it will develop into the very same being as those debating this issue.

What astounds me is that those who favor abortion went through an identical development stage as the being they are condemning to death. Would these very same people agree that a similar choice should have been made about their own existence? How many human lives have been lost that could have added to our society in so many ways?

Abortion today is used primarily as a birth control of convenience because people are too self-centered to take precautions. They prefer their own pleasurable self-indulgence over the care and sanctity of the life they created. What ever happened to taking responsibility for one's actions in this country? Is it too much to ask a woman who has conceived to place the child into adoption? Nine months of dis-

comfort is nothing compared to life in prison for voluntary manslaughter! And what about consenting to sex with a male; is that part of the equation too? Or has abortion just become another extension of the women's liberation movement started in the late 60's which coincidentally boosted membership on or about the same date as Roe V. Wade?

Does the father of the child have a say in this? And what about the constitution of the United States? Are not all people conceived in this country deserving of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness? I believe abortion is a crime against humanity and should be outlawed. We need to overturn the Roe v. Wade decision and get back to cherishing life in this country. For a country that murders its children cannot be far from self-destruction.

Back in 1973 a Supreme Court decision {Roe v. Wade} legalized abortion by a 7-2 vote.

Six of the seven justices in the majority were Republican appointees. The only Democrat appointee, Byron White, voted against Roe v. Wade. Back then the Republican motto was government is best that governs least. Hence the Republicans giveth and the Republicans taketh away.

Joe Bialek

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Mayor **Sam Liccardo** said with rapid transmission rates across the county, he's eyeing the end of January as a deadline for city employees to get boosted.

San Jose mayor wants all city workers to get COVID boosters

Under proposal all visitors entering city buildings would need vax shots

By **Jana Kadah**

Article courtesy of *San José Spotlight*

San Jose city employees may have another vaccine requirement coming their way. Mayor Sam Liccardo introduced a proposal last week to require all city employees to get COVID-19 booster shots as a condition of employment. Visitors to city-owned facilities such as the SAP Center and San Jose McEnery Convention Center would also need a third shot.

Liccardo's proposal will be heard by the city's Rules and Open Government Committee on Jan. 5, which means it could make its way to the full City Council by Jan. 11. If passed, San Jose would be the first city in the state to impose such a mandate.

The proposed booster mandate comes as the Omicron variant spreads in Santa Clara County—it's now the dominant strain in the country.

"It's plainly evident that Omicron is much more transmissible, and we're seeing that all throughout the East Coast, certainly through Europe and other parts of this country that makes the risk to our community quite eminent," Liccardo said.

"We are not interested by any stretch in causing panic. We just want to make sure everyone's prepared."

There are 10 confirmed Omicron infections in Santa Clara County, but Liccardo said health officials suspect the number is actually much higher. The seven-day rolling average of new COVID infections in the county is 187 as of Tuesday.

Liccardo said with rapid transmission rates across the county, he's eyeing the end of January as a deadline for city employees to get boosted. He said he'll have a better idea of a deadline after the holiday break.

"But as far as I can tell, there's no reason why you should not move forward aggressively knowing what we know, both about Omicron and about the importance of get-

ting fully vaccinated, which I believe includes a booster shot," the mayor said.

Liccardo's booster mandate came as unwelcome news to some.

Tom Saggau, spokesperson for the San Jose Police Officers' Association, said he hadn't heard of the proposal until the mayor announced it.

"Our objection is really process-focused and we want to see the data," Saggau told San José Spotlight. "There has to be a negotiation or discussion. You cannot impose changes to working conditions without meeting and conferring with your workers."

And before a decision is imposed on city employees, Saggau said bargaining chairs should be able to see data and other information to help inform the mandate.

"We're focused on making sure that the process is followed and making sure the law is followed to make sure our rights are protected," he said. "So that's why this kind of announcement with no consultation is disappointing."

San Jose previously enacted a vaccine mandate for city employees earlier this year — a move that was met with some pushback from SJPD and the San Jose Fire Department. As a compromise, all 7,037 city workers received a one-week grace period to provide proof of vaccination after the Sept. 30 deadline.

Eventually, more than 95% of the city's employees met the requirement, Liccardo said.

Of San Jose's roughly 1,150 police officers, 1,052 are fully vaccinated. For firefighters, 611 of 676 are fully vaccinated, according to data from the city.

As of Dec. 7, only 353 employees are not fully vaccinated, according to data from Jennifer Schembri, director of the city manager's office of employee relations.

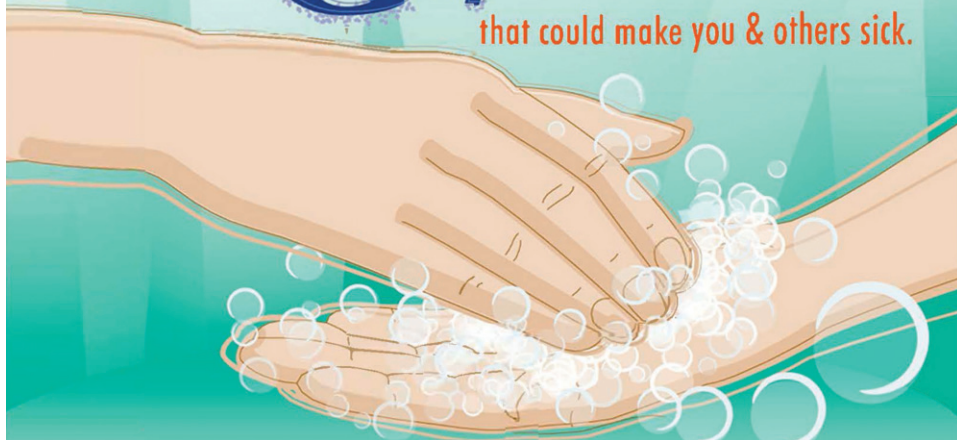
Of those, about 288 actively working employees have approved exemptions, or have exemptions currently under review.

Six workers have received notices of intended discipline for failing to show proof of vaccination, two are in the disciplinary

See **BOOSTER**, next page

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Santa Clara County
PUBLIC HEALTH

Times **Local News**



Heirloom nativity scene stolen by suspect captured on security cam

The Galindo family of Evergreen is heart-broken.

The family's San Jose house was all set up for Christmas to welcome everyone for the Holidays. Then, the festive mood changed as the family's cherished Nativity scene was stolen right off of their front porch just a few days before Christmas.

"I was very, very upset," said Alma Galindo. "The nativity scene was a family heirloom that we wanted to keep passing down to our kids from my mother," said Alma. "People have no respect. Our hearts our broken!"

A Ring videocam-captured image shows the suspect grabbing the entire Luna Family nativity scene at the front of their home and running away.

A man caught on camera in plain view filled up his bag with the figurines and took off on foot.

"That someone would just have the courage to walk up and take a Nativity, I mean who takes that?" Galindo said.

Galindo said that about an hour later, the man came back to take the rest of it.

Hours later, a neighbor who saw the post and video on the Nextdoor app brought the Galindo family a new one.

"I was astonished and shocked, it was crazy that someone was actually reaching out to help us," Samuel Rodriguez, neighbor of the Galindos said.

"That someone would just have the courage to walk up and take a Nativity, I mean who takes that?" Galindo said.

Booster

Continued process and three have been suspended without pay. The remaining employees are new hires, whose data has not been verified yet.

Liccardo said the city will soon track booster shots among city employees. The mayor is also proposing the purchase of software or equipment that would facilitate more rapid and less labor-intensive verification of vaccinations, according to his office.

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Times **Feature**

Major New Construction				
On Map	Assessee	Property Type	City	Net Change
1	PLANETARY VENTURES, LLC / 1	Agricultural & Miscellaneous	Mountain View	\$487,320,040
2	SJSC PROPERTIES, LLC	Multifamily Housing	San Jose	\$220,643,829
3	CAP TRANCHE 2, LLC	Office	San Jose	\$183,000,000
4	MGP IX SAC II PROPERTIES, LLC	Office	Mountain View	\$168,937,031
5	PEERY, RICHARD T. TRUSTEE & ET AL	Office	San Jose	\$155,355,350
6	BACCARAT SHORELINE, LLC	Office	Mountain View	\$149,140,873
7	ADOBE, INC.	Agricultural & Miscellaneous	San Jose	\$127,720,000
8	INTUITIVE SURGICAL, INC.	Industrial & Manufacturing	Sunnyvale	\$111,876,746
9	PATHLINE PARK I, LLC	Industrial & Manufacturing	Sunnyvale	\$102,692,335
10	LINKEDIN CORPORATION	Industrial & Manufacturing	Mountain View	\$101,779,630

The top 10 major new construction projects in Santa Clara County in 2020. Image courtesy of the Santa Clara County Assessor's Office.

Santa Clara County property value grows despite COVID pandemic

By Eli Wolfe

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

When COVID-19 first emerged in early 2020, the Santa Clara County Assessor's Office braced for a repeat of the Great Recession, when property value plummeted. Instead, 2021 boomed in residential and commercial property sales, even with a pandemic hanging over the South Bay.

The Santa Clara County assessment roll—which includes the value of all real estate and business property—grew by \$25.4 billion in 2021, rising to a record \$576.9 billion. This is a 4.6% increase over 2020, according to an annual report from the Assessor's Office.

In his 27 years as County Assessor, Larry Stone has only seen one year when the value of the roll declined instead of increased. That was in 2010 in the wake of the Great Recession.

Although the pandemic had a seismic impact on the county's economy, overall it did not harm property values or slow development this past year.

"What surprises me is the extremely robust development of major high-rise office buildings and residential properties," Stone told San José Spotlight. "It's like COVID didn't exist."

Changes of home ownership and new construction are the greatest drivers of growth in the assessment roll, Stone said. The pan-

demic did cause growth from new construction to decline by 21%, dropping to \$6.7 billion from \$8.5 billion.

This is largely due to the pandemic hitting multiple layers of the development process: work stoppages due to government mandated shutdowns, labor and material shortages and planning departments suffering various disruptions.

But commercial real estate kicked off in a major way after the first few months of the pandemic. Mountain View is home to four major new construction projects, including one by Google subsidiary Planetary Venture. Two significant projects also got underway in Sunnyvale, including a development in the Pathline Park business complex.

San Jose saw four significant construction projects take off during the pandemic, such as SJSC Towers, which will eventually hold 610 residential units, plus retail and office space, and Adobe's office development, also located in the downtown core.

"You just have a tremendous number of approved developments going on just in downtown San Jose," Assistant Assessor Greg Monteverde told San José Spotlight. "There was a tremendous amount of investment there, from Adobe

Towers to the commitment of the Google (campus)—probably all driven by the fact that we're going to have a fantastic transit

See PANDEMIC, next page

Top 15 Taxpayers for Santa Clara County for FY 2020-2021			
Firm	Type of Business	Assessed Value	Taxes Paid
GOOGLE, INC.	Internet	\$8,831,675,833	\$105,798,878
PACIFIC GAS & ELECTRIC CO.	Utilities	\$2,511,014,384	\$66,251,127
CAMPUS HOLDINGS, INC.	Computer Manufacturing	\$3,652,054,476	\$43,287,876
APPLE COMPUTER, INC.	Computer Manufacturing	\$1,932,561,304	\$23,088,583
CISCO TECHNOLOGY, INC.	Computer Manufacturing	\$1,517,606,211	\$18,124,359
WESTFIELD MALLS	Retail	\$1,198,731,500	\$15,520,732
APPLIED MATERIALS, INC.	Chip Manufacturing Equipment	\$1,145,700,280	\$13,515,188
INTEL CORPORATION	Chip Manufacturing	\$1,090,141,602	\$12,899,044
LOCKHEAD MARTIN	Aerospace	\$891,098,033	\$10,589,600
ESSEX PORTFOLIO LP	Real Estate Management	\$836,678,920	\$10,024,615
FRIT SAN JOSE TOWN & COUNTRY VILLAGE, LLC	Corporate Service Company	\$655,151,539	\$9,783,950
PACIFIC BELL TELEPHONE CO. DBAAT&T CA	Communications	\$376,145,984	\$9,734,644
INTUITIVE SURGICAL, INC.	Medical Device Manufacturer	\$491,514,374	\$9,239,254
CW SPE, LLC	LLC	\$771,596,716	\$9,093,267
GP IX SAC II PROPERTIES, LLC	LLC	\$745,701,200	\$8,942,406

Two percent of businesses account for more than 3/4 of the assessed value of business property. Image courtesy of the Santa Clara County Assessor's Office.

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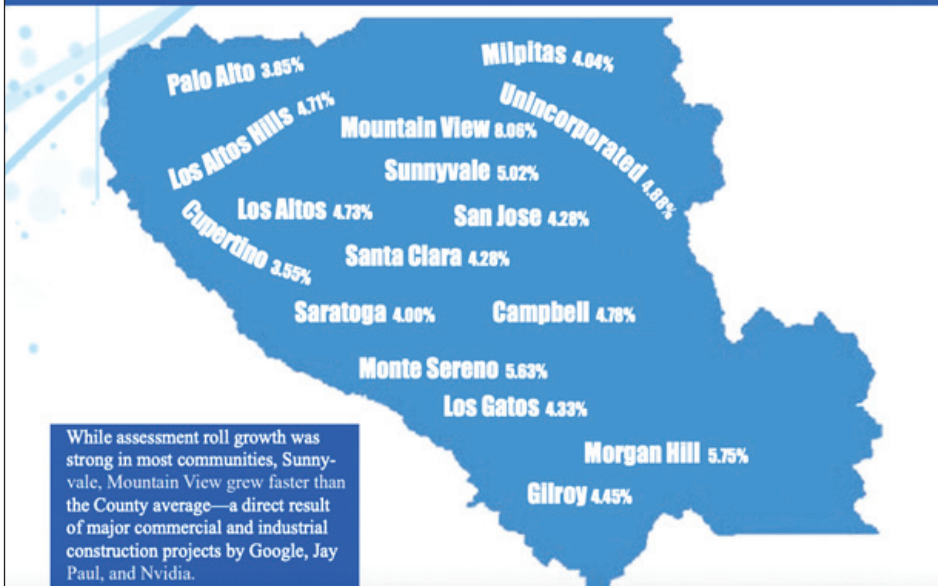


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Times **Feature**

Assessment Growth by City



Assessment growth in Santa Clara County's 15 cities and unincorporated area. Image courtesy of the Santa Clara County Assessor's Office.

Pandemic, from previous page hub in about a decade with Diridon Station being the focal point for it."

The residential market also proved surprisingly resilient during the pandemic. Home sales in Santa Clara County during 2020 were nearly identical to 2019. But the median price of a single-family home rose 3.5%. Stone attributed this trend to the unique supply and demand characteristics of Silicon Valley.

"You've got high-tech professionals with a lot of money chasing too few homes, which will drive property values up," he said.

Mountain View and Sunnyvale had the strongest assessment growth of any cities at 8.06% and 5.02%, respectively. That growth is mainly from commercial and industrial projects by Google, Jay Paul and Nvidia, according to the report. San Jose recorded 4.28% growth in its property roll.

Assessments also continue to be affected

by the 1978 state law Prop. 13, which caps assessed property value increases at no greater than 2% annually. Once a property is sold, it can be reassessed and taxed based on its more recent market value. As a result of this law, new property owners can end up paying a disproportionate amount of a city's property taxes. For example, 42% of properties in Sunnyvale were purchased in the past 10 years, but they account for 69.5% of total property taxes.

Stone said it's hard to know for sure how much Prop. 13 depresses the assessed value of real estate in the county, but he doesn't believe it's marginal.

"I would guess the market value of property in Santa Clara County is probably three to four times at least what the assessments are," he said.

Contact Eli Wolfe at eli@sanjosespotlight.com or @EliWolfe4 on Twitter.

Year in Review

Continued from page 1

virtual 5k race in May and a Festival of Thanks in November to raise funds for scholarships and local charities. The Festival of Thanks was a mini Art & Wine Festival featuring artists, local nonprofits, crafts for kids and Leland High School robotics teams.

In March, Almaden elementary, middle and high school students were invited to participate in Leland High School's virtual science fair, sharing their creativity and scientific research.

Slowly, life started returning to near normal, with events being held in person following safety precautions such as social distancing and wearing masks indoors.

In May, the Almaden Blossom Valley Chapter of the National Charity League, a mother-daughter philanthropic organization, held a socially distant senior recognition ceremony. The event, held at Hakone Gardens in Saratoga, celebrated six years of charitable work by its class of 2021.

District 10's first Neighbor Day took place in the Shadow Brook neighborhood of Almaden Valley in May. Following a coffee social and on-site edition of Mahan's Chat with Matt, residents brought the results of

their spring cleaning to a row of dumpsters. The day was about connecting with neighbors as well as the councilmember. The Shadow Brook neighborhood also turned out on Memorial Day to remember those lost to COVID as well as wars.

The Martin-Fontana Parks Association celebrated its 10th annual Heart of the Park event in October at Jeffrey Fontana Park, complete with birding, arts and crafts and gardening tips. Highlights included a Strutt your Mutt dog parade, painting pumpkins and games. And the Holy Family Parish and School Annual Holiday Boutique took place in November featuring more than 30 vendors.

Spreading holiday joy, in December, Graystone Elementary School Girl Scout Troops helped make the Family Giving Tree Wish Drive a success, gathering more than 100 gifts and \$500 for families in need.

Although people are tired of the pandemic and the recent surge in the COVID-19 Omicron variant cancelled many holiday plans, Santa Clara County Public Health Officer Dr. Sara Cody is hopeful for the future.

"We've had many challenges over the last two years," she said. "We've been able to meet them, and I am confident we will meet this challenge as well."

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Times Local News

In annual speech, San Jose mayor says homelessness is city's 'biggest failure'

By Jana Kadah

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo painted a realistic picture of the city's failures while highlighting a hopeful future at his State of the City address on Thursday, Dec. 23.

In his seventh annual address, and second virtual speech, Liccardo discussed the city's biggest issues. He focused on homelessness, public safety, community resiliency and environmental improvements.

The city's biggest failure in Liccardo's eyes—homelessness.

"I take responsibility for that failure and for every unhoused neighbor who is in camps in our parks, our creeks and our sidewalks," Liccardo said. "It's the failure of decisions predicated on the belief that if we just keep doing the same things the same way, eventually progress would come, contrary to the palpable evidence in our streets."

The city's 2019 homeless count showed San Jose had more than 6,000 unhoused residents—a figure that rose 42% from 2017 to 2019. It's also a figure many housing advocates believe is much higher after two pandemic years and the end of the state eviction ban.

Liccardo said the city helped 4,900 homeless residents find permanent housing since the pandemic's start, but the proof of growing homelessness is in the streets as many roads, parks and creeks are still riddled with tents and makeshift homes.

San Jose mayor focuses on COVID-19 recovery in State of the City speech

Sandy Perry, a housing advocate and president of the Affordable Housing Network of Santa Clara County, said the homeless crisis is "without a doubt" the city's biggest failure.

"The lack of affordable housing is the city's problem, but I just don't agree with their approach because they're long on transitional housing or temporary housing and they're short on permanent solutions," Perry told San José Spotlight.

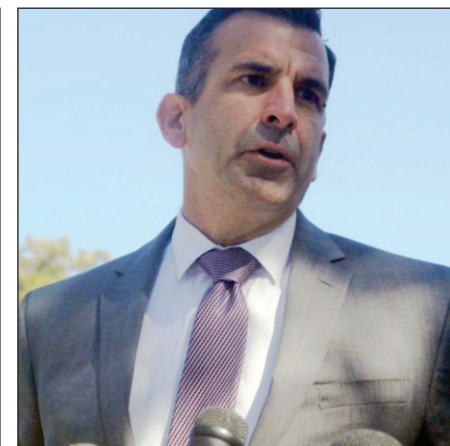
Liccardo touted new, innovative solutions like transforming motel rooms into interim housing sites and building additional prefabricated homes. His goal for next year is to construct 1,000 quick-build apartments and convert 300 motel rooms.

He advocated for quicker, temporary solutions to be more cost effective and get people off the street quicker—noting 2016's Measure A "gave too many false hope that it would solve homelessness."

"In reality, the first apartment complex funded with that 2016 measure didn't open its doors in San Jose until 2020," the mayor continued.

Public Safety

Liccardo spoke of solutions to improve public safety "without a gun or a badge," like halting police enforcement in high schools and expanding the community service officer program. He also pointed



to a program started this year that sends behavioral and mental health specialists on calls with police.

But advocates within the criminal justice system like Raj Jayadev from Silicon Valley De-Bug said the mayor has done the opposite by increasing funding to police through the purchase of different surveillance technologies without investing in alternatives.

"It's really, quite frankly, insulting knowing that people are dying on the street and they're buying new technologies that exacerbate the suffering," Jayadev said.

"We're seeing just an escalation of people that are having more and more real interactions and dangerous interactions with police."

The mayor said San Jose police are the most thinly-staffed department compared to other major cities in the U.S., which is why he said he didn't listen to protestor calls to defund the police.

"Our neighborhoods invariably tell us that they want to see more police patrols in their neighborhoods, not fewer," Liccardo said.

Environment and community

The mayor also discussed plans to create a more sustainable future—noting the recent vote to make San Jose carbon neutral by 2030—the first city in the U.S. to set such a goal.

He also pointed to the 400 miles of bike lanes recently completed and the installation of 2,000 publicly accessible car chargers for electric vehicles.

Liccardo celebrated the city's investments to curb the digital divide. The city helped connect more than 100,000 residents to free Wi-Fi and equipped more than 60,000 students with laptops, the mayor said.

"We continue to pull together to confront unprecedented challenges," Liccardo said. "For all our challenges, San Jose has never shone brighter."

He concluded by saying San Jose is the envy of all other cities because of its innovations and opportunities.

"I've provided you with a glimpse of some of our work so far and of our work together in the year ahead," Liccardo said. "I hold my service to you as my greatest professional honor I relish the privilege of continuing to serve you."



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Community News



6 tips to keep pets safe and warm this winter

Just as people prepare their homes, cars and families for extreme temperatures and weather events of winter, it's important to remember pets' needs this time of year.

As cold weather sets in, Dr. Jennifer Freeman, DVM, resident veterinarian at PetSmart, shares these tips to prepare and ensure your pets are warm and happy throughout winter.

Take Caution When Outdoors

When temperatures reach levels of extreme cold, Freeman recommends limiting outdoor walks and monitoring your pet's behavior for signs of stress or discomfort. Letting your dog outside to use the bathroom or go for a quick walk is OK, but never leave a pet outside for a long period of time, especially during a winter storm.

"Don't let your dog off its leash after snowfall, as snow can mask familiar scents," Freeman said. "This can cause your pet to become disoriented or lost if they get too far away."

Add Extra Layers

Despite efforts to limit time outdoors, your pet needs to go outside for bathroom breaks and exercise. Pets who are small, short-haired, old or have any health issues or illnesses may be more sensitive to cold weather.

Pet sweaters can help keep your pet warm. If your pet is shivering, that's a sign they need extra layers. To help trap body heat and protect paws from extreme cold, consider using booties when venturing outside.

Watch out for Hazardous Chemicals

Many people use snow-melting products like deicers, antifreeze and salt, which can cause skin irritation and be fatal if ingested by your pet. Pet parents should keep an eye on their pets when they're outside and be mindful of hazards. After a walk, it's important to thoroughly rinse your pet's paws and stomach, Freeman said, especially after walking in areas where

these products are frequently used.

Keep Skin Protected

Just like humans, many pets get dry skin during the winter. When your pet needs a bath, try using a pet-friendly moisturizing shampoo to help keep skin healthy and hydrated. If your pet's skin seems extra dry, supplements like fish oil can be added to your pet's food to help the skin and coat. It's important to keep an eye on skin health and check with your vet if issues persist as they could be signs of larger problems.

Have an Emergency Plan

"While creating emergency kits in case of a storm or power outage, don't forget about your pet's needs," Freeman said. "A pet's kit should include supplies needed to keep them fed, warm and secure during emergency conditions like blizzards or extreme cold. Items like sweaters, insulated vests, paw booties, pet-safe ice melt and a heated bed or pad can help avoid risks associated with freezing temperatures."

Gather any other care items your pet may require such as medications, puppy pads, waste bags, litter box supplies and calming spray. Freeman also suggests storing a one-week supply of food in a waterproof container along with bottled water and portable bowls as well as a list of feeding routines and behavioral considerations in case others need to care for your pet.

Ensure Identification Information is Current

While winter emergencies may add to the importance, it's crucial your pet wears a tag displaying your phone number year-round. Microchip and register your pet with current contact information and tuck a copy of their vaccination and medical records, veterinary contact information and a current photo in your emergency kit. (Family Features)

Find products to help protect your pet this winter at PetSmart.com.

Photo courtesy of Getty Images

TECH JARGON OF THE WEEK

Cloud Services

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

Cloud Services

The cloud is ubiquitous. It's everywhere even though we rarely notice it. You interact with the cloud starting first thing in the morning as you check your phone for new emails before you even get out of bed. The cloud is there again when you use your phone's maps app to check traffic conditions on the way to work.

Once at work, you use the cloud whether you write code using Github as a code repository, share a document with a colleague using Box, enter customer information into Salesforce, or onboard a new employee using Workday. When we go home, we may open vacation photos a friend sent to us on Dropbox without giving it a second thought that we are consuming a cloud service built on top of another cloud service (Dropbox is built on Amazon AWS).

All of these are cloud services, yet we experience them in completely different ways, which raises an important question: What is a cloud service?

Let's first understand what is not cloud. Software that is stored in and run from someone's local hard drive is not the cloud because one of the requirements of the cloud computing is that the software, the underlying code, and the supporting infrastructure must be delivered

via the internet and must run over the internet.

The first sense of cloud services covers a wide range of resources that a service provider delivers to customers via the internet, which, in this context, has broadly become known as the cloud. Characteristics of cloud services include self-provisioning and elasticity; that is, customers can provision services on an on-demand basis and shut them down when no longer necessary.

But why is Facebook.com considered a cloud service but Amazon.com isn't considered a cloud service? The answer is related to how the two services are used. An e-commerce site such as Amazon certainly falls under the "software or service delivered over the internet" definition. However, another requirement of the cloud is that data must be uploaded to it. People don't upload data to Amazon's e-commerce site, but we upload a lot of data to Facebook in the form of pictures, comments, etc.

Therefore, the cloud can't be conflated with the Internet and doing so would inevitably lead to circular logic. Instead, cloud computing is a model for sharing resources and enabling on-demand access to things like data storage, software, and processing.

Cloud services provide great flexibility in provisioning, duplicating, and scaling resources to balance the requirements of users, hosted applications, and solutions. Cloud services are built, operated, and managed by a cloud service provider, which works to ensure end-to-end availability, reliability, and security of the cloud.

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

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Times **Local News**



Synagogue fire burns into the floor. Thanks to the quick action of firefighters and a community member, The synagogue's Torah Scrolls were saved and protected.

Fire

Continued from page 1

were spared thanks to the timely intervention of a community member and firefighters, Weinfeld said.

A South San Jose Jewish community was looking for answers after their synagogue was heavily damaged by a fire Wednesday morning.

"I can't tell how it started and why it started," Cohen said. "If I had to guess, living in San Jose, it was probably a homeless person trying to stay warm. It's a miracle that no one got hurt."

Weinfeld moved to the Bay Area from Brooklyn, New York, about two years ago to establish the Chabad House. The synagogue held its grand opening in September, during Rosh Hashanah.

Efforts were already underway to raise funds to rebuild the synagogue, Weinfeld said. An online fundraiser — www.gofundme.com/f/rebuildchabad — had raised nearly \$140,000 of a \$250,000 goal as we went to press.

"We are all in shock and devastated at the disaster but we are also optimistic about rebuilding our community to much bigger and greater heights!" Weinfeld said. "The Lubavitcher Rebbe taught us that after a devastating loss, comfort will be achieved through growth. Instead of looking back and anguishing over the loss, we channel those powerful feelings forward. We bring out our inner strength to help us grow stronger."

Shawn Ansari – Record Sale



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

the beautiful grounds. Learn more about us and community events we sponsor by visiting our website; <http://www.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.stfranciscatholic.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!

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**



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