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Evergreen Times

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Mayor Liccardo wants speed cameras in SJ

Pilot program requested

By Times Media staff writers

San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo testified before the State Assembly's Transportation Committee last week in support of a bill to test automated speed enforcement cameras.

California law currently prohibits cities from using these speed cameras.

Liccardo says the cameras would help local law enforcement agencies uphold speed limits on busy streets, making them safer for motorists and pedestrians.

Liccardo's reasoning is that the
See CAMERAS, page 2

Apoorva Panidapu of Evergreen Valley featured in Microsoft's Legacy Project Virtual Museum

By William Bellou
Publisher

Apoorva Panidapu of Evergreen Valley says she is so honored to be featured in Microsoft's 2022 Legacy Project Virtual Museum - Women's History Edition.

The 2022 Legacy Project: Women's History Month Virtual Museum showcases women's incredible accomplishments and contributions toward a reimagined world where young girls continue to amplify their voices, demolish invisible barriers, and push past the impossible.

Apoorva, a columnist for the Evergreen Times (Gems in STEM), is being honored for her work in advocacy, art, and research, alongside past influential change makers including Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Dr. Jane Goodall, Brie Larson, and Dr. Gladys West.



I'm so inspired to be an honoree, and can't wait to continue my work in creating a world where

women and gender minorities are treated equitably everywhere." Apoorva said

This interactive virtual museum is designed to inspire and educate
See APOORVA, page 2

Committee recommends closing O.B. Whaley Elementary School

Third school to close, public hearings scheduled for April 26 and May 2

By Times media staff writers

The 24-member Superintendent's School Consolidation Advisory Committee is recommending to the school board that O.B. Whaley Elementary School be closed at the end of the 2022-23 school year.

Approximately 330 students currently attend the school which is considered to be low attendance as compared to the other elementary schools.

The recommendation to close the school is being made in the wake of a severe budget shortfall and declining enrollment numbers exacerbated by the pandemic.



The recommendation came a week after parents, students and former employees of O.B. Whaley Elementary School gathered outside their school to demand the district keep it open.

Two public hearings on the proposed closure will be held April 26 and May 2 at 6 p.m. at Quimby Oak Middle School. The school board will make its final decision on the recommended school closure at a meeting on May 12.

"This is a difficult recommendation to make because none of us want to have to close schools. However, we also know that we cannot ignore the rising operating costs and declining enrollment that we have been facing — and will continue to face as a district, resulting in a \$12

million financial shortfall," said Interim Superintendent Steve Betando in an email to parents. "This decision keeps the best interests of our students in mind so that we can ensure that our schools maintain the level of excellence that our families expect and our students deserve."

Due to a \$12 million budget shortfall, Santa Clara County Department of Education notified the district it would have to create a fiscal stabilization plan in order to get its budget approved. The district's board of trustees decided to close two schools — Dove Hill Elementary and Laurelwood Elementary — at the end of the 2019-20 school year and a third at the end of the 2020-21 school year. The pandemic delayed the third school closure until the summer of 2023 and the re-consolidation process began again in February 2022.

A parent, who lives a block away from O.B. Whaley, says her nine-year-old daughter was upset to hear that her school will most likely be closed and that she will most likely not see her friends. "Yesterday, my daughter was in tears because her friends are going to have to move somewhere else."


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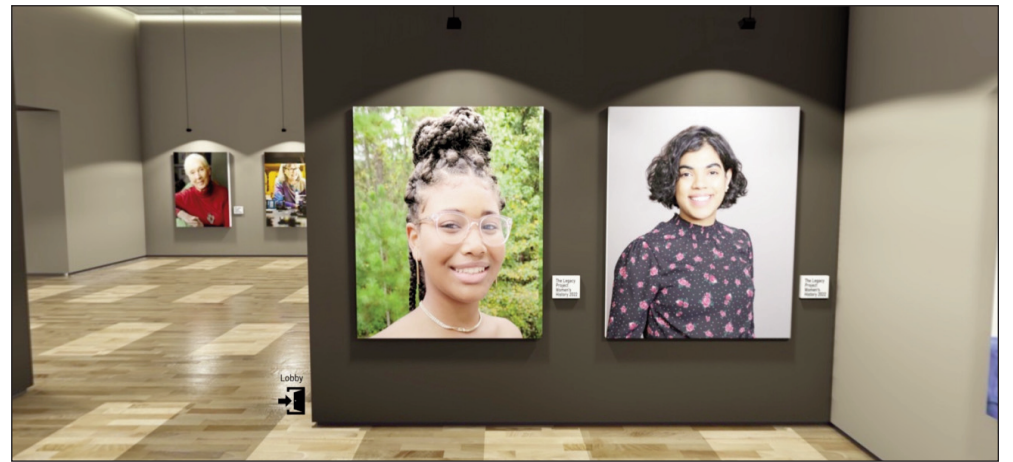


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Times From the Cover



Apoorva Panidapu LEGACY IN THE MAKING

Mathematician, artist, philanthropist

Apoorva is a young mathematician, artist, social entrepreneur, writer, and advocate for youth in STEAM, pushing back against the discrimination she and many others face for being a girl in math. She has written and co-authored several research publications as a teenager, working alongside world-renowned mathematicians. She is a 2021 Davidson Fellow Laureate, 2020 Global Child Prodigy, World Science Scholar, and winner of the Templeton Spirit of Ramanujan Fellowship. Nicknamed "The Human Calculator," Apoorva made her television debut on NBC's Genius Junior, hosted by Neil Patrick Harris, where she displayed her mathematical talents on a national stage. Apoorva created her column, Gems in STEM, to welcome everyone to STEM in an accessible way. She reaches over 65,000 people through published newspapers and Medium, and won the 2021 Strogatz Prize for Math Communication due to her column's considerable global impact.

Apoorva founded her own online art gallery (apoorvaartgallery.com) as a platform to raise funds for underserved children and to advocate for social reform. She has raised over \$40,000 for charity with her art and teaching, receiving the 2021 Diana Award and five President's Volunteer Service awards in recognition of her service. Every International Women's Day, she auctions portraits of influential women for charity, and in 2021, she raised \$4,000 for CASV to support foster youth with her portrait of the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg. This year, she will be auctioning a portrait of powerful poet and activist Maya Angelou.

Apoorva is a keynote speaker who has spoken nationally and globally at various STEM and leadership events about gender bias in early education, her research, and her journey in STEM, entrepreneurship, and service—encouraging youth to pursue their passions fearlessly. Through her teaching, art, public speaking, and writing, she strives to create a world where women and gender minorities in STEM are treated equitably.

Microsoft

Women's History

Apoorva Panidapu

Apoorva

Continued from page 1
 underprivileged K-12 students about significant moments and prominent figures of women, both past and present.

Due to the pandemic, school field-trips continue to be extremely limited, with teachers and students having minimal exposure to the amazing cultural exhibits at museums across the nation.

In order to reconnect students with these experiences, Microsoft's Legacy Project collabo-

rated with historical museums across the U.S. to virtually transport museums into students' homes and classrooms all around the globe, to ensure that students can experience how women's history is alive and well.

Editor's note: You can Explore the virtual museum by visiting the Legacy Women's History website: aka.ms/Legacy-WomensHistory (You can find Apoorva in "The Legacy Project!") You may also view Apoorva's informative video for Women's history month here - Gender Bias Starts Early. How Do We Address It?: <https://youtu.be/uNKICRBSuRk>

Cameras

Continued from page 1
 cameras will reduce deaths on the road at a time when San Jose traffic fatalities in San Jose continue at record pace. With less than two weeks until 2022, the city is approaching a record it does not want to achieve: the most traffic deaths in one year.

"We see that speeding in the last year or so accounted for 31% of these fatal traffic crashes," said Colin Heyne, an official with the city's Department of Transportation.

"We know from our data, in 30 percent of those auto fatalities, speeding constituted the key cause of that collision," Liccardo said. "Automated speed enforcement clearly works. A 2017 study from the National Transportation Safety Board confirmed what several U.S. cities have already found- with automated speed enforcement traffic fatalities are reduced by between 46 and 71 percent in cities like Portland, New York, and Washington DC."

Assembly Bill 2336 would allow San Jose and other bay area cities to establish a Speed Safety System Pilot Program.

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LETTER
TO THE
EDITOR**Protecting Our
Democracy Act can
prevent Presidential
abuse of authority**

Dear Editor,

Republicans and Democrats should be able to agree that no president, regardless of party, should be able to obstruct and undermine the will of the American people or exploit weaknesses in our political system for personal gain.

That's where the Protecting Our Democracy Act comes in. If passed, it would prevent future abuse of presidential power and corruption, increase transparency, and ensure presidents of either party can be held accountable.

Strengthening the guardrails on presidential power is just common sense. If the average person used their office for personal gain, they'd go to jail. If the average person could pardon themselves, there would be no rule of law.

No president should be above the law. That's why I'm urging Congress to pass the Protecting Our Democracy Act. We must prevent future presidents of any party from abusing the power of their office.

Darlene Thorne

Valley Currents

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

San Jose councilmember Mahan opposes extending Valley Water's ballot measure

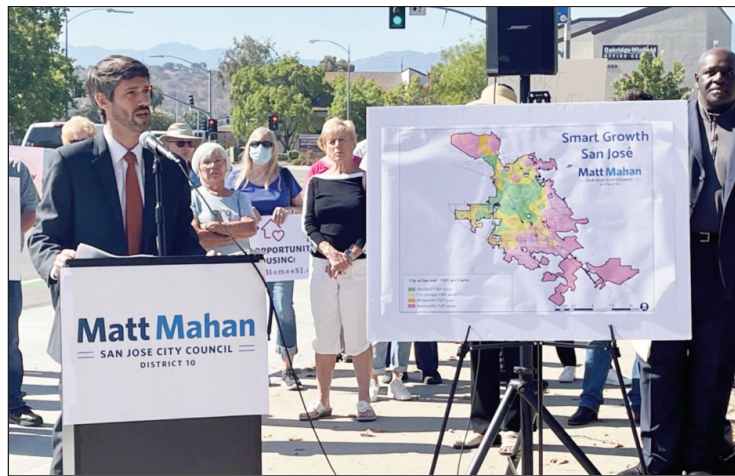
By Times staff writers

San Jose Councilmember **Matt Mahan** (pictured) introduced a resolution at City Council this week opposing Valley Water's ballot measure, which would allow members to serve four consecutive four-year terms instead of three.

Mahan, a mayoral candidate, says the ballot measure's language is misleading and the cost of the ballot measure will waste millions in taxpayer dollars.

"The ballot measure does absolutely nothing to address the real problems we face around water—namely that we're in the most significant drought in recorded California history," Mahan said.

Valley Water estimated putting this measure on the ballot will cost about \$3.2 million—another concern for Mahan, who is currently campaigning for mayor on a platform that emphasizes cutting back wasteful government



spending. He noted residents in his district are so worried about water rates his office started a community working group to address this issue. He said the money going toward the ballot measure could be used to help hundreds of ratepayers.

"That's well over 1,000 lawn conversions to drought tolerant plants," Mahan said. "According to the average amount of water

bill debt San Joseans have, that's 6,000 families whose debts could be relieved."

Gov. Gavin Newsom has ordered water agencies around the state to impose stronger water conservation rules as the state descends into another year of severe drought. Water conservation has been a serious problem in San Jose, where local officials imposed a 15% water use reduc-

tion on residents last year.

Last month, Valley Water's board of directors voted 4-3 to put the measure on the June 7 primary election ballot. According to its proponents, the measure will help the board retain experienced members and provide greater continuity of vision on long-term projects. The district oversees dams, reservoirs and water treatment plants in Santa Clara County.

Valley Water CEO Rick Callender said in a statement that the nearly century-old agency is facing unprecedented challenges to the region's water supply, including drought, rising sea levels and the loss of the Sierra snowpack.

"Directors believe allowing voters to extend term limits would give the board consistent leadership overseeing complex projects, and potentially save hundreds of millions of dollars due to changes and delays," Callender said.

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OpEd

Hands of the poor

A very important and meaningful impartial look at the displaced

The OWL Warming Center is a place where individuals can be kept safe at night as an alternative to living on the street in Evergreen, California.

The OWL set up for a short period of time, in a private location that with referrals, temporarily takes in the poor on cold nights. It serves food and offers a safe haven for the less fortunate.

I had noticed a woman living on the street last month sitting on the ground with all of her worldly possessions. The things she covets are things you and I might not think to hold on to. All things kept in bags came from stores. Each item



placed carefully and checked upon often, like a robin delicately overseeing a nest of eggs.

The egg decoration

I notice she takes out a large egg-shaped decoration. It was covered with glittery things and the color light blue. Shimmering, it had the val-

ue of perhaps less than one dollar. I must admit, for me, just looking at it from afar made me smile. I understood why one would want to keep it.

She tucked it gently into the mouth of a small store plastic bag which was mostly full. I see her take the empty paper towel roll and carefully push it in the same bag. Each thing had its place. She seems to be focused on her world and not willing to make contact with others nor look at them.

I began to wonder why she kept so much. Over the weeks I saw her in the same area and her possessions seemed to grow. How does she move it all from place to place, I wondered.

Today I see three piles of plastic bags and understand she transports it all to the bus stop bench. I say to myself, no wonder why Valley Transit Authority (V.T.A.) is removing so many benches. But I am against that and believe benches need to stay.

Her hands told a story

Some days, I held out two dollars and she prayed for me by putting together her hands and tilting her head down. I never made eye contact because I thought that too intrusive for

See POOR, page 18

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Nwachukwu of Evergreen Valley named to MSOE Honors List for Winter quarter 2022

Chinyere Nwachukwu (inset above) of Evergreen Valley has been named to the Milwaukee School of Engineering's Honors List for the 2022 Winter Quarter.

Nwachukwu is pursuing a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

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 is an independent, non-profit university with nearly 3,000 students and was founded in 1903. MSOE offers bachelor's and master's degrees in engineering, business and nursing. The faculty are student-focused experts who bring real-world experience into the classroom.

Cortese's climate restoration bill clears first hurdle 'We must shift the conversation and think bigger'

Senator Dave Cortese's (D-Silicon Valley) bill, SB 1297, cleared its first hurdle March 28 after passing the California Senate Environmental Quality Committee.

SB 1297 will ensure California takes a leadership role in advancing climate restoration by taking steps to minimize embodied carbon and maximize carbon sequestration in the built environment.

"We must shift the conversation and think bigger," Cortese said. "California can and must advance both climate neutrality and carbon restoration objectives, which together will require achieving and maintaining net-negative emissions as soon as possible, by leveraging a tremendous, but largely unexplored, opportunity to sequester carbon in our built environment. We are expanding methods in buildings and construction projects that can create and maintain high-quality jobs for California workers."

A look at creating new composition of building materials to help the environment

Despite high greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) impacts from building materials and

the significant potential they offer to advance California's GHG goals and climate restoration, little has been done to address these topics in California. SB 1297 will begin to address this important gap by requiring the state to develop a plan and recommendations to minimize embodied carbon and maximize carbon sequestration in building materials.

Embodied carbon, or GHG emissions associated with producing and using building materials, accounts for at least 11 percent of global carbon emissions.

New breakthroughs are here

"Through relatively recent innovations, it is now possible to store CO2 in the built environment, including roads and buildings. Minimizing embodied carbon and maximizing carbon sequestration in the built environment represents an outstanding opportunity for California to take a leadership role in advancing climate restoration," says Rick Wayman, CEO of the Foundation for Climate Restoration.

At the recent UN Climate Conference, California joined an effort to accelerate innovation, investment, and market development for low-carbon building materials. The federal government also recently announced that in 2022, the General Services Administration (GSA) will require contractors to disclose the embodied carbon of building materials for new building and major modernization contracts.

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



Federal funding grows for Silicon Valley BART Phase II

President Biden allocates a total of \$425 million to project

President Biden will allocate an additional \$200 million for the Silicon Valley BART (Bay Area Rapid Transit) Extension Phase II in his upcoming proposed budget.

The project will extend the Silicon Valley BART alignment from the North San Jose Berryessa station through downtown San Jose to Santa Clara, adding four more stations and six more miles of track, including an innovative single bore tunnel under downtown San Jose.

This is the third allocation under the federal Expedited Project Delivery Pilot Program. The FTA announced a commitment of \$125 million in August 2019 and then another \$100 million was committed in January 2021.

"The President's commitment so far to allocate \$425 million is great news in the overall commitment to fund the federal share of the project," said VTA Board Chair Chappie Jones.



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April 1 & 8, 2022 Friday (4-9 pm)

April 2 & 9, 2022 Saturday (all day)

QUESTIONS? Reach out to sjys@sjys.org.

SJYS is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization (EIN 91-2166427) that has scholarships and financial aid offerings available based on a showing of need.

Times Feature

Get your tax refund faster by avoiding six commonly overlooked mistakes

With the April 18 deadline coming up for most tax filers, there are a few ways to get your refund as soon as possible, including filing electronically and avoiding errors in your return, such as typos or incorrectly reporting your income.

If you file electronically, most refunds will be delivered within 21 days. But if you mail a paper return to the IRS, it can take up to eight weeks to process.

Aside from the way you file, you'll also want to make sure that what you file is done correctly. With that in mind, here are six common errors to avoid, from tax experts and the IRS itself.

1. Use the best filing status

Taxpayers choose between five filing statuses: single, married filing jointly, married filing separately, head of household and qualifying widow or widower with dependent children.

Your filing status can affect how much you pay, and while multiple different statuses may be allowed for your situation, one could result in a higher tax burden. Use this tool to determine the filing status that results "in the lowest amount of tax," according to the IRS.

2. Correctly claim a dependent

A dependent can be either a qualifying child or a qualifying relative, and comes with tax breaks that can lower how much you owe. But it can be confusing to know whether you can claim certain people as de-

pendents.

For example, divorced parents may both try to claim their child, even though two people cannot claim the same dependent. In that case, "there's going to be a problem," says Riley Adams, a certified public accountant who runs Young and the Invested, a website focused on financial literacy.

Before claiming a dependent, make sure that they actually qualify for that tax status and that no one else in the household is claiming them. If you're not sure if someone in your household qualifies as a dependent, this questionnaire-based IRS tool can help you figure it out.

3. Answer the virtual currency question accurately

Near the top of your Form 1040 or Form 1040-SR, you'll see this question about virtual currencies: "At any time during 2021, did you receive, sell, exchange, or otherwise dispose of any financial interest in any virtual currency?"

The language of this question has confused taxpayers in the past, Adams says. But what it's asking is simple: You should check "yes" on the form if you sold cryptocurrencies, exchanged one cryptocurrency for another, used crypto to buy something or received it as payment, says Adams.

"If you didn't sell it or exchange it, or if you transfer it to your digital wallet, you don't have to click 'yes' on this," he adds.

4. Report all taxable income

Underreporting income may lead to penalties and interest, so it's best to get the amount right before you file.

Don't forget to include income from freelance work, not just the amount on the W-2 form provided by your main employer. Employers will typically send freelancers a Form 1099 that includes the amount they were paid.

Keep in mind that employers aren't legally obligated to report your earnings to the IRS unless the amount paid exceeds \$600, but they sometimes still do, says Adams. For that reason, you should report all your freelance income, no matter how small.

5. Remember that your unemployment benefits are taxed, too

Unfortunately, many people are surprised to learn that their unemployment benefits are taxed as ordinary income. A special law exempted some of this tax in 2020, but that was for a limited time and does not apply to 2021 tax returns.

You should report any unemployment compensation that you received in 2021 on your tax return under "Additional Income." If you're using tax software, you'll be asked about your unemployment income and that information will be added for you.

6. Double-check the names and numbers in your tax return

This one is obvious, but a simple typo can hold up your tax return for weeks. Make



sure you've correctly entered crucial identifying information like your Social Security number, date of birth and routing numbers if you're using direct deposit to receive your refund.

"The beauty of the electronic filing is if you've got a misspelling of your name or an incorrect Social Security number, the IRS will kick that back to you pretty quickly, letting you know there's an error," says Adams.

If your adjusted gross income is \$73,000 or less, you can use IRS Free File, which gives you access to commercial tax prep software at no charge. It uses a question-and-answer format that's easy to follow, and can flag errors.

Once you file your return, you can check your refund status with the "Where's My Refund?" online tool or through the IRS2Go app.



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- SOS Auto Repair
- Valley Transportation Agency
- Valley Water

Times News Briefs

Three-year pavement plan in District 8

The City of San José's Department of Transportation just released their three-year paving plan – where Councilmember Sylvia Arenas has advocated for your street to be repaved. Please visit the Pavement Story Map at gis.sanjoseca.gov/maps/paveprojects to check out all the streets that were paved last year and all the streets that are set to be repaved over the next 3 years.

New council district boundaries

San José has new Council District boundaries! The boundaries changed due to redistricting – the required process of redrawing the political boundaries for elective offices. This process takes place once every ten years, after the U.S. Census, with a goal of equalizing population among districts.

Most of District 8 has stayed intact, with an addition of some new friends and neighbors at Dove Hill Park! Residents can look forward to building relationships with all of the new District 8 members.



In total, approximately 39,000 residential and business addresses in San José now have new Council Districts. City services and programs will remain the same for all addresses, as will existing school districts. Council District maps and frequently asked questions can be found online here. Search an address or location with this lookup tool.

**POLICY UPDATES
Joint special meeting on child well-being**

Last week, the City of San José's Neighborhood Services & Education Committee and County of Santa Clara's Children, Seniors, & Families Committee met for the second Joint Special Meeting on Child Well-Being. This Joint Special Meeting identified recommendations that further promote equitable access to childcare, early education, and overall child and

youth well-being programs.

During this critical discussion, Arenas advocated for the development of a Child and Youth Masterplan and an allocation plan for Child & Youth Services in the \$10.5M of federal ARPA funds that were secured last Fall. From this collaborative effort with the City, County, and community stakeholders, tangible steps are being made towards closing service gaps in childcare, education, and overall child and youth well-being. To re-watch this critical discussion, use this link: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_DYuozWdN8s

Updates on city of San José services and operations

Mask mandate at city facilities

Beginning March 28, employees and guests at City facilities are no longer required to wear masks. However, we STRONGLY recommend employees and visitors to continue wearing masks in all indoor public spaces.

New work2future location open

The work2future has officially opened the San José Career Center in its new location, 1608 Las Plumas Ave. in East San José! In addition to meetings with career advisors, the San José Career Center will host workshops and occupational skills trainings, job fairs, and other activities designed to advance job seekers' competitiveness and help employers meet their talent needs. Visit www.work2future.org for more information.

Need rental assistance?

If you are having difficulty paying rent, don't move out without understanding your rights. Call the City of San José's Eviction Help Center to check the status of your application or to apply! Renters must still pay rent for the month of April.

For more information, visit HousingIsKey.com or bit.ly/evictionhelpcentersj. You can also email evictionhelp@sanjoseca.gov or call the Eviction Help Center at (408) 975-4444.

Municipal water offers online registration for low income customers

Customers of San José Municipal Water System can now register online for low-income/vulnerable status on their water account to be eligible to receive benefits, including late fee waivers and extended payment plans.

Additional low-income benefits may become available in the future. The online registration page is available in English, Spanish and Vietnamese.

Times News Briefs

*Continued, next page***Need help paying your electricity bill?**

The past two years have been difficult, and while for some it feels like life may be getting back to normal, we know many are still struggling to keep up with utility bills. San José Clean Energy (SJCE) is here to help.

- Relief on overdue bills is here! Customers with past due balances on their energy bill will receive a credit between February and April to help reduce debt accrued during the pandemic. Read more about the CAPP credit here: www.SanJoseCleanEnergy.org/CAPP

- For more help paying your bill, visit www.SanJoseCleanEnergy.org/Discount-Programs. You can also call SJCE at 833-432-2454 or email them at info@sanjosecleanenergy.org.

- Saving energy can lead to saving money! Visit www.SanJoseCleanEnergy.org/Energy-Savings-Tips for ways to save energy without compromising comfort.

Catalytic converter etch and protect program

The San José Police Department in partnership with the San José Police Foundation is proud to announce the launch of the

Etch and Protect Program for catalytic converters. Register your vehicle and get etched at [https://www.sjpd.org/community/crime-prevention/prevention-](https://www.sjpd.org/community/crime-prevention/prevention-tips/catalytic-converter-etch-program)



[tips/catalytic-converter-etch-program](https://www.sjpd.org/community/crime-prevention/prevention-tips/catalytic-converter-etch-program)

Construction academy

Calling all contractors for a digital experience into the City of San José's Construction Academy Construction Contracting Seminar Series 2022! This is an amazing opportunity where you will be able to learn how to maneuver through a public works construction project all on zoom. Registration is FREE! Register today here.

Programs for families, businesses impacted by Covid-19

Grant available for small businesses

Was your small business affected by COVID-19? The microbusiness program gives grant money to all that are eligible. Small businesses can start applying for a \$2,500 grant, now. The online application will be available in English, Spanish, and



Vietnamese. Apply directly at bit.ly/36u5COZ

Women, infants, and children (WIC) program

WIC helps low-income mothers and their children receive health resources, breastfeeding support, food benefits and more. Grandparents, single fathers, and

foster parents who meet income requirements can also apply for WIC benefits for the child they are raising.

If you participate in another assistance program, like CalFresh, you may be automatically income-eligible for WIC. If your child faces nutrition risk, don't wait. Contact WIC today to see if you qualify! Visit myfamily.wic.ca.gov, or call (408) 792-5101 for more information.

Claim your expanded child tax credit and earned income tax credit when you file your taxes

As part of President Biden's American Rescue Plan, many parents and guardians are eligible for the Child Tax Credit, and many people are eligible for the Earned Income Tax Credit. However, everyone needs to file a tax return to get their full Child Tax Credit and Earned Income Tax Credit. Go to ChildTaxCredit.gov for information on how to get free assistance filing your taxes.

Free groceries available

The City of San José is coordinating countywide food distribution system for those in need. To access food or volunteer, visit: siliconvalleystrong.org, call 2-1-1, or

The Collectors' Corner

by Matthew Frazier

In late June of 2006, I had reached a point of frustration as a freelance screenwriter here in San Jose and The Bay Area.

I had been working with independent movie producers who were failing to validate my work and were abandoning their projects left and right. I needed a change of pace and scenery while relegating myself to working on my own script and writing projects nights and seeking opportunities in a new field during the days, as a distraction. This was shortly before The Writers' Strike in Hollywood.

Almaden Valley Nursery

While submitting applications, cover letters, and resumes to hardware stores, home improvements centers, and other Retail Industry businesses in and around San Jose, my brother suggested I turn my attention to a small independent family-owned nursery where our own family had purchased a four-in-one fruit tree. The very next day, I printed out a copy of my cover letter and resume and headed down to Almaden Valley Nursery. I spoke with the staff and completed and submitted an application right there onsite that very afternoon.

About ten days later, the general manager

called me in for an interview and I was offered a job three days later. While walking the property with the general manager during my first day, I was awestruck by the beauty and the symmetry of the property. The plethora of geometric configurations and vibrantly colored plants resonated with me at once.

One of the very first nursery consultants/salespersons I met there soon became a close friend and mentor. This salesperson was also an advocate of and custodian to a small section within the nursery called The Collectors' Corner. Of the different departments and sections within that nursery, The Collectors' Corner stood out the most.

The Collectors' Corner

The Collectors' Corner at that time was a small table roughly six feet wide and two feet deep, showcasing specimen plants from various regions of California. Today, it accounts for roughly half the nursery. These specimen plants were a collective representation of what one would see were they to travel to the various climates and zones of this state. I soon pledged my commitment to be an advocate and assistant to this beautiful attraction.

California is comprised of multiple zones, each of which has multiple micro zones. Through conversations with passionate customers and colleagues, I soon learned that San Jose and Santa Clara Valley was once oak woodlands, home to majestic and



The Collectors' Corner showcases native plants from various regions of California.

stunning heritage oaks and like plants.

The adventure of learning about native plants

Every Friday morning, Suncrest Nurseries would arrive and deliver plants which I had not yet heard of nor seen. It was an adventure unloading those plants from the Suncrest truck and putting them into their respective homes. I began purchasing these specimen plants and giving them a home in our yard at our house and gifting them to family and friends along the way.

From late June of 2006 to late July of 2008, I worked at this nursery, advocating and consulting as an ambassador of California's native plants and especially those which are native to our very own valleys here in the South Bay, especially those of Santa Clara Valley. Along the way, I was invited to attend trainings and did a fair share of independent reading and research with respect to the anatomy and physiology of California's native plants and their communities.

Water and Stormwater Manager Certification

Since my term ended with that nursery, I have met and spoken with many who are passionate about restoring our environs and landscapes to what they were originally, before urbanization. Now, years later, I am an Independent Certified Water Manager through The California Landscape Contractors' Association and an Independent Qualified Stormwater Manager through EnviroCert International, Inc. I have found a way to join committees and subcommittees with non-profit agencies and organizations throughout The Water Industry. Water Conservation and Water Management are at the forefront of my education and training.

For those who live in San Jose, Santa Clara Valley, The South Bay, or anywhere else in this beautiful state, I encourage you to visit Almaden Valley Nursery and see The Collectors' Corner for yourself. Bring a guest or two if you can. With the statewide water crisis, implementing drought-tolerant and water-wise cacti, flowers, shrubs, succulents, and trees is of an immediate nature. Not only are these state-native and valley-native plants beautiful, they will save you hundreds of hours of maintenance and thousands of hydro dollars long-term in your botanical and horticultural endeavors, whether you be an architect, contractor, designer, or enthusiast. Thank you for your time this day. I wish you a very enlightening and pleasant experience in exploring this phenomenal feature of Almaden Valley Nursery.

To comment on this column, you may reach Matthew Frazier, Certified Water Manager by email: kitchenfrazier@hotmail.com.

Times **Community**



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9th Annual Lam Research Heart & Soles Run May 7

By **Mary Ann Dewan, Ph.D.**
County Superintendent of Schools

Spring has arrived. It is a perfect time to "spring into" family lifestyle changes that support healthy food and activity. Now is a beautiful time to get the entire family outside for cycling, soccer, or having fun on the playground.

The 9th Annual Lam Research Heart & Soles Run is on Saturday, May 7. You are encouraged to join in with the Fitness & Fun Spring into Fitness Challenge leading up to the event's 5K/10K.



From the Superintendent
 Mary Ann Dewan, Ph. D.

During your practice runs, be sure everyone drinks water when physically active. Replace sugary beverages such as sodas, juices, or sports drinks with fresh fruits and vegetables.

Visiting your local farmers' market, grocery store, or produce stand adds a fun and educational opportunity to learn about eating seasonal produce while identifying colors, shapes, and what they like to eat.

Choosing healthy foods and participating in physical activities are a few healthy habits that a family can build together. Practicing the proven safety and risk mitigation strategies such as testing, staying home when sick, and vaccinations keep communities safe and healthy.

To learn more about the 9th Annual Lam Research Heart & Soles Run, visit: <https://runsignup.com/Race/CA/SantaClaraCounty/HeartandSolesRun>

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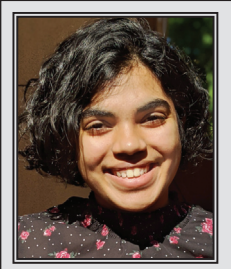


Times **Feature**

Why Size Matters: An Introduction to Quantum Dots (Part 1)

By Apoorva Panidapu

As a recap: this column, Gems in STEM, is a place to learn about various STEM topics that I find exciting, and that I hope will excite you too. It will always be written to be fairly accessible, so you don't have to worry about not having background knowledge. However, it does occasionally get more advanced towards the end.



Gems in STEM
By Apoorva Panidapu

Does size matter? It's an age-old question in all sorts of areas. Is it always "the bigger the better"? (If you think so, you might like Texas!) Or, can small prevail over tall (like with egos/pimples)? Honestly, the answer to this debate varies person-to-person. (Maybe, just maybe, we'll come to an answer ourselves by the end of this discussion, so stay tuned!)

We constantly make observations about our macroscale world, which we can luckily explore whenever we want. But in the past century, scientists were ready to take things up a notch, or more accurately, down a notch. They started zooming in on the world to see where all the mysterious and

like a pessimistic worldview.) In this speech, Feynman remarked on the possibilities of miniaturized machines and encoding large amounts of data in tiny spaces, which seemed almost unfathomable at the time—which is what makes nanotechnology so exciting.

Because the nanoscale is so incredibly small (around 1 to 100 nanometers), manipulating matter in this world isn't too easy. It'd be super cool if we could boss a bunch of individual atoms around, from "turning" them on and off to store information or lighting them up with different colors (in what would be a fantastic glow show), or just directing them in some way. This isn't quite currently possible, but don't despair—we have the next next thing: quantum dots!

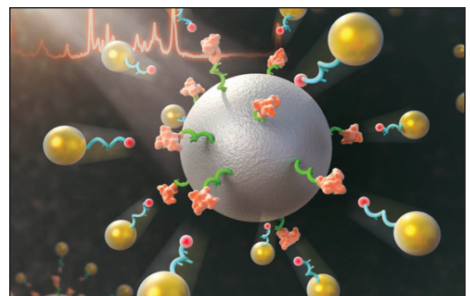
What are Quantum Dots?

Quantum dots, also known as artificial atoms, are tiny crystals that range in size from 2-10 nanometers. They're so small that we can basically think of them as a concentrated single point, which is why they are often called zero-dimensional. Quantum dots are made from a semiconductor material, which aren't really a conductor or an insulator, but can be chemically treated to behave like either (like silicon). Though quantum dots are technically crystals, their behavior is a lot like individual atoms, hence their nickname "artificial atoms."

For quantum dots, size definitely matters. Why? Let's dive into it...next time! (Hint: it has something to do with the picture below.)



For your bi-weekly reminder that I am evil (and sometimes run out of space), we're calling it an article here! In the next few columns, we'll talk about the special optical properties of quantum dots due to quantum confinement effects and their incredible applications in solar cells, televisions, and medicine—make sure you don't miss it. Until next time! If you have any questions or comments, please email me at apoorvapwrites@gmail.com.

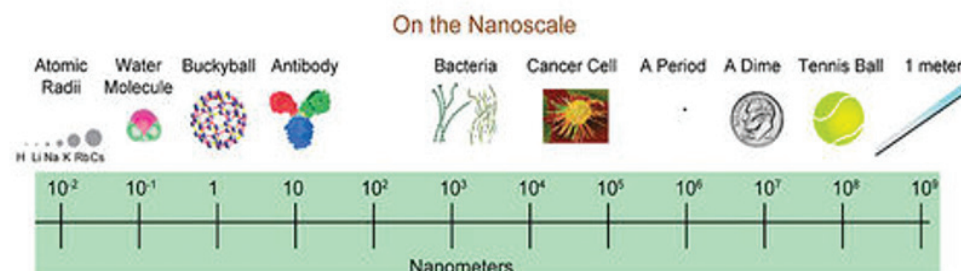


interesting things happen on the micro and nanoscale.

This is the basis of nanotechnology, which is the study of how we can manipulate matter on an atomic and molecular scale. Unlike your side-view mirror, objects here are much farther and smaller than they appear (in your mind).

That evil piece of paper that gave you a nasty paper cut? 100,000 nanometers thick. The ant you (hopefully accidentally) stepped on? A million nanometers long. Get this, the ratio of a meter to a nanometer (which is a billion) is approximately the ratio of a marble to the Earth. So yes, nano is (na)no joke.

Where did this miniscule idea even come from? Most scientists agree that the acclaimed physicist Richard Feynman first introduced the idea of nanotechnology in his lecture, "There's Plenty of Room at the Bottom." (Whose title, at first glance, seems



We believe that everyone deserves to live in a safe and healthy home.

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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.



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Disclaimer: Etching the catalytic converter does not guarantee it will not be stolen, nor is it guarantee of recovery...but it could help!

Times School News

Presentation High School takes home prestigious science award

Only all-girls school to win 2022 Synopsys Science & Technology Championship's Outstanding School Award

Presentation High School marked Women's History Month by bringing home the 2022 Outstanding School Award from the Synopsys Science & Technology Championship, and the only all-girl's school to do so.

One teacher and nine students from Presentation High School also won awards at the competition.

The Synopsys Championship held March 9-10, 2022, featured students and teachers from schools throughout Santa Clara County. The awards also qualified some of the students to advance to the California Science & Engineering Fair.

"What a great way to celebrate Women's History Month," said President Holly Elkins. "Our students are diligent, hard-working and innovative, and these awards showcased their capabilities and the change they can make in this world. These young women are carrying on a long tradition of academic excellence and creativity at Presentation High School. They are also poised to continue the contribution of women to the fields of science and technology, enriching their lives and the world."

The winning teacher and students plus their science projects are listed below.

SCHOOL AWARD

Presentation High School- 2022 Synopsys Outstanding School Award

1st PLACE + qualification for the California Science and Engineering Fair

Students: Danica Kubota and Jia Gill, both Class of 2023

Project: Using Reinforcement Learning to Optimize the Placement of Firebreaks: This project involved using artificial intelligence learning program to run simulations of fire breaks for forest fires, and where best to place fire breaks.

Category: Physical Science and Engineering

1st PLACE

Students: Arshiya Anand and Alexandra Mull, both Class of 2023

Project: Reduced Circuit Wiring for a Vehicle's 12-volt System: The idea for this project came when Alex and her dad built an electric car together. Alex and Arshiya took the project a step further to look at the circuitry and determine if parts, specifically lights and air conditioning, could run with less wiring.

Category: Physical Science and Engineering

2nd PLACE + qualification for the California Science and Engineering Fair

Student: Maanasa Ramprasad, Class of 2024

Project: Formulating Ready-To-Use Therapeutic Foods with Locally-Sourced Ingredients for Severe Acute Malnutrition in Nigeria. In this project Maanasa created four formulas for Ready-to-use Therapeutic Foods (RUTF) containing local ingredients, following World Health Organization nutritional guidelines, and costing 14-20% less than the

standard RUTF, in order to expand availability of these foods while supporting local farmers and reducing their environmental footprint. The project also garnered Maanasa a letter of recognition from the Northern California Institute of Food Technologists.

Category: Biological Science and Engineering

Student: Paulina Plater, Class of 2024

Project: Fluidic Optics Using Liquid Surface Tension in a Neutral Buoyancy Environment

Category: RRI Physical Science and Engineering

HONORABLE MENTION + qualification for the California Science and Engineering Fair

Student: Sangyani Sinha, Class of 2024

Project: OmniGraphia: A Novel Intelligent Robot Replacement for all Optical Laboratory Instruments. This project concentrated on how a low-cost multitasking robot could maximize the breadth of scientific research in laboratories with low budgets and in areas of resource scarcity.

Category: Physical Science and Engineering

HONORABLE MENTION

Student: Tanisha Prasad, Class of 2023

Project: LivingGreen: An App that Tracks a Household's Greenhouse Gas Footprint. For this project Tanisha created an Android app that provides households with a customized, running estimate of their monthly greenhouse gas footprint based on their daily activities by tracking credit card statements. The U.S. Environmental Protection agency also sent Tanisha a letter of encouragement for her work.

Category: Physical Science and Engineering

CERTIFICATE OF ACHIEVEMENT

Student: Saanvi Bapat, Class of 2025

Project: Medicine Reminder System. This project won Saanvi the Inez M. Lechner Award and is an affordable and effective way to remind users to take and refill their medication.

Category: Physical Science and Engineering

TEACHER AWARD

Tracy Hughes, Horace Lucich Award for Outstanding Teacher

About Presentation High School

Presentation High School is an independent, college preparatory school for girls with a Catholic mission. For almost 60 years, Presentation High School has empowered smart, creative, and confident young women to become advocates and leaders. Presentation fosters a lifelong sisterhood and develops courageous and compassionate leaders ready for college and beyond. Presentation is an inclusive community that encourages the development of the whole person: spiritually, academically and personally. This balanced approach helps young women develop into critical thinkers who are prepared for college, career, and life. In just four short years, our students become women of action who are driven by self-confidence, intellectual curiosity, spiritual growth and a deep sense of community.

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Times **Feature**

sjDANCEco Spring DANCE Fest & Free Dance Classes April 23-24 Eastridge Center

More than 60 Bay Area dance organizations (from young children to professional companies and everything in between) present many styles of dance on the Eastridge festival stage during a free non-stop 7-hour program each day April 23-24.

The professional dance portions of the show are from noon to 1 p.m. and 5 p.m. to 6 p.m.

Free dance classes will be offered at 11:00am, 1:00pm, 2:00pm and 5:00pm.

The celebration is part of Bay Area Dance Week and National Dance Week (April 15-24, 2022) and showcases the diversity of the Bay Area dance community.

sjDANCEco is a year-round contemporary dance company based in San Jose, California that produces world premieres by its core and guest choreographers, and presents the very best of Contemporary and Classic Modern Dance and Masterpieces of the American Modern Dance Repertory.

In addition to a full season of dance concerts, sjDANCEco also is a major participant each Spring in free dance presentations



during National Dance Week, regularly participates in international dance festivals, and has a full schedule of contemporary dance classes for the advanced and professional dancer. sjDANCEco ignites the spirit of dance.

sjDANCEco's Spring DANCE Festival is made possible through the support of: California Arts Council, Leo M. Shortino Family Foundation, Applied Materials Foundation, Heritage Bank of Commerce, Mission City Community Fund, City of San Jose, SVCcreates, Portner Charitable Trust and generous individual donors.

Photo by Fred Corpuz/Courtesy of sjDANCEco

Tech Jargon of the week Cold Wallets

Have you ever stumbled into a conversation where everyone is speaking around this "techie" word – and even after you've broken in, it is difficult to understand the unfamiliar jargon and acronyms? Well, there's no need to sweat it. Let me teach you the meaning of some commonly used tech words:

Cold Wallets

A wallet is simply a method to store virtual money. Like you can keep non-virtual money in a bank account or under your mattress, you can keep virtual currencies in hot and cold wallets.

There are different kinds of wallets – hot wallet, cold wallet, etc.

Cold wallet is an offline wallet provided for storing bitcoins. With cold wallet, the digital currency is stored on a platform that is not connected to the internet, thereby, protecting the wallet from unauthorized access, cyber hacks, and other vulnerabilities that a system connected to the internet is susceptible to. Unlike a physical wallet, which can hold any currency if it's paper, a cold wallet cannot store all cryptocurrencies. Each cold wallet has its own unique range of cryptocurrencies it is compatible with. This means that if a cryptocurrency is sent to the wrong wallet, the amount sent is lost forever.

Cold wallets offer the best method of safeguarding cryptocurrencies because they store crypto assets offline and literally put it in the hands of the owners. Other wallet types are susceptible to hacking, phishing, and damage which can easily lead to loss of funds. While people might choose other wallet types for

cryptocurrencies they move or trade frequently, cold wallets are ideal for long-term storage.

Cold wallets are devices built to store users' private keys securely. Most look like a USB drive and can be accessed via desktop apps. The private key given to any bitcoin user is a unique string of alphanumeric characters required to access the user's address. The address is the user's unique ID that is required to make transactions and receive bitcoins from a sender. Two people making a transaction with bitcoin, where one is a seller and the other a buyer, will have to share their addresses with each other to complete the transaction. The buyer of the commodity or service sends the required number of bitcoins to the seller's divulged address as payment, and the blockchain verifies the validity of the transaction and confirms that the buyer or sender really has those funds to send. Once the payment has been delivered to the address, the seller or receiver can only access the funds through his or her private key. It is, therefore, imperative, for private keys to be kept secure because if stolen, the user's bitcoins or altcoins could be unlocked and accessed from the address without authorization.

Cold wallets cost money. Prices for common hardware wallets range from \$50 to \$200. Not a big price to pay if you own many cryptocurrencies, but ridiculous to safeguard a few Satoshi. Additionally, if you lose your cold wallet or break it beyond repair, it is all gone.

Remember, if you want to hold onto your cryptocurrencies, keep them safe!

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 Feature

San Jose mayor candidates sound off on pension reform, gun policies, homelessness

By Eli Wolfe

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

Candidates running for mayor in San Jose set themselves apart on several key policy issues during San José Spotlight's first election forum of 2022.

Five candidates joined Wednesday's forum—Santa Clara County Supervisor Cindy Chavez, San Jose Councilmembers Dev Davis, Matt Mahan and Raul Peralez, and former San Jose Police Department officer Jim Spence.

Most the candidates agreed that addressing homelessness, affordable hous-

ing and improving public safety are top priorities for America's 10th largest city. But several topics exposed rifts between their views on public pensions, transportation, the role of the mayor and firearm policies. The candidates are vying to replace outgoing Mayor Sam Liccardo who leaves City Hall at the end of the year.

Councilmembers Davis and Mahan said they oppose pension obligation bonds, following a question about how they would address San Jose's rising pension costs and the more than \$3.5 billion in

funded pension liabilities.

"Currently, 15 cents of every dollar we spend through our general fund goes to paying the unfunded liability we face each year, and that is projected out to be a significant burden," Mahan said, adding the city must work with its labor unions to reduce that burden. "I wrote the first memo though opposing pension obligation bonds, because I don't think the answer is to gamble on Wall Street and hope that we can outperform our discount rate."

With the exception of Spence, all of the

candidates spoke in favor of investing in public transit, although several had pointed criticism for VTA. Spence complained that VTA buses are dirty and don't go where people need them to go.

"Ever since the VTA was formed in 1995 the city of San Jose has suffered for that decision," Spence said. "Look what happened when VTA closed down for four months—all those people that bought into the light rail, that lived in high rises next to a transit spot, they were stranded, they had no way to get around. And did

See CANDIDATES, next page

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Times Local News

Candidates

Continued from previous page

VTA increase the buses? No they didn't."

Chavez, who sits on the VTA board along with Peralez, fired back that VTA closed after a mass shooting and people rely on the system.

"VTA, prior to COVID, was moving around 108,000 trips a day in our county. They closed down for a short time because of the shooting—they didn't just decide to close down, Jim," Chavez said. "We have people in our community who have opted to not buy cars because they want to be able to move around on transit, so we have an obligation to make these systems work."

The candidates bounced ideas for revitalizing San Jose's downtown, which has been afflicted by blight and vacancies for many years. When Spence argued that expanding BART to downtown will rip up streets, Peralez interjected that the use of single-bore tunneling technology will avoid creating a gaping hole and other construction impacts to downtown businesses and residents.

"We have a lot of buy in from our businesses and property owners downtown because they know we're not going to have that impact," said Peralez, who represents downtown San Jose. "We're more likely to run into mammoth remains... than to hit sewer pipes or utilities."

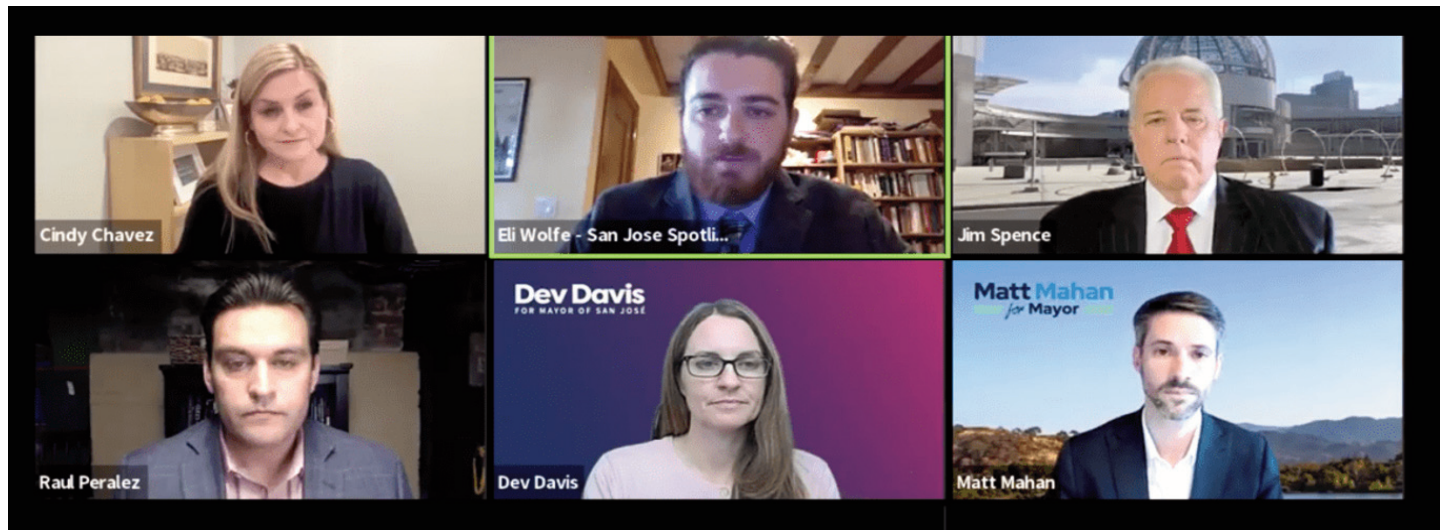
Asked whether San Jose should adopt a "strong mayor" system that allows the mayor to hire and fire department heads such as the police chief, Peralez said he favors the idea, but deferred to the will of the charter review commission. The commission was established last year to recommend improvements to San Jose's government.

Mahan argued most cities have this model and it helps keep bureaucracy aligned with the will of elected officials—he said San Jose's next mayor should make a case for this model to the public. Davis opposes the strong mayor model because the current form of government works well. She noted that voters have the ability to recall city managers.

Other than Peralez, all of the candidates had significant reservations about the gun control rules introduced by Mayor Sam Liccardo last year in the wake of the mass shooting at VTA's Guadalupe rail yard. The policies call for recording gun purchases, requiring gun owners carry liability insurance and pay an annual fee of \$25 to offset the costs of gun violence.

Mahan said he voted against requiring gun owners to pay an annual fee to the city because of potential problems with implementation and constitutionality. Chavez said she appreciated the mayor's goal but said it would be better to focus on existing laws.

"I was the only councilmember to vote against both of the new gun owner mandates, the insurance and the fee," said Davis, noting she is a gun owner herself. "What we need to do is we need more traffic enforcement that actually stops guns from coming into the city, as well as drugs. We need to use (red flag laws) more, but also make them more accessible to the public, and we need to get ghost guns off the street."



San Jose Spotlight's 2022 mayoral forum held on March 24, 2022.

Shawn Ansari – Record Sale



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Times **Feature**

Poor

Continued from page 4

her. Upon looking at her hands I thought them to be noble in nature. They were brown skinned and I could see by their use what they had done over perhaps 80 years. I had a feeling she had helped many in making meals and taking care of children. That was just a hunch. I imagined what recipes she had remembered and the special joy she gave her family with them.

Her face was always partially hidden with a hat and clothing draped around her neck. She dressed for warmth even in the sunshine.

Today at the bus stop I noticed her tending her bags. Each was fiddled with and kept in check. All day she would sit on the ground or the bus bench and people would not speak to her. Human beings just walked around where she existed. Sometimes she put bags on the bus bench, but she removed them if people were waiting to take the bus. How considerate of her, I whispered to myself.

Her small body tended to not stand straight. Hunched over and sitting a certain way, the more I saw her or thought about her I was reminded of ancient Inca people who were preserved in graves and after thousands of years one could still see the person's kind face. She seemed to be ancient because her hair was white as snow.

I felt bad about the way some religions long ago sacrificed young women and they went to their deaths in an empty way as one of mankind's ritual creations. This made me reflect on how our area treats the homeless and perhaps that is our ritual.

As we turn our clocks back, at 6 pm it's still hot outside. I went back to give her a couple of dollars and nice white plastic bags in the thinking she could consolidate and take the mini bags and put them in the big clear bags for transport.

Just as I arrived, she was leaving and walking the other direction towards the store. Like a little girl, she abandoned her belongings for a period of time and off she went to buy food. Usually, she dawdled over her bags but in this case, she was on a mission to leave it all behind and go to the store.

As she went over the crosswalk away from me, I noticed she picked up each foot daintily as if she was marching in a band. Her ankles, legs and knees were picked a bit straight up in unison with dedication and focus of moving forward.

The piles of mixed bags were so carefully tended to that they took on the status of someone's guardianship and were not to be touched. These possessions were simple artifacts collected from what looked to be things that people no longer wanted.

She knew the world and how to be patient with it

She never spoke and moved in slow motion. Somehow, I got the impression that she seemed to know this world and how to be patient with it. I took the time to wait for her to return and give her the small money and big bags. This was a second trip for me to give her these things for it gnawed on me that she had so many bags so I thought the nice big white, clear bags would be of great help to her. I would find out the next day while driving by that she chose not to use the new big clear bags.

As I waited, I began to reflect on her life. Was she a mom? Was she once married? Where are her children? Drugs, no, she did not seem to need those so I felt that drugs were never part of her life quest. Where was her family? Was she a sweet grandmother I thought, who was disconnected from her family lifeline? But why? Maybe she had some monies due to her from social security. I knew she needed to see a social worker to figure it out. I would ask OWL, but would not get a response.

You see, the OWL Warming Center closes in a week or two or three. So where do the poor go? What happens to such people? Perhaps somehow in our quest for freedom and total independence, we ignore and leave people behind in conversation of who they are and if their living conditions are proper. Perhaps we learn to disregard people.

As I laid down on the grass by the busy three lane street on the narrow grass strip, the overhanging branches fought the sun and gave me welcomed shade. I got the feeling everyone took me for a homeless person. I

Continued, next page

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Times **Feature**



If you look closely, you will see the quiet elderly woman tending to her worldly possessions.

rested and after an hour was happy inside to see she returned.

Walking up to her I showed her the two-dollar bills and I handed her the big plastic bags. Careful to give her privacy I avoided eye contact. She created her isolation with hat and clothes gently and softly hiding her face. I noticed her pants were a bit dirty and wondered if she had the ability or means to do laundry.

After handing her the two things I came to give, she surprised me by tilting up her head to look at me. This was her way of saying thank you for her mouth did not move. For the first time, seeing a glimpse of her face, I noticed that she was not Hispanic as I had always thought. You see, her hands were brown color but my assumption was in error.

I believe she was either Japanese, Vietnamese or Chinese. Maybe she was part Hispanic, I did not know. To know a race is perhaps to gain some kind of barometer of information. But today it did not matter and had no relevance.

This realization made me reflect on how we are all part of the same human race and live together in what we do and perhaps think. I never knew her name and we never spoke. The thought did occur to me that perhaps people collect things because they believe the objects accumulated have more value than themselves.

The next night it was raining and I was told that the lady in perhaps her 80's was sitting in the rain holding an umbrella over her head.

'They are the same person as we are'

The next morning, passers by said to me, "I pray for someone to help not only her but other homeless in the area too." Then a resident said something I thought profound. She said, "They are the same person as we are."

Still another woman stated, "We are not saved by our religions, we are saved by the grace of God."

I could not sleep that night, so I went to her and gave her a blanket. Walking to her I noticed that the sprinklers hit where she was sitting so she had to stand. I handed her the nice blanket and noticed she did not use it but instead kept it to her side. The next day and most days after I brought her hot coffee. I did not want to bring too much for fear of not honoring my private obligation.

A deep mystery

This woman is strong and perhaps 80 years old. There was a deep mystery here and I decided to explore more in the days to

come by taking the time to interview her, who was she and where she came from.

She told me she has no name and refers to herself as "Hanoi." Some days as I looked at her in the rain and cold her face bundled up and all, she reminded me of a snapshot of the painting by Edvard Munch called "The Scream." Other days she looked like a cozy furry lion wrapped in white wool.

This woman whom I first dared to not make eye contact a week earlier, began to speak. She said some English but it was a distant second language for her. Her mother language I learned is French.

She put cream in the hot coffee and added many sugars as I began to ask about her life to try to gain help for her.

She explained that at age 5 she was kidnapped and taken away and her parents were killed. It took place in Vietnam and she said she still owns land there.

When I asked why she left the OWL warming center she explained that they treated people like communists and she did not like it.

Quite strong and fearless, she sat and watched cars pass. She did this all day and night except to get food or use the restroom. She did not lie down and I wondered how she could be so strong. How could a person not lie down to sleep?

I explained that someone will ask her to move all of her things and brought her clear plastic bags to consolidate it all but she refused and said, "No."

She said everything was fine. She spoke not so clear English but I could hear that she felt the arrangement of the plastic flowers bought at the dollar store were beautiful. I believe she created art and it was indeed pretty to look at. I smiled.

When I asked about the banana and the two large pineapples in buckets of water, she responded that she planned to grow them, of course.

As I dropped off a nice new blanket, another woman gave her a white warm comfy jacket. She used it as a hat and it looked good on her. I was told that the 15-year-old boy and mom who gave her the jacket and new pants were told by her, "thank you." More importantly is this lady in the rain gave a gift back. She carefully selected a plastic flower and give it to the boy and his mom. The most joyous thing was the boy said, "That handing us the rose was truly Godly." You see, in our world that is falling down, the lady had bestowed kindness and hope to others which is a profound gift.

In the span of a half hour, I learned the
See POOR, page 21



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Evergreen Times

Times **Community News****Poor**

Continued from page 19
following from Hanoi.

"My life isn't working, she said. "It is important to feed the animals and the trees."

When asked about her family, she said she was kidnapped as a young child and moved around the world and through Singapore, Europe and then arrived to the United States in her 30's. She said she owned land in Vietnam and America.

When I said I was sorry for her parents dying she responded firmly that her parents were not dead, they lived inside her heart as she motioned with her hands and arms drawing into her.

Some might consider her mentally ill but her words were in my view very keen. She said, "God is in the sky." And, when speaking about her current living situation she stated, "I don't accept too much trouble."

She mentioned "Buddha" and I knew religion was important to her.

She was bitter about those she called "robbers," who she felt lost their lives because of how they comported themselves in living this one.

When asked again about her name she responded, "The people dropped my name and I learned to live by myself."

Then she struggled to find a plastic card that was on a lanyard and it was a bus Clipper Card to which she felt had much power.

She then stated, "I can't handle too much communism," and explained she once had a \$1,200 monthly payment on a townhouse in

San Jose. I deciphered her words to mean that bad people had moved in.

I'm always happy

Then she said something truly powerful. "I am always happy and I love myself and I don't want to bother people."

When I asked her what she wanted, she responded, "I want to buy a house."

As far as I could tell, she considers herself a scientist and designer. She pointed to the pineapple in water bucket with plastic flowers bought from the dollar store and said, "If I wasn't a scientist or designer how could I have created this." Then she said, "It's beautiful," to which I agreed and nodded my head.

She made great sense when she said, "I didn't go to any university because it was too expensive so I learned myself."

When I asked her what food, she would like so that others could buy it for her, she said "chicken roll." When I asked again and again, I finally understood she meant, "Chicken roast," which is sold in supermarkets in plastic domes.

'Don't want to live like a fish in a can'

I tried to convince her to go back at night to the OWL warming center but she said to me, "I do not wish to live like a fish in the can, and they treat everyone like communists." In asking others I was told she was asked to leave the warming center because she was not treating people properly.

She had suspicions that people in her life



Possessions are placed neatly at bus stop.

stole from her and stated, "They never change, they rob and are professional robbers."

When I asked what else she would like to have she said she wanted to buy a cover to help her during rain and sun. I got the impression she wanted a canopy one can set up over their head.

In the next day, others helped her by buying pants and socks and it was nice to see her wrapped head with the nice jacket.

I tried to get her help by emailing Home First but got no response. Wonderful TEAM members Marilla Garcia and Victoria Lam of Councilmember Arenas' Office did respond and are working this issue along with Mayor Sam Liccardo's Chief of Staff Jim Reed, but Home First never emailed back. Thank you, Councilmember Arenas' TEAM, for caring and emailing back! It is nice to see people care.

Then something glorious happened the next morning. Someone commandeered a

Starbucks umbrella and incorporated it to lean over her so that she would not be rained upon by sprinklers nor mother nature. Others gave her blankets in clear plastic zip holders. This was humanity reaching out to her. I just knew that previous C.E.O. Howard D. Schultz would be proud!

It made me feel good that the community was rallying around her as I brought the next day's cup of coffee. As I looked at her,

I thought, no one is more noble than her; no one stronger. She was iconic, but I was scared.

I was scared that some part of the bureaucracy of the city or county would be by to inhumanly remove all traces of all things and her too. Sometime soon I knew this to happen. It was just a matter of this thing called time.

Maybe, it is a small possibility but perhaps, this nice elderly lady has social security coming to her because she came to the U.S.A. more than 40 years ago. Maybe she has monies in a bank somewhere too. Maybe she currently owns land in one or two countries but robber barons pried it from her hands, who knows.

The key factor in deciphering it all will be to connect her to a social worker who speaks French and can in some way find out her social security number.

Kevin Larsen

San Jose resident

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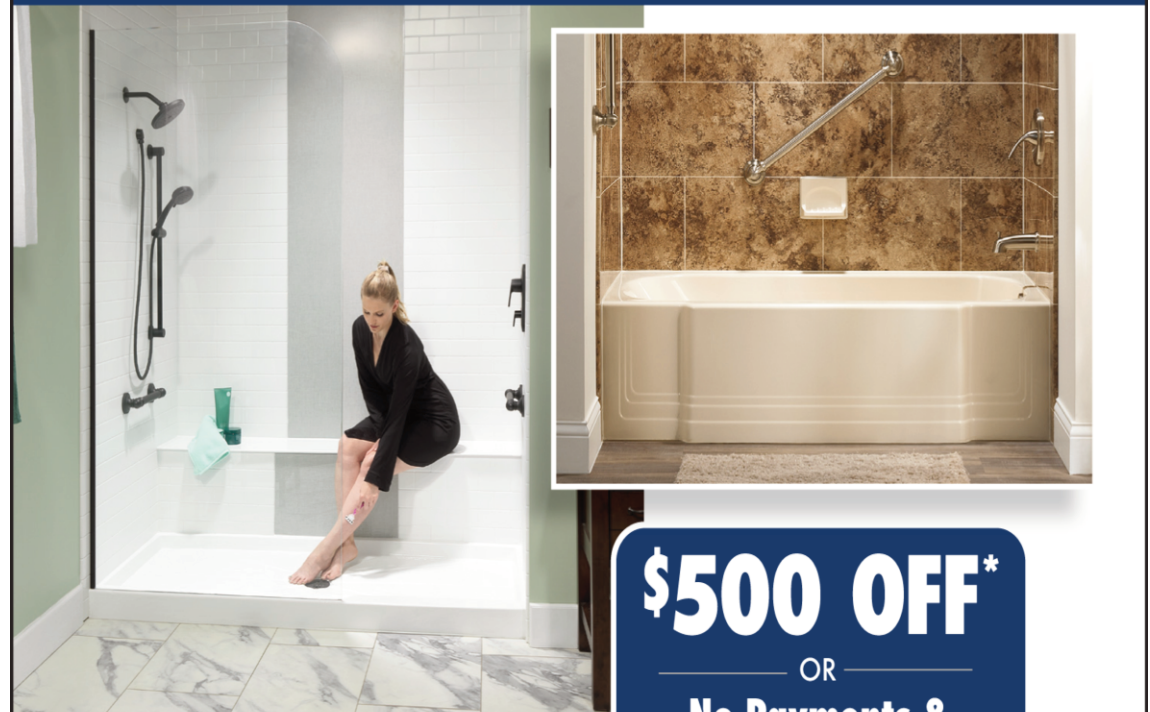
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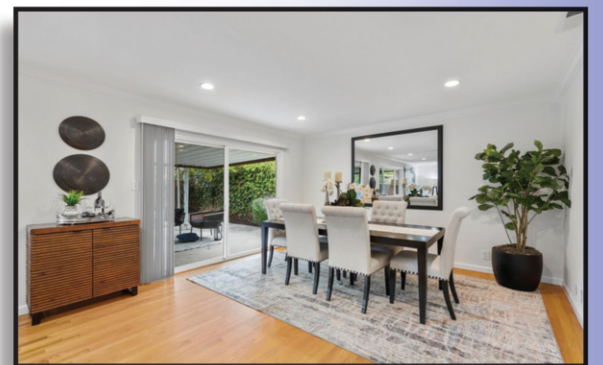
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COMPASS

\$3,950,000
 5 Bedrooms
 4 Full Baths
 2 Half-Baths
 5000 Sq Ft
 2.5 Acre Lot

21290

CINNABAR HILLS ROAD

Almaden Valley

Unbridled elegance in this architectural masterpiece with private driveway and wooded views. This stunning custom estate showcases exceptional detailing, fine finishes, and an open floorplan celebrating indoor/outdoor living. An abundance of oak trees offers an unparalleled, ultra-private setting. Outdoor entertaining with complete built-in kitchen and patios, solar heated infinity pool & spa with waterfall feature. Two-story foyer with a grand imperial-style staircase. A formal living room with fireplace, wine bar, and Juliet balconies. Expansive family room, gourmet kitchen with multiple prep stations and island, and sliding doors to the outside. Executive office and gym area. Top Almaden Schools: Graystone, Bret Harte, Leland.

More Photos and Full Video Available at AlmadenValleyRealEstate.com



The Swan has been the #1 Agent in Almaden Valley each year for the last 13 years as measured by Dollars per Agent Per Year. And 2021 was no exception. She is the only Almaden Valley specialist to have been nationally ranked and recognized twice by The Wall Street Journal/RealTrends for being in the Top 250 Agents in the US. Additionally, Swan is consistently among the Top 100 Agents in the SF Bay Area.

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

Therese Swan
 408.656.8240
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