

'Shop With a Cop' foundation distributes food, Easter baskets, and more to over 400 families **SEE PAGE 4**



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The California exodus and housing costs; are people really fleeing the state? **SEE PAGE 2**

Eyewitness account from inside Home Depot as it turned into an inferno **SEE PAGE 12**



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Coyote Valley is pictured in this file photo.

ELECTION 2022

The race for Santa Clara County Supervisor District 1

June 7, 2022 Statewide Direct Primary Election

By Tran Nguyen

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

The fight for the Santa Clara County Supervisor District 1 seat is bound to be one of the most competitive races this election season.

Supervisor Mike Wasserman, who has held the seat since 2010, terms out at the end of the year—and five candidates are vying to replace him.

The newly drawn District 1 boundaries have been extended to include several San Jose neighborhoods such as Evergreen and Silver Creek. The district no longer has the conservative stronghold areas of Almaden Valley and Los Gatos in its borders.

See RACE, page 11

Basic universal income proposed for high school grads once homeless

\$85M price tag is a first for Silicon Valley

By William Bellou
Publisher

State Senator Dave Cortese wants to stop the cycle of homelessness by providing guaranteed funding: low-income high school seniors.

Cortese's bill SB 1341, which recently cleared the California Senate Education Committee, would provide \$1,000 per month unconditionally to roughly 15,000 high school seniors who have experienced homelessness.

Expected pay out to last five months

The proposed guaranteed income would start after graduation and last for about five months until the students begin college, vocational training or enter the workforce.

11% of California State University students experience homelessness

Cortese was motivated to create the bill after reviewing the 2021 Silicon Valley Pain Index and other studies that found 11% of California State University students experience homelessness during their college career.

'They've done nothing to deserve homelessness'

"I will always remember the surprise I felt seeing that 25% of the homeless population was under the age of 25," Cortese told San José Spotlight. "Tens of thousands are students who are graduating seniors. It's not as if they're not trying to



Evergreen Valley High School in San Jose is a part of the East Side Union High School District.

stay in school. They're graduating, they've done nothing to deserve to be homeless. So what are we doing to get them out of homelessness?"

A \$1000 a month payment provides a notable difference

Implementing Cortese's proposed plan is estimated to cost the state about \$85 million—a price tag the senator says is worth it. He initially wanted to provide UBI to college students to support their educational efforts, but found \$1,000 checks would affect a student's federal financial aid.

"The irony of trying to help low-income college students with guaranteed income is you've actu-

ally potentially hurt them today," Cortese said, adding his larger goal is to change how federal student aid is dispersed.

Similar foster youth pilot program launched in 2020

Cortese launched a similar pilot program when he was a Santa Clara County supervisor, giving 72 transitional-aged foster youth countywide \$1,000 a month. The program started in June 2020 and ran through August 2021. The universal basic income for foster youth has resulted in 72 participants finishing high school, college, vocational training and even a master's program.

San Jose City Council opposes term limit measure

Water district spends \$3.2M in bid to allow board members to serve longer; Critics say that ballot measure 'A' is misleading

By William Bellou
Publisher

The San Jose City Council has voted to formally oppose a measure on the June ballot in Santa Clara County that would extend term limits for board members of the Santa Clara Valley Water District.

By a 7-3 vote late Tuesday, the

council passed a resolution urging a no vote and calling on other cities in the area to also oppose it.

Critics, especially Councilmember Matt Mahan who led the opposition, complain that the proposal, Measure A, uses misleading wording in a deliberate attempt to trick voters into believing they are limiting the water district board members' terms, when it in fact would allow them to serve longer than currently allowed now.

Several councilmembers blasted the water district for spending \$3.2 million to place it on the ballot at a time when the agency has been raising water rates and buying water at

high prices to reduce shortages in the drought.

"You know what's even worse than wasting taxpayer money? Intentionally misleading them," said San Jose Councilman Matt Mahan. "And that's exactly what this measure does."

Councilmember Raul Perez said, "When I read through the language, I was appalled."

Since 2010, water board members have been limited to three successive four-year terms. But in February, as several of them faced being termed out of office this year, the district's board voted 4-3 to put a measure on the June 7 countywide ballot to extend their service to four suc-

cessive four-year terms. The measure's language does not say that if approved by voters, water district members, some of whom already have served more than 20 years on the board, could serve longer.

Voting in favor of the resolution to oppose the ballot measure were Mahan, Perez, Magdalena Carrasco, Dev Davis, Maya Esparza, Sylvia Arenas and Pam Foley. Voting no were Jimenez, David Cohen and Vice Mayor Chappie Jones.

The Santa Clara Valley Water District, based in San Jose, is a government agency that provides water and flood protection to 2 million residents countywide.

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Back Story

The California exodus and housing costs

By Sam Liccardo

I was asked to speak a bit about the future of the state that we love. As I stand here, I am mindful of the irony of a group of business leaders listening to a government official babbling about fixing whatever ails California.

It invokes the old saw about the Midwest county fair exhibit, where local townspeople could watch hourly shows of a poodle playing a piano. As they were leaving one show, one departing spectator was asked by an incoming patron, “Hey, can this poodle really play very well?” “Who the hell cares?,” the spectator responded. “I just applauded because the damned dog can play at all.”

“The-piano-playing-poodle” standard has largely defined the expectations that generations of Americans have held for the government tackling our greatest challenges. Nonetheless, I’ll do my best.

I don’t doubt that many in this audience could identify many signs of peril for the California Dream. Only 36% of Californians believe that the state is heading in the right direction, citing homelessness, crime, housing costs, struggling schools, drought, and wildfires. While tax rates have always been high, many business leaders tell me that our regulatory sclerosis may be inflicting an even heavier toll, ranging from Prop. 65 “shake-down” lawsuits, to AB5’s confusing array of exemptions. All of this has fed headlines and opinion pages of warnings about the great “California Exodus.”

Is there a California Exodus?

Two studies last year—out of UC San Diego and UCLA—suggest not. The rate of out-migration appears to be about the same as it has been for the last couple of decades. Yes, California lost more than 170,000 people last



year, but demographers surprisingly point to factors other than outmigration: lower birth rates, fewer foreign immigrants nationally, and more than 55,000 pandemic-related deaths.

What about California employers, and the great Tech Exodus? Uber, Oracle, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, and other companies captured headlines for moving their headquarters out of state. Yet the data suggests that they didn’t take many employees with them. In my own City of San José, where unemployment is about 3%, we saw the departure of HPE’s executives to Texas, but the company contemporaneously added hundreds more employees to their North San José campus. In the same period, many other companies expanded into San José, including Amazon, Apple, Archer, Aruba Networks, Chargepoint, Google, Nio, Procept Biorobotics, Roku, and yes, Tesla.

So, the Great Exodus may be overwrought. But critically, its adherents aren’t wrong. Why? Because demographers generally agree about a more troubling piece of data: the sharp drop in migration into California—by 38% or more.

That is, the departure of Elon Musk or a few other cranky billionaires won’t doom California. What will doom California is the state’s declining appeal to hundreds of thousands of other creative and ambitious minds. As California loses its gravitational pull for innovators, risk-takers, and immigrants, our economic future will dim.

It was not always thus. For the past century, California reigned victorious in the war for talent, propelling its remarkable transformation into the planet’s 5th largest economy, because of what some call “low barriers to entry.” That is, California long had plentiful housing, accessible high-quality higher education, and an egalitarian, open-source ethos that welcomed everyone: immigrants, geeks, and eccentrics—many of the very people who drive our most innovative young companies.

But those “barriers to entry” are rising fast. Winning the war for talent requires reducing those barriers to entry.

So, “how do we do so?” you ask?

A woman named Lucy reveals an important insight. Unfortunately, none of us will ever meet Lucy—she died about 3.2 million years ago. Anthropologists found her remains in 1974 near Hadar, Ethiopia. Lucy is our oldest

See EXODUS, page 10

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Reader touched
by recent story

Dear Editor,
God Bless you Kevin!

What a profound article you have written about this elderly lady living on Bus Bench, which touches directly the core of the human soul.

Humanity is thankful to you for observing realizing and respecting the details which are very often overlooked by others while they are racing to reach somewhere or trying to connect to those via social media who are away but same time are missing to be in the present moment in which life is happening.

This story is very, very inspiring! How an elderly lady with no possessions and no shelter is happy whereas so-called outwardly successful ones, living in nice houses, with endless choices to cater their senses are going through Depression/Anxiety and with many other mental health issues.

There is a clearly transgression of some spiritual laws which belong to humanity



and not to any one religion. In the name of privacy humans have built walls around themselves. We must embrace all living beings in our love with a great reverence to Life. This elderly lady deserves a much better life and blessed are those who are making an effort to make this happen.

Neerja Sharma
Evergreen Valley



Someone commandeered a Starbucks umbrella so the sprinklers wouldn't hit the back of the lady living on the bench at night.

Valley Currents

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



Shop With a Cop Foundation distributes food, Easter baskets, children's books and Covid test kits to more than 400 families

By Times Media staff writers

Shop With a Cop Foundation distributed food kits, pre-Easter baskets, children's books and home Covid test kits to more than 400 families on Saturday, April 9 in the Santee/McLaughlin neighborhood in San Jose.

For the past two years, the non-profit Shop With a Cop Foundation has responded to an unprecedented demand for emergency food and other essentials for vulnerable populations, covering basic, everyday expenses that can be a constant struggle. Helping at-risk individuals and families cover the costs of these basic necessities not only meets their needs, but also helps them retain their dignity and respect.

Hunger is more pervasive than ever among households throughout the City of San José after two years of the pandemic. Layoffs have left

people scrimping to pay for basic necessities with heightened desperation among the economically challenged areas of San José.

Helping the foundation distribute food included local law enforcement, elected officials, corporate leaders, and community volunteers through a generous grant from the Silicon Valley Community Foundation, individual donors, and corporations.

The Shop with a Cop Foundation of Silicon Valley's mission is to foster better relations between the police and the community. This is a frightening and confusing time for youngsters. All of us at Shop with a Cop SV hope these resources will send a clear message to families & children that although they may feel isolated, there are people who care.

"The demand to assist those in

need has never been greater. Food insecurity has been unabated. Our local police officers want to help families during these challenging times.

Shop with a Cop Foundation of Silicon Valley is about relational policing and rebuilding trust in the community," said Darrell Cortez, Executive Director of Shop with a Cop Foundation SV.

People wishing to make a tax-deductible donation so more families can receive gift cards can mail them to: P.O. Box 8003, San José, CA 95155. Make checks payable to "Shop with a Cop Foundation SV/ COVID Relief Fund" or donate at www.shopwithacopsv.org via PayPal or Venmo: @SWAC-SV For additional information please contact: Contact Shop with a Cop Foundation SV at (669) 226-2663 or swacsv2012@gmail.com.

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Pen Women celebrating centennial anniversary

The National League of American Pen Women (NLAPW) Santa Clara County Branch is celebrating Women's Month and their one hundred year anniversary by their continued commitment to the core values of respect, knowledge, creation and preservation of the arts, and outreach to young women talented in writing, visual arts and music.

Santa Clara County Branch annually awards three \$1,000 grants to graduating high school seniors who are talented in the arts and are continuing their education to a college or university. This year's talented young women winners are Kendyl Brower, Letters/Writing, Westmont High School; Gina Bae, Art, Palo Alto High School; and Irene Lin, Music, Homestead High School.

NLAPW was founded in Washington D.C. in 1897. Among their more prestigious members over the years are Eleonore Roosevelt, Marian Longfellow O'Donoghue, Grandma Moses, Georgia O'Keeffe, Pearl S. Buck, Rosalyn Carter and Hillary Clinton. In commemoration of the Santa Clara County Branch centennial year, an anniversary and history book, We Are Pen Women, was published by branch member, Luanna K. Leisure

VTA increases transit patrol visibility on its light rail system

In light of the gruesome attack on a New York subway train, VTA is increasing transit patrol visibility on the light rail system, aboard trains, and at light rail stations throughout Santa Clara County.

Although there have been no specific threats to the VTA system, the Sheriff's Office Transit Patrol is ensuring that the riding public is not only safe on board but also feels safe and confident to ride public transit.

Two Explosive Ordinance Device (EOD) canines regularly available to VTA will be patrolling the system randomly throughout the week. We ask passengers and passersby not to engage with the bomb-



sniffing dogs and allow officers to complete their surveillance without interruption. We do not expect this extra security visibility to interfere with transit service.

Again, this increased security visibility is not responding to any threat but to ensure the riding public feels safe aboard the light rail system.

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Valley Water breaks ground on San Jose flood control project

By Jana Kadah

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

A project to reduce flood risks from rising sea levels is underway in North San Jose's Alviso neighborhood.

On Thursday, South Bay officials broke ground on the first phase of the South San Francisco Bay Shoreline Project—a local, state and federal partnership to provide tidal flood protection in the area, as well as restore and enhance tidal marsh and related habitats.

With a total estimated cost of \$545 million, the project is the first of its kind in Santa Clara County to help protect the southern end of the San Francisco Bay from coastal flooding and rising sea levels due to climate change.

Climate change

"What we know about climate change is it's worsening our extreme weather," said Wade Crowfoot, secretary of California Natural Resources. "So remarkably amid a period of extended drought, we can experience these atmospheric rivers and what climate change is doing is intensifying these winter storms. That's a big deal in the San Francisco Bay Area, obviously, because almost 4 million people live around the bay."

Ecotones

According to Valley Water, the project will provide coastal flood protection through a combination of levees, wetlands and transitional zone habitats known as



Local officials and members of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers break ground on the South San Francisco Bay Shoreline Project on April 14. Photo by Jana Kadah.

ecotones. The district said ecotones will provide an additional buffer for the levee while also allowing marsh habitats to migrate as sea levels rise. The project's origins come from a 2003 acquisition of thousands of acres of former salt production ponds.

Estimated date of completion 2036

The first phase of the project is between the Alviso Slough/Guadalupe River and Coyote Creek. About half of the first phase will be complete by January 2024. Until then, pedestrian access to the eastern half of Alviso Marina County Park will be closed due to construction. Once the project is completed in 2036, it's expected to provide flood protection to more than 1,000 residential structures and 100 other buildings.

San Jose's Alviso neighborhood is particularly at risk of flooding because it sits at the southern end of the bay. Its trails and make-shift levees at the salt ponds are also very weak.

"When Cargill used to manage these ponds, they would come with a truck, dig them at the toe of this and just plop it on here. So this is just bay mud, it's not strong," Rechelle Blank, chief operations officer for watersheds at Valley Water, told San José Spotlight.

Blank continued because it is just mud, it can't withstand a storm or an earthquake, putting thousands of residents at risk.

Alviso determined to be most at risk

"So we need to replace these with engi-

neered structural levees and that's why we joined with the Army Corps, who are building them," Blank said.

So far, roughly \$200 million of the project's funding has been secured. Officials are starting construction in the area most at-risk: Alviso.

"This is a great day for the businesses and the community of Alviso," Valley Water board member Richard Santos said. "I'm a native of Alviso, and I have experienced major flooding three times in my life. That experience influences my work at Valley Water and reinforces my goals and ensures that we keep communities safe through our flood protection programs."

The South San Francisco Bay Shoreline Project is a partnership between Valley Water, California State Coastal Conservancy, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and regional stakeholders. In addition to providing flood protection and restoration of 2,900 acres of tidal marsh habitat, the project also aims to offer recreational and public access to Santa Clara County's shoreline.

It's going to bring the best part of the bay right to our doorstep

"This project is so important to the communities here. It's not only going to protect (residents) from flooding, it's also going to bring the best part of the bay right to their doorstep," said Matt Brown, manager of the Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge.



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Times **Community News****UNANIMOUS VOTE****Mask mandate lifted in San Jose**

Masks are no longer required indoors in most places in San Jose after the City Council unanimously voted Tuesday to align with the state's masking guidelines.

The decision came two months after Santa Clara County lifted indoor mask requirements in mid-February. San Jose required individuals to wear masks in public places like grocery stores and restaurants.

Masks are still required in health care facilities, homeless shelters, prisons, long-term care facilities and on public transit.

"It makes sense to repeal our ordinance to align with the county and state and federal and minimize any confusion with the public," said Dolan Beckel, the director of the city's Office of Civic Innovation.

Under the state's guidance, wearing a mask indoors is recommended but not required in public places, especially schools.

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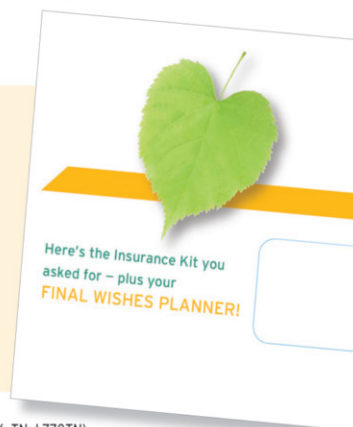
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A poster displaying the nine VTA workers killed in the May 26 mass shooting at a light rail yard in downtown San Jose. Photo by Vicente Vera.

VTA gives benefits to families of workers killed in San Jose shooting

By Eli Wolfe

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

VTA has agreed to pay retirement benefits to the families of workers killed in a mass shooting last May to make sure they're taken care of for years to come.

The VTA board of directors voted unanimously last week to give \$4.9 million in retirement benefits to 10 families who lost loved ones in the shooting at the Guadalupe Rail Yard on May 26, 2021, including one who survived the attack and died by suicide months later. The agency will pay out \$3,000 per month or more for each of the victim's qualified family members.

Seven of the 10 victims didn't work at VTA long enough or weren't old enough to be eligible for pension benefits. VTA previously gave one year worth of equivalent wages, three years of paid health insurance benefits and other financial assistance to affected families. Families have also filed workers' compensation claims.

Board members said it felt necessary to offer longer-term financial support to the families of victims, especially as the agency approaches the one-year anniversary of the shooting.

"We want to do whatever we can to support them," Patrick Burt, VTA board member and Palo Alto mayor, told San José Spotlight. "And it's not limited to what we believe might be the strict legal obligations—we want to try to do what's right for the families."

Amalgamated Transit Union Local 265 (ATU), which represented the workers, agreed to work with the VTA to come up with a deal for providing benefits to the families. John Courtney, president of ATU 265, declined to discuss the benefits with San José Spotlight, saying it's a personal matter.

"We are not going to discuss any provisions of the pensions that went to the families of the deceased, in any way," he said.

VTA and ATU have struggled to see eye to eye on issues since the shooting. Last Au-

gust, a VTA paint and body worker named Henry Gonzales died by suicide at the rail yard in downtown San Jose. Leadership from ATU, which represents Gonzales, blamed VTA for his death, saying the agency failed to give workers adequate mental health support. The transit agency called these claims false. In the months since, Courtney has taken VTA to task for having a toxic work culture. The agency decided to hire a consultant to evaluate and address this problem.

Transit advocates said it seemed promising ATU and VTA were able to come up with a deal to provide benefits to traumatized families.

"If both parties are happy with this decision, then I'm all for it," Eugene Bradley, founder of Silicon Valley Transit Users, told San José Spotlight.

Rich Constantine, VTA vice chair and mayor of Morgan Hill, echoed this sentiment.

"Contract negotiations are sometimes contentious, but this isn't that," he told San José Spotlight. "As we near the one-year anniversary, we're coming to grips with how we'll memorialize the event, and how we're still healing from the event. I think it was just natural for us to find common ground, and hopefully we can continue to find common ground on issues not related to this tragedy."

There may be need for common ground in the near future. On April 29, more than 2,000 VTA employees will need to be vaccinated for COVID-19 unless they have an approved medical or religious exemption. Workers who don't comply with the policy may be disciplined or terminated. According to a VTA worker who asked for anonymity to avoid retaliation, many employees are still not vaccinated.

"You could be working here for 30 years then all of a sudden you don't want to get vaccinated for whatever reason and you're terminated," the worker told San José Spotlight.

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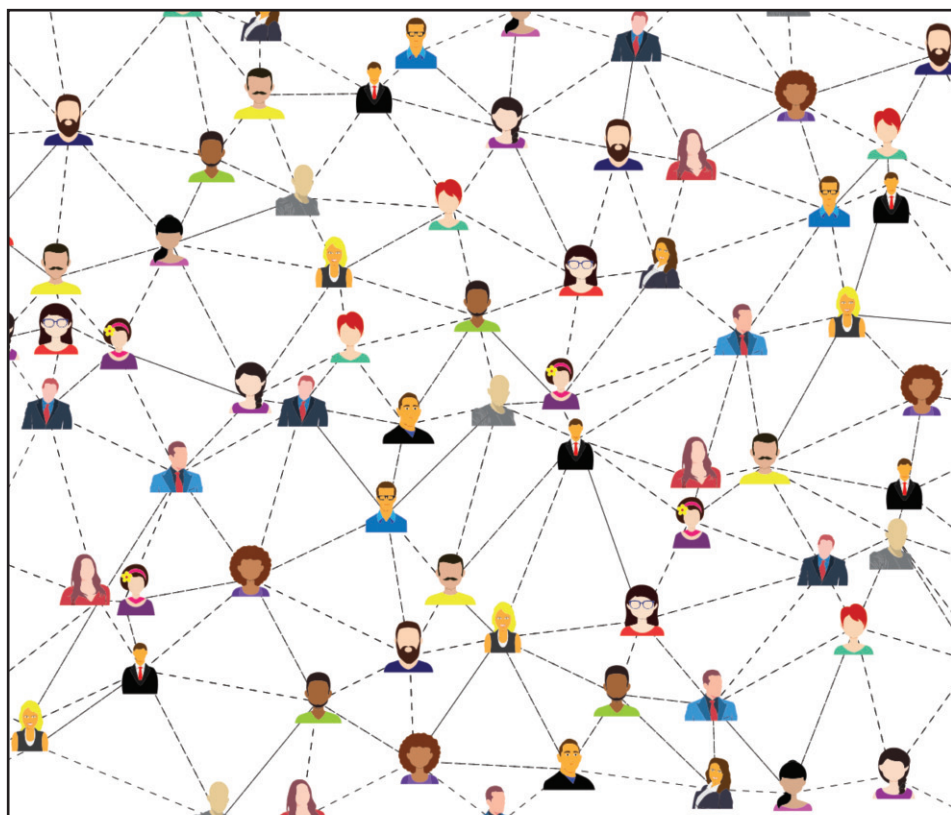


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Times Feature

Exodus

Continued from page 2

identified hominid ancestor who walked upright, on her two feet. Even today, out of 250 species of primates, humans are the only animal that walks upright. Lucy can take credit for that, although she was only a meter tall when she did stand.

Scientists have spent a lot of time speculating about why Lucy was bipedal, when her long curved feet, and long, powerful arms suggest that she spent most of her existence living in trees. As author Bill Bryson tells it, some University of Texas anthropologists determined in 2016 that Lucy must have died from what they called a "vertical deceleration event."

What is a "vertical deceleration event," you might ask? In prehistoric Ethiopia, there weren't a lot of parachuting accidents, so it's fair to assume that the "vertical deceleration event" amounted to Lucy falling out of a tree. Yet Lucy's skeletal framework suggested that she was very much at home living in trees—that is, at least, until the last two seconds of her life.

What's the point? Lucy's Creator—and our Creator—gave us the capability to adapt, so that we'd stop falling out of trees. She enabled Lucy to walk upright. When Lucy's children and progeny fully exploited this capacity for walking upright, a host of new discoveries awaited—the use of fire, the wheel, domesticated animals and agriculture, TV game shows. The rest is history. Quite literally—human history.

California has the capacity to overcome its challenges, if we're willing to adapt. We can continue living in trees, or we can walk upright.

Take the greatest of our barriers to entry: housing costs. California won't ever again be the place where an 8th-grade educated shopkeeper can affordably build a house and a white picket fence on half an acre lot, as my grandfather did in the 1940's. But it should be a place where any struggling family or 22-year-old entrepreneur can afford a dignified apartment in a safe neighborhood.

The cost to construct an apartment building in the Bay Area now exceeds \$800,000 per unit, however. We now have more regulations, more public money, and more government involvement in housing construction and policy than at any time in California history.

But we're not getting more housing, and it's not any more affordable.

Part of the answer lies in getting government out of the way. Exempting a much broader category of urban infill housing from CEQA's regulatory burdens, for example, would save a lot of litigation and cost. Reforming California's public finance system could dramatically reduce the fiscal NIMBYism that drives many suburban city councils to drag their heels on housing approvals. Cutting fees can also help. Early in my first term, I pushed to cut

city fees on high-rise housing. Opponents loudly protested that we were only helping fat-cat developers at the expense of taxpayers, but the numbers say otherwise. Last month, for example, we approved a \$4.4 million fee reduction on a residential tower, but if it gets built, public agencies will collect more than \$25 million in taxes over the first decade alone. The public is clearly getting its money's worth—and the housing.

In addition to getting out of the way, state and local governments need to be willing to adapt to new partnerships with the private sector. We have to dramatically expand the skilled labor pool in the industry, and that requires high schools engaging with contractors and the trades to restore and expand courses that apprise young adults to pathways to good-paying jobs in construction.

We know that prefabricated and modular housing can dramatically reduce construction costs, but their factories have been overwhelmed with demand in recent years, and all are on backorder. State tax incentives and other mechanisms to expand housing factories in high-poverty communities—such as in the Central Valley—could dramatically boost prefabricated housing supply in expensive coastal cities like mine.

Finally, there's ADU's. Most California cities consist overwhelmingly of single-family neighborhoods, and have ample land to boost the affordable housing supply with backyard homes, or accessory dwelling units. In San José, we waived fees, partnered with prefabricated builders to pre-approve modular designs, and created a same-day approval process for homeowners applying for permits. We've seen applications increase 50-fold since 2016, to more than 800 last year alone. To go from hundreds to thousands of backyard homes, we need to overcome the obstacles that many homeowners have with financing. We're willing to contribute city dollars for rent-restricted units, and we're seeking lenders who are interested in partnering with the City to take advantage of this potentially huge market.

I've used housing as an example, but we can do far more to reduce California's barriers to entry—around education, utility costs, crime, and a host of other challenges. But it will require adaptation. And adaptation is harder to do in more ideologically rigid political systems dominated by a single party—even if it is my own party. It's even harder when people of different parties and with different ideas don't communicate across that partisan divide. But we must.

Unlike our ancient ancestors, hopefully, California won't need a rapid deceleration event to adapt. The denizens of the state Capitol and our many City Halls may play the piano as well as any poodle can, but to hit the right notes, we'll need to adapt to new roles, with many other players in the orchestra.

***We can do far
more to reduce
California's
barriers to entry—
around education,
utility costs,
crime, and a
host of other
challenges.***

Times News Briefs

Race

Continued from page 1

Local politicians see this as an opportunity for progressive candidates to take control of a seat held by conservative lawmakers since 1997.

The new boundaries, adopted through a redistricting process, disqualified some candidates and opened doors for others. At least one candidate moved to remain in the race. District 1 still encompasses Coyote Valley and the cities of Morgan Hill, San Martin and Gilroy.

The redrawn region also shifts the voting power to San Jose—two out of every three district residents live in the city.

Here are the five candidates running for District 1 in alphabetical order.



Sylvia Arenas

San Jose Councilmember Sylvia Arenas, a Democratic candidate serving in District 8, wants to continue her work championing families, children and communities of color at the county level.

Arenas, 49, jumped into the race after the county redistricting process shifted the Evergreen area into District 1. Arenas has represented the area since 2016. She served on the Evergreen Elementary School District board of trustees prior to her time at City Hall.

As councilmember, Arenas has spearheaded a myriad of social services and policies including San Jose's Family Friendly Initiative. The program helps increase access to early education, after school programs, safe housing and paid family leave. Arenas also touts her work in reforming the city's response to rising rates of sexual assaults and improving public safety.

"I have been a tireless champion for the needs of children, families and those underserved," Arenas told San José Spotlight. "I want to ensure that working families have the opportunity to succeed in Silicon Valley."

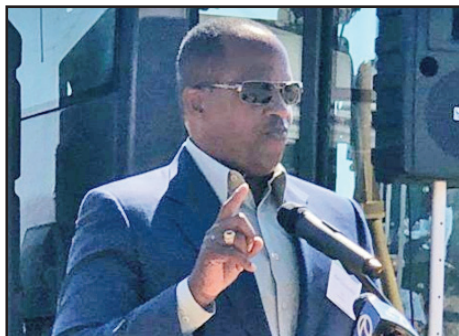
Arenas wants more safety net systems for young children and families by establishing universal pre-K programs and creating a county office dedicated to family policies. She wants to create more government job programs and fight wage theft to protect workers. She also calls for more mental health programs and housing-focused solutions to address homelessness.

Arenas has secured support from San Jose Councilmembers Magdalena Carrasco, Maya Esparza, Raul Peralez and former Assemblymember Kansen Chu. Arenas has a dual endorsement for the seat from the South Bay Council Labor with education leader Claudia Rossi. She has not reported any campaign contributions since January.

"As a first generation Mexican American woman, fighting for underserved individuals and families is at the absolute core of my values," Arenas said. "I have never been afraid to put up a fight."

Rich Constantine

Morgan Hill Mayor Rich Constantine, 58,



wants to address pressing South County issues.

Constantine, a Democrat, has served on the Morgan Hill City Council since 2010 and as mayor since 2018. He was also a firefighter with the San Jose Fire Department and volunteered with the search and rescue unit of the United States Air Force Civil Air Patrol. Constantine has also served on the Santa Clara Valley Water Commission, Santa Clara Habitat Conservation Agency and VTA board.

Constantine plans to expand on the collaborative work between the county and cities in the South Bay to address priorities such as protecting open space, expanding health care access, building more affordable housing, conserving water and increasing fire prevention.

"The 15 cities in the county and the county itself have all the same concerns," Constantine told San José Spotlight. "We should be pooling our resources together and working together similarly to how we did during COVID."

As mayor, Constantine increased the number of affordable homes in Morgan Hill. The city now has more affordable housing per capita than any other city in Northern California, Constantine said.

Constantine has spent years advocating for more investment in recycling water to address the ongoing drought crisis. He also wants to expand safety nets in health care.

The District 1 candidate has the support of Supervisor Cindy Chavez, Congresswoman Zoe Lofgren and former Congressman Mike Honda. Constantine raised roughly \$61,000 in 2021, according to his campaign filings.

"Twenty-four years and 10 months as a firefighter has given me insight on how the health care system works and the empathy for people and their plight," Constantine said. "I treat everybody—like all my firefighter brothers and sisters do—as if they're the most important person in the world."



Denelle Fedor

Denelle Fedor, a district resident with a long history of being a political staffer, is the only Republican candidate in the race.

Fedor, 52, works as a case manager at San Jose nonprofit LifeSTEPS, which provides affordable and supportive housing assistance. She also volunteered as a rape crisis counselor. Over the last two decades, Fedor has served as chief of staff for former San Jose Councilmember and current Planning Commissioner Pierluigi Oliverio, and as an aide to former Councilmembers Pat Dando, Ken Yeager and Johnny Khamis.

Fedor wants to prioritize solutions to homelessness, mental health programs, public safety, transportation and farmland preservation. She supports building a new jail that includes mental health services and opposes early release.

Fedor supports CARE court, an initiative proposed by Gov. Gavin Newsom to allow county courts to mandate a 12-month personalized plan for the unhoused population, and wants to repurpose the old City Hall on North First Street for more mental health services.

She proposes a routine audit of the Santa Clara County Sheriff's Office and setting term limits for the sheriff position.

Fedor also wants to see more assistance to farmers, ranchers and winemakers in South County. She supports an overhaul of the VTA board to include members with transportation experience.

"I'm the only Republican and I bring a fiscal accountability voice," Fedor told San José Spotlight. "I've also been called a budget hawk because of my attention to detail regarding finances."

As a latecomer in the race, Fedor has not reported any contributions to her campaign. She has the support of East Side Union High School District Trustee Van Le and Evergreen Elementary School District Trustee Jim Zito.

"I have 15 years of experience working in a political environment for the third largest city in California," Fedor said. "I had to work with people who may not agree with the issues I was bringing up on behalf of my elected person, but I was able to move things through."



Johnny Khamis

Former San Jose Councilmember Johnny Khamis, 53, wants to bring new ideas to the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors.

Khamis termed out of his council seat in 2020, where he touted a record of accountability and fiscal responsibility. His priorities as a supervisor include addressing homelessness, crime and budgetary issues.

"We need to delve into the real statistics and the root causes of some of the problems," Khamis told San José Spotlight. "We can't keep doing the same thing and expecting different results."

To address homelessness, Khamis wants to expand mental health and substance use programs, such as the court-ordered assisted outpatient treatment program Laura's Law, build more rehabilitation facilities, send unhoused individuals from out of state back to their hometowns and require incarcerated people to take job trainings to qualify for early release. Khamis also supports building the new jail and wants to restore funding to the sheriff's office.

Khamis also wants to see more oversight and scrutiny in how Santa Clara County spends its budget, especially with contracts for homeless services and mental health programs.

Khamis, who spoke out against the county's new political boundaries last year and threatened to sue as the new map disqualified him

from the race, [and he] had to move to continue campaigning. He currently works as a consultant for Benefit Experts.

One of the more conservative candidates in the race, Khamis raised nearly \$200,000 in 2021, according to his campaign filings. He's not affiliated with a party. Khamis has gained the support of San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo, former Santa Clara County Supervisor Don Gage, the Taxpayers Association of Silicon Valley and a number of police chiefs in the district.

"I have a long list of law enforcement support that I'm very proud of," Khamis said. "They know that I'm trying to work on new ideas."



Claudia Rossi

Longtime South Bay education leader and practitioner nurse Claudia Rossi hopes to bring progressive views to District 1.

Rossi, 54, is a lifelong Democrat with plans to address equity and increase safety nets in the South Bay. She has served as a trustee on the Santa Clara County Board of Education since 2014.

Rossi wants to invest in more health care prevention measures to prevent families and residents from falling into homelessness. She also wants to find ways to preserve farmland in South County.

"No other candidate in this race is as well-versed in the intricate systems of the county as I am," Rossi told San José Spotlight. "I'm someone who's ready to serve on day one because I've been serving at that level for almost a decade."

During the COVID-19 pandemic, Rossi joined 19 other education leaders across the county in signing a letter sharply criticizing Liccardo for politicizing school reopenings before vaccines were fully distributed. She also helped bring mental health services to school sites during her tenure as a trustee.

Rossi said early prevention measures of chronic diseases will keep the population healthy and save the county money in the long run. She also wants to see more scholarships and apprenticeship programs for young people—especially for youth of color—to help them stay in the area. To address climate change, Rossi wants to increase incentives to preserve land for agriculture.

She has scored endorsements from Supervisors Susan Ellenberg and Otto Lee, former Supervisor now state Sen. Dave Cortese and former state Sen. Jim Beall. Rossi raised roughly \$76,000 in 2021, according to her latest campaign filings.

"The endorsements of those that have served with distinction on the county board are the most telling because they know what candidate understands the actual work of a county supervisor," Rossi said.

The primary is set for June 7. Hear from the Santa Clara County Supervisor District 1 candidates during San José Spotlight's candidate forum on April 13.

Arenas, Constantine file photos; other candidate photos courtesy of the respective candidate.



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Times Community



Balls of fire could be seen shooting into the sky amidst towers of billowing black smoke at 5:45 p.m., just 18 minutes after the fire was noticed burning in the Blossom Hill Road Home Depot on April 9. No one was injured in the blaze. *Photo by Jeff Baham*

SUSPECT ARRESTED

Local Home Depot destroyed in massive five-alarm fire

Everyone safe despite tardy fire alarms, questionable sprinklers

By Jeff Baham
Special to the Times

San Jose's Home Depot #0622, located across the street from Oakridge Mall, was quickly destroyed in a massive five-alarm fire on Saturday, April 9, moving from an employee's verbal instructions to evacuate to the ceiling falling down in flames within the space of minutes.

"I was just shopping for paint, looking at color samples, and within five minutes, the whole place was covered in smoke," said Julia Locus, a San Jose resident who was in the Home Depot when it caught on fire at approximately 5:27 p.m. on April 9. "We dropped everything and walked out, but it really didn't hit me how serious this was until we turned around and looked back inside once we were out. Fire was falling from

the ceiling, and then I knew we've got to get out of here."

The fire quickly made national and international news reports, partly because weather satellites were able to detect the fire's intense heat signature from outer space.

Dyllin Jaycruz Gogue, 27, was arrested on April 15 under suspicion of aggravated arson. He was trying to steal tools from the store and lit the fire in the process, destroying the entire 98,827 square foot store and causing an estimated \$17 million in inventory loss. He faces 10 years to life in prison, if convicted.

"What used to be aisles of products are now just a field of debris and ash," said newscaster Terry McSweeney on an NBC affiliate newscast about the event. "The roof collapsed."

Fire alarm didn't sound immediately

Though all customers and employees were evacuated from the building safely, no fire alarms sounded until well after the ceiling was falling apart in flames, and both



A customer calls 911 and an employee takes stock of the rapidly escalating situation at 5:32 p.m., approximately five minutes after customers were first alerted to leave the premises by cashiers and crew members. At the time of this photo, no fire alarms had yet begun to sound on the property. *Photo by Julia Locus*

Times **Community**

A firetruck races down Blossom Hill Road on the wrong side, fighting oncoming traffic in an effort to defeat the log-jam of cars surrounding the Home Depot parking lot. Photo by Jeff Baham

customers and employees report no sprinklers were observed to activate, though the San Jose Fire Department reports that the store did have sprinklers which “appeared to work,” according to an NBC news report. But witnesses report otherwise.

“I never saw any sprinklers while the fire was spreading,” Locus reports. “The first audible fire alarms didn’t sound until parts of the ceiling were crashing down in flames.”

Employee: Sprinklers didn’t work

“I’m an associate with the Blossom Hill store, and the sprinklers never went off,” said Twitter user @OfficalWildWolf, who represented herself online as an employee working during the blaze. “The fire started in aisle 47 where the insulation is.”

“When we were shopping for paint, I heard an employee tell someone that they think they have a fire,” Locus said. “Then I realized that there was a light, sweet wood-burning smell in the air, like a campfire. Within moments, the employees were yelling ‘Fire! Everyone get out!’”

Fierce orange fireballs

Within half an hour, columns of thick, toxic black smoke rose hundreds of feet into the sky, punctuated by fierce orange fireballs shooting into the early evening dusk. A trail of smoke started to head south for miles, which was visible all over the south Bay Area. News and law enforcement helicopters began to hover as the fifth alarm was announced and fire departments from all over the area responded to the blaze.

The primary goal of firefighters was containment, as the debris was already beginning to rain down on neighboring properties when they arrived. Adjacent storefronts (including Wagly, a pet hospital) were threatened by the flame and smoke.

Although firefighters were still extinguishing hot spots into late Sunday afternoon, the fire was successfully contained to just the Home Depot property. The amount of smoke and water damage to neighboring properties still needs to be determined, however. It was reported that all of the pets from Wagly were safely transported away from the fire, though some witnesses note that a few animals may have run away in the process. Also, at least one residential property behind the Home Depot had a fence catch fire from floating debris, which was quickly extin-

guished by the neighborhood residents. The Santa Clara County Sheriff’s Office observed at least two nearby fires from their helicopter. Whether or not they began from the Home Depot debris is unknown – but brisk winds make it a distinct possibility.

Wind, other conditions contribute to blaze

Windy conditions may have contributed to the fast growth of the fire, according to fire officials. “You could feel a brisk breeze in the Home Depot when we walked in,” Locus said. “It was striking – I even mentioned it to my husband as we walked to the paint department, that I wish I had brought my sweater. The air was really moving strongly inside the building.”

Complicating factors hinder firefighters

Other complicating factors were the amount of heavily flammable and dangerous materials contained in a typical Home Depot store, including lumber, plastic lawn furniture, toxic chemicals, propane tanks, and other such materials. Local residents reported hearing loud explosive bursts as the fire continued to rage. Fire officials also reported to NBC News that the cinderblock wall at the back of the store property precluded them from entering the location from the rear, adding another complication to the situation.

“I saw a mother with her little girl in the store, and when we were all outside and I saw them get out safely too, I was so relieved,” Locus recalled. “We all just moved out quickly without shoving or panicking. Since there were no fire alarms sounding, I don’t know if anyone really knew how serious this was.”

“There was a light haze in the air, and employees walking out who also weren’t sure how bad it was,” Locus said. “Once we were out in front of the store, we all turned around to look inside. But when fire started falling from the ceiling and the first giant cloud of thick grey smoke rolled out the front doors, we all knew it was definitely time to leave.”

Locus had plans to eat dinner at nearby El Maestro on Blossom Hill Road, but the smoke was so ominous that she decided to just go eat in Milpitas to escape the rapidly-closing roads and thick traffic caused by the arriving first responders. “I’m just so glad that everyone got out, and no one was injured,” Locus said. “It really is a miracle. Thank you, Lord.”



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Times Feature



WATERWISE

Ceanothus ... A Bumble Tree?

By Matthew Frazier

During the years I worked in garden centers and nurseries, here in San Jose, I had an opportunity to see many beautiful and vibrant plants.

In the last article, I mentioned The Collectors' Corner at Almaden Valley Nursery. Of all the cacti, flowers, succulents, shrubs, and trees I have cared for or seen.

There are a select few whose image resonates in my mind. Among these is California-native Ceanothus. Ceanothus comes in many forms including groundcover, shrubs, and trees.

My family and I have a mature Ray Hartman Ceanothus tree in our backyard. Every spring, for the past thirteen years, our Ceanothus tree bursts into bloom with conical trusses of blue-grey flowers; attracting wave after wave of California-native bees and non-native honey bees.

I was once approached by a customer in one of the garden centers where I worked and asked: "Do you have any bumble trees?" My coworker and I paused a moment to think. My colleague asked: "A bumble bee?" I asked this customer a few questions to get some key information as to what they had in mind.

The conversation very quickly turned to a demonstration of the various varieties of Ceanothus we had in stock, plus others which were available by special-order and at the smaller California-native specialty nurseries scattered across the South Bay and beyond. This was in March of 2012 and the conversation very quickly developed into a discussion of the value of California-native and Santa Clara Valley-native plants and especially those which are a conduit and haven for our native bees who are threatened by commercial insecticides and neonicotinoids. As we conversed, bees were actively and aggressively foraging for pollen on the colorful blooms.

This customer was appreciative of our conversation and decided to make a venture of visiting The Collectors' Corner at Almaden Valley Nursery along with some other smaller California-natives nurseries throughout The Bay Area. Over the years, I

have seen many California-natives in landscapes and yards throughout this valley and beyond. Though I focus my efforts on advocating for natives which were part of our original environment here in Santa Clara Valley, and neighboring valleys of The South Bay, Ceanothus stands out to me as being especially inviting to the California-

native bees as they search steadfastly for pollen and shelter. There are other shrubs and trees which could very well be classified as "Bumble Trees". Ceanothus is arguably one of them. Coming in different forms, the natural geometry and form of this majestic botanical wonder is one to be regarded with admiration; Having just returned from a ten-day vacation to Watsonville, California, where I've seen Dark Star Ceanothus which is a very large shrub

and sometimes in tree form.

Each and every time I see Ceanothus, in any of its forms, it is aglow with activity from bees, especially bumble bees and our very own native bumble bees. Over the years, I have read articles about Colony Collapse Disorder and other challenges and threats facing our California bee populations. This subject is worthy of many comprehensive conversations and merits much discussion and thought.

Ceanothus appears to do quite well in our valley-native clay soil. With careful placement and appropriate irrigation, the plant can thrive in our climate. In past articles and discussions, I have argued the value of efficient irrigation. This time, I am advocating for the careful and thoughtful placement of California-native Ceanothus.

Ceanothus is a wonderful companion to areas with fruit trees. The bustle of bumbles near fruit trees, especially when the flowers begin opening, is key timing. Each spring, my family and I watch our Ray Hartman Ceanothus tree host a plethora of native and visitor bees, right beside our four-in-one fruit cocktail tree.

The flurry of activity pretty much guarantees a successful growing season. The array of blues in The Ceanothus varieties is plentiful. From cobalt to a dusty slate, the brilliance of the blooms is almost certain to draw eyes as well as bees and other beneficial pollinators. Even if I were not a former nursery consultant/nursery specialist, I would advocate for the adoption and hosting of this magnificent specimen plant.

If you have the chance, please so allow yourself the opportunity to see The Ceanothus in person. It truly is a "Bumble Tree."



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Times **Feature**

This is an image of musicians gathered to render the Pancharatna krithis in Thiruvayaru.

Story of the Pancharatna Krithis

By Veena Krishnan

The Pancharatna krithis, composed by Sri. Tyagaraja, are rendered by many in groups around the world by Carnatic musicians and students.

The five Pancharatna (literally meaning “five gems”) krithis are Jagadananda karaka, Duduku gala, Sadinchane, Kana kana ruchira, and Endaro mahanubhavulu. Each composition is set to one of the five ghana ragams, Naatai, Goula, Aarabhi, Varali, and Sri. All the krithis are on Lord Rama, an incarnation of the Hindu god Vishnu. Jagadananda karaka is in Sanskrit, and the others are in Telugu. It’s interesting that these five krithis were not composed at the same time or at one stretch. In fact, Sri. Tyagaraja did not intend to group these five krithis.

It was Sri. Harikesanallur Muthiah Bhagavatar who grouped these five krithis as they would be easy to sing together. Having swaram and saahityam for all the charanams minimizes the variation of style between different music schools. The tradition to sing the Pancharatna krithis started in 1941 at Thiruvayaru and continues every year in January, around the time of Sri. Tyagaraja’s death. Other places around the world also conduct Tyagaraja Aradhanas in January and April and May (around the time of Tyagaraja’s birth).

The first krithi, Jagadananda karaka, is a brisk and joyful krithi. Sri. Tyagaraja sings the praises of Lord Rama. It’s ten charanams are of varying lengths and are exciting to hear. Tyagaraja’s mudra, or signature phrase comes in the last three charanams, which is interesting because in most krithis, the composer’s mudra appears only once. In Duduku gala, the second krithi, Tyagaraja sings this krithi in the place of a sinner. He owns his mistakes and says that the only Lord Rama will pro-

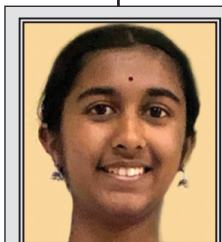
tect him.

Sadinchane, the third krithi, is another Pancharatna where Sri. Tyagaraja praises Lord Rama in a very lively manner. The ragam and tune of this krithi, which add to the liveliness and the brisk pace in which it is sung, brightens this composition. I will skip the fourth krithi for now as it requires more elaboration and go over it after the fifth krithi, Endaro mahanubhavulu. This krithi sounds very majestic when heard. Sri Tyagaraja praises all those who worship Lord Rama. Tyagaraja’s signature comes twice in this krithi.

Now to Kana kana ruchira, the fourth Pancharatna krithi. This composition is very beautiful and is sung in a slower pace than the other krithis. Here, Tyagaraja praises Lord Rama’s beauty and asks for his blessings. This krithi is in Varali, a ragam that is not taught directly to a student. It is said that teaching this ragam to a student creates rupture between the guru and sishya (student). Before the first Tyagaraja Aradhana, many singers did not know Kana kana ruchira because of this. To solve this, Maharajapuram Viswanatha Iyer sang from the second floor of a building and all the musicians sat below and learned the krithi.

Some other traditions are to play Chetulara in Bhairavi on the flute, sing Sri Ganapathi in Sowrashtram, and sing Guruleka Etuvanti in Gowrimanohari; although these vary based on the Aradhana. Listening to the Pancharatna krithis is truly a different experience. Click on this link to listen to the Pancharanta krithis sung in Thiruvayaru: <https://youtu.be/tFFWkZ9I-cE>

It’s interesting to know about the story behind the Pancharatna krithis and the yearly tradition to sing these krithis as a group.



About Carnatic Music

By Veena Krishnan

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Times Feature

Report: 2022's healthiest and unhealthiest cities in America

With the cost to treat patients projected to rise by 6.5% in 2022 and the COVID-19 pandemic continuing to be a big public health threat, the personal-finance website WalletHub has released its report on 2022's Healthiest & Unhealthiest Cities in America, as well as accompanying videos and expert commentary.

To identify the places where health is a priority, WalletHub compared more than 180 of the largest U.S. cities across 43 key metrics. The data set ranges from the cost of a medical visit to fruit and vegetable consumption to COVID-19 cases.

Key Stats

- Fremont, California, has the lowest share of physically

unhealthy adults, 8.00 percent, which is 2.5 times lower than in Huntington, West Virginia, the city with the highest at 19.60 percent.

- Laredo, Texas, has the lowest cost per doctor's visit, \$56.00, which is 3.9 times less expensive than in Juneau, Alaska, the city with the highest at \$219.00.
- Burlington, Vermont, and South Burlington, Vermont, have the lowest share of adults eating fruit less than once daily, 30.40 percent, which is 1.7 times lower than in Gulfport, Mississippi, the city with the highest at 51.80 percent.
- Glendale, Arizona, and Lewiston, Maine, have the lowest average monthly cost for a fitness-club membership, \$15.00, which is 7.2 times less expensive than in New York, the city with the highest at \$108.26.

To view the full report and your city's rank, visit: <https://wallethub.com/edu/healthiest-cities/31072>

Healthiest Cities	Unhealthiest Cities
1. San Francisco, CA	173. Montgomery, AL
2. Seattle, WA	174. Columbus, GA
3. San Diego, CA	175. Augusta, GA
4. Portland, OR	176. Shreveport, LA
5. Salt Lake City, UT	177. Charleston, WV
6. Honolulu, HI	178. Jackson, MS
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Times **Local News**

Gun safety in our communities

By Santa Clara County Supervisor Otto Lee

In the early morning hours of April 3, 2022, a shooting broke out in Sacramento, horrifically taking the lives of six people and injuring many others. Then, during the morning commute on April 12, 2022, a shooter opened fire in New York City's subways, wounding dozens.



County Report
By Otto Lee
Supervisor

The damage brought by gun violence is too common an occurrence in America. As the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention stated in 2021, this is a public health crisis that our country has grown to know all too well.

We remember July 28, 2019, when a shooter cut through a fence at the Gilroy Garlic Festival and killed 3 young people, including 2 children, and wounded at least 17 other people who were simply enjoying a fun-filled family day. Then on May 26, 2021, a shooter took the lives of 9 of our Santa Clara County VTA brothers, fathers and loved ones who were just going to work to provide for their families. It is imperative that we take measures to address this issue locally.

These tragic moments are still impacting our families. They also represent one of the many ways that gun violence continues to scar our communities. Combined with the prevalence of "ghost guns", we need to act. Ghost guns are non-registered firearms that are privately made by people from kits without serial numbers so they cannot be traced; this poses a huge threat to our community as they make it more difficult to hold perpetrators of gun violence accountable. Law enforcement agencies in Santa Clara County took 293 ghost guns off our streets in 2021, more than double from the prior year.

We are taking action to end this senseless and heinous gun violence. We're also taking action to stop preventable self-harm and violence. Recent studies have revealed that more than 60% of gun related deaths are suicides. There are firearms in our homes that are causing harm, and we want your help.

On Sunday, May 22, 2022, my Office is partnering with the Milpitas Police Department and the Office of the Santa Clara County District Attorney to host a gun buyback event at the Milpitas Community Center from 9 AM – 1 PM. No questions asked. For each handgun or shotgun turned in, participants will be given up to \$100 and \$200 for each assault weapon. Please visit SupervisorLee.org for more details. The first gun buyback was held in Philadelphia more than sixty years ago, and in Santa Clara County, gun buybacks have been successfully removing dozens of guns from our streets for nearly a decade.

We would appreciate your help in letting the community know about this upcoming event. Visit SupervisorLee.org for more information and links to our social media.

Following the April 3, 2022, shooting in Sacramento, President Biden announced a new nominee to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms, and Explosives to tackle the growing frequency of ghost guns. Combined with our local efforts by the District Attorney

and the Board of Supervisors, we are taking steps toward making real change that promotes health, wellness, and safety by removing weapons of violence and destruction. Our neighborhoods are safest when we come together.

One of the avenues to unite our residents and better our neighborhoods is through community engagement. Santa Clara County offers many different opportunities for people to get involved.

Additionally, the County offers more than 75 different Boards and Commissions that cover a range of topics for residents of all ages to get involved with. Some of the options include the Domestic Violence Council and the Youth Task Force – places where we can work together to end violence. Please send in an application if you are interested in serving.

SANTA CLARA COUNTY GUN BUYBACK

May 22, 2022
MILPITAS COMMUNITY CENTER
9 AM - 1 PM

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Another fantastic way to get involved is by joining the District 3 Community Roundtable (D3CRT). The D3CRT is a group of committed, engaged and active community members who are dedicated to addressing problems within District 3. Our next meeting is May 19 at 7PM. Please email supervisors.lee@bos.sccgov.org with the subject "D3CRT" if you are interested in joining us.

Gun violence is a complex issue that sadly does not have an easy solution. While we work to address the roots of hate, anger, and sadness that drives so much of this violence, we hope that this special buyback event will help us get dangerous weapons off the streets to help save lives.

Shawn Ansari – Record Sale



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Times Feature

The Pitch Award Ceremony: ESUHSD students' real-world marketing program

Multimedia students at East Side Union High School District (ESUHSD) worked with Hello Next Step, a SF Design Marketing Agency to create viral videos and other social media marketing campaigns.

On Wednesday, April 6 the Pitch Award Ceremony recognized the best campaigns with cash awards and accolades.

"We are honored to support and nurture this next generation of filmmakers and marketing professionals," said Glenn Vander Zee, ESUHSD Superintendent. "There is exceptional talent in our schools and we are delighted to continue to move this program forward."

A professional design agency brings student work out of the classroom and into a real world setting. They learn creative strategy, marketing, and technical skills by working with design and marketing professionals. Modeling career professionals is a critical component to students' learning and ESUHSD's career technical education pathway.

"Next Step brings Behavioral Science out of academia and into the business world," said founder Shirin Oreizy. "It's clear to the students that their work is not just to beef up a resume, they're actually helping shape

how people think about their future."

"We are creating opportunities, a space for our students to achieve at their highest potential and succeed in college and career," said Lorena Chavez, ESUHSD Board of Trustees Vice President. "Our students are stepping up to the challenge of expanding their creativity and learning viable skills."

Multimedia campaign winners are:

- "You Gotta See This Award" for Most Followers

- 1st Place: Carl's Seniors
- "Thumbs Up" Award for Most Likes
- 1st Place: Carl's Seniors
- "Say WHAAAT, Stirred It Up" Award for Most Comments

- 1st Place: Carl's Seniors
- "All 4 Corners of the Earth" Award for Most Views

- 1st Place: Bambi Films
- "Did You Hear?!" Award for Best Sound
- 1st Place: Jacob Bolli & Aaron Aguierre from Sunshadow Productions
- "Walt Disney" Award for Best Storytelling

- 1st Place: Jasmin Carrillo from Cold Water Films
- "#1 News Anchor" Award for Best Interview

- 1st Place: Cesar Lopez from Cold Water Films
- "Snap, Crackle, Pop" Award for Best Editing / Effects

- 1st Place: Jacob Bolli & Aaron Aguierre from Sunshadow Productions
- Audience Favorite: Cold Water Films

Why size matters: An introduction to Quantum Dots (Part 2)

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.

In the last issue, we talked a bit about the idea of manipulating matter and atoms at the nanoscale—which turns out to be pretty difficult. However, we can explore the next best thing: quantum dots!

Quant-um...what?

Quantum dots, often called 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 semiconductor material (like silicon)—they aren't really a conductor or an insulator, but can be chemically treated to behave like either.

Quantum dots are proof that you don't have to be big to be interesting, so it seems that size indeed doesn't matter...or does it?

Quantum dots are able to absorb light, so when you shine a light on them, they release this absorbed energy as distinctive and precise colors that depend on the quantum dot's size, shape, and material. Talk about shining in the spotlight!



Now, I have just a couple questions: What? Why? Where? When? How?

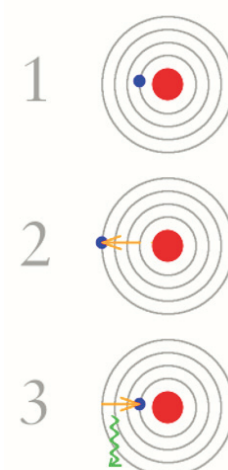
Never fear, dear reader, we will answer these together, but for now I'll give you the mysterious answer that everyone says but never seems to actually explain: "because quantum!"

Specifically, quantum confinement is the culprit behind this optical correlation between the colors of QDs and their size + material.

Quantum Dots are exciting when excited

To see this, let's first understand why quantum dots are nicknamed artificial atoms! You might have already learned in your physics or chemistry class about how atoms can be excited with energy (like little kids) when an electron inside it jumps up to a higher energy level/electron shell (...unlike little kids). However, at higher levels they are generally unstable and thus eventually go down (or relax) to a lower level that is more stable (like little kids). In order to do this, they need to get rid of this extra energy, so the atom emits a photon of light with the same energy it absorbed!

This emitted light's wavelength and frequency, and hence color, depends on the difference between the quantized (i.e., set) values of the energy levels it jumps between, based on what the atom is. You can sort of think of it as



climbing rungs on a ladder!

Just like atoms, quantum dots can similarly be optically excited! QDs also have

Continued, next page



Gems in STEM
By Apoorva Panidapu



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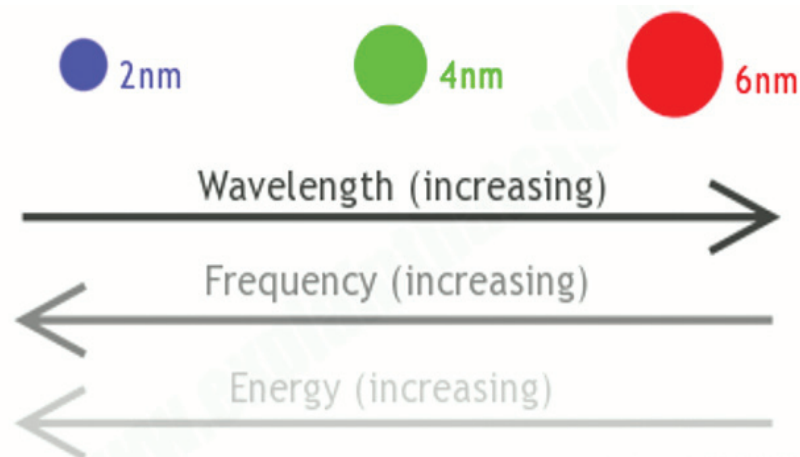
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Times **Feature**

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quantized energy levels, but even if they are made from the same material, they can emit different colors of light based on their size. Smaller quantum dots (~2 nm) produce shorter wavelengths and higher frequencies (bluer), and bigger quantum dots (~6 nm) produce longer wavelengths and lower frequencies (redder). QDs that are of a more intermediate size (~4 nm) emit green light—go, go, go photoluminescence (which is what we call this light emission process)!

It turns out that quantum dots have a broad absorption spectra, meaning that they can be excited across a pretty expansive range of light wavelengths. However, In a fun contrast to this, QDs actually have a fairly limited spectra for the light they give off, which is why we get these super fine-tuned colors (like that vibrant rainbow we saw above). This means that we don't see overlapping colors which gives way to some crazy applications in using these various QDs to track and label biomolecules in real-time (which we'll talk more about in the next part about applications)! It's especially useful because QDs photobleach really slowly, meaning that their color intensity lasts longer in comparison to other molecular markers, so we can track longer processes.

Let's take it back now, y'all (and cha-cha real smooth) to what it means to be quantum.

Basically, QDs display quantum effects because of their incredibly small size, meaning that the electrons within them can only be at the discrete energy levels we just talked about. At this nanoscale, we're restricting, aka confining, electrons' motion and behavior in all three spatial directions—basically falling down a rabbit hole to the quantum wonderland (might as well change our names to Alice at this point and drink anything that says “drink me”)!

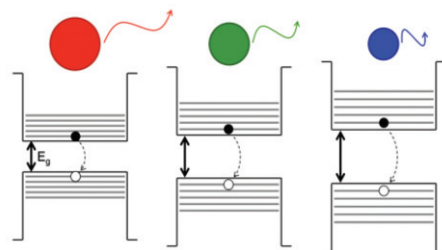
Band Gaps Aren't Just for 1D

Because of this fascinating effect of quantum confinement, as nanocrystals decrease in size, their band gaps increase, which is what gives them this rainbow power.

To clarify, this band gap isn't a gap a band takes after they inevitably lose a member (I'm looking at you, One Direction—your "hiatus" has been 7 years long already with no end in sight, and it's very upsetting).

In actuality, you can think of a band gap as the minimum energy it takes to free electrons in a material so that they can move electricity through it. So, due to this

strengthened confinement, smaller QDs have larger band gaps, meaning that they need more energy to get excited (like adults). They then give off higher frequencies and shorter wavelengths and are thus bluer...also kind of like adults :(. As expected, larger QDs have smaller band gaps, so they need less energy and have lower frequencies and longer wavelength, which is why they are redder.



In the next column, we'll talk about the incredible applications of quantum dots in solar cells, televisions, and medicine—make sure you don't miss it!

Quantum dots' band gaps are incredibly sensitive to their size, and are thus tunable to our liking. Like we just saw, by decreasing the size of the dots, you increase the band gap, and vice versa, just like tuning a violin.

'When things get nano, things get quantum'

Moral of the story: when things get nano, things get quantum. And these quantum effects give us the superpowers to actually go in and tune the optical, electrical, magnetic properties of quantum dots to change the world as we know it—right at the nanoscale.

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 column, we'll talk about the incredible applications of quantum dots 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.



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- Lighted Window Productions featuring uplifting concerts, thought-provoking theater produc-

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

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Fr. Larry Hendel, Pastor.

SAN JOSE GURDWARA
3636 Gurdwara Ave.

San Jose, CA 95148 The word Sikh (see-kh)

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

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Times **Community News****Ask the DMV****Let the DMV simplify your wedding paperwork**

Did you know that the most popular time for weddings is from May through October? Whether you're headed to the altar, moving into a new home, or heading to a wedding out of state, learn how the DMV can help make wedding season more convenient and less stressful.

Q1: I just got married and want to change my last name. What are the steps to do so? Do I have to visit a DMV office to get my name updated on my ID?

A1: To change your name with the DMV, you'll first have to change your name with the local Social Security Administration (SSA) office. The DMV electronically verifies your name, birth date, and social security number with the SSA. After you've changed your name with the SSA, you'll need to complete a driver's license or identification card application, a process you can start online. Next, you'll need to visit a local DMV office to provide evidence of your name change and pay the application fee. At the time of this transaction, you'll also be required to surrender your current driver's license.

A name change is also an opportunity to apply for a REAL ID instead of a standard driver's license. For more information, visit realid.dmv.ca.gov.

Bay Area women leaders honored at YWCA Golden Gate Silicon Valley 38th Annual Tribute to Women Awards

YWCA Golden Gate Silicon Valley will honor the outstanding women leaders at the 38th Annual Tribute to Women Awards, presented by Cisco.

More than 40 executive and emerging woman leaders from throughout the Bay Area will be recognized during a virtual event Thursday, May 12, 6:00 – 7:00 p.m. Registration to the event is free at bit.ly/TributeAwards22 and viewers can join from anywhere.

The Awards recognize the achievements of women who have excelled in their fields and have made significant contributions to the Bay Area through their dedication and leadership.

"Although every Tribute to Women Awards program is special,

we feel especially proud to honor this year's Honorees," said Adriana Caldera Boroffice, CEO, YWCA Golden Gate Silicon Valley. "We know that women have borne the brunt of negative career impacts over the course of the pandemic, so to have the opportunity to shine a light on 43 women leaders across the Bay Area is truly exciting—not to mention this year's group of Honorees include many women who have made significant impacts in local COVID response efforts."

To date more than 1,500 women have been recognized through the Tribute to Women Awards for their outstanding achievements in the workplace and beyond.

A complete list of the 2022 Tribute to Women Awards Honorees is available at bit.ly/TributeAwards22.



Q2: I'll be moving into a new home after getting married. Do I need to visit a DMV office to change my address?

A2: You can change your residence or mailing address online in the DMV's Change of Address System. However, you cannot use this online service if you:

- Do not already have a California driver's license or identification card.
- Do not have a social security number.
- Have an army post office or fleet post office address.
- Have an address outside of the US.
- Have applied for but not yet received

your REAL ID. For those, you must complete a change of address form and mail it to the address listed on the form.

Learn more about online changes of address at dmv.ca.gov/portal/online-change-of-address.

Q3: My best friend is getting married out of state next summer and my passport has expired. Can I use it instead of a passport to fly to the wedding?

A3: Yes! A REAL ID is a federally accepted form of identification and may be used to board domestic flights and to enter secure federal facilities, such as military bases and

federal courthouses. One benefit of a REAL ID is that it allows you to carry a single piece of identification that serves a dual purpose, as opposed to having to keep up with both a driver's license and a passport during travel, a time which is often already very busy and hectic. Starting May 2023, a standard driver's license/ID will become federal non-compliant, meaning you will not be allowed to board an airplane or enter secure federal facilities using it.

Give yourself one less thing to worry about with a REAL ID! Explore more of what the DMV has to offer at dmv.ca.gov.

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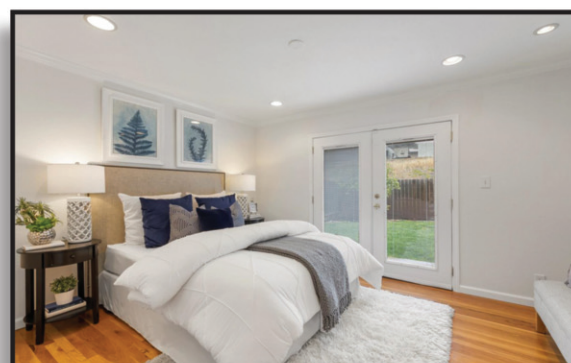
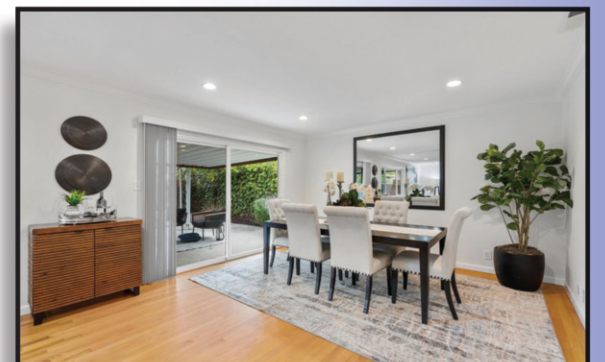
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Almaden Valley



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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.

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