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California ranks fourth most bicycle friendly state in League of American Bicyclists '22 Report – **SEE PAGE 4**

San José Mayor, state leaders, others plant city's first 'Pocket Forest'
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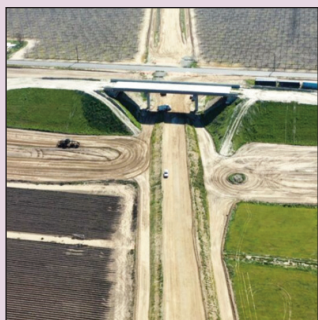
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Times

APRIL 29 – MAY 12, 2022 ■ VOL. 35, NO. 9



Grade separation for the California high-speed rail project at Excelsior Avenue near State Route 43 in Kings County. Photo courtesy of the California High-Speed Rail Authority.

Bay Area poll shows support for high-speed rail route

Finishing the complete route from Los Angeles to San Francisco could take \$105 billion

By Eli Wolfe

Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

A new poll suggests strong public support for California's ambitious high-speed rail project, but the challenges of stretching it to San Jose are daunting.

UC Berkeley's Institute of Governmental Studies reported voters in California favor continuing the high-speed rail project by a five-to-three margin.

The poll, which examined a range of issues voters want the state to address, was administered online to 8,676 California residents in English and Spanish. The findings are likely subject to a sampling error of approximately plus or minus 2 percent

Mark DiCamillo, director of UC Berkeley's Institute of Governmental Studies poll, told San José Spotlight it can't easily be compared to past surveys
See RAIL, page 11

Mayoral candidates debate local issues

By Lorraine Gabbert
Senior Staff Writer

San Jose mayoral candidates shared their concerns and ideas for improving the city at a recent debate.

Santa Clara County Supervisor Cindy Chavez and Councilmembers Matt Mahan, Dev Davis and Raul Peralez faced off at an Almaden Valley Community Association event on April 11, discussing how to reduce homelessness and crime in San Jose.

The candidates all identified homelessness as the greatest single issue facing the city.

Chavez said through Measure A, the County and its partners have housed 15,000 homeless people. Measure A, the 2016 Santa Clara County \$950 million housing bond, provided funding to build 4,800 affordable homes countywide during the homelessness crisis. After six years, the County has completed 289 units with 1,246 in construction as of January.

Chavez said, "the most cost-effective thing we can do is to keep people housed."

She said the county kept about 20,000 people from becoming homeless in 2019 by giving



San Jose mayoral candidates shared their concerns and ideas for improving the city.

ing family's an average of \$5,000.

Davis said safety, sanitation and services are needed as well as housing. She said drug addiction and mental health services have to come from the county.

"I have really learned that big problems really get bigger during difficult times," she said, "but I've also learned that even in the worst of times, when we work together, good things

can happen."

Mahan said homeless shelters have to be far more cost-effective, with money spent on services like addiction treatment, mental health treatment, job training and placement and family reunification. He recommends building prefabricated modular units on government owned land across the county for the unhoused.

See DEBATE, page 11

Park connection expands open space opportunities

The Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors approved the purchase of a 47-acre property that will allow the Parks and Recreation Department to build a trail connecting Santa Teresa and Calero County Parks.

The \$8.5 million purchase will not only connect the two heavily used parks but could potentially expand parking and enhance pedestrian and equestrian safety.

The proposed trail at Fortini and McKean Roads will extend from Santa Teresa's Stile Ranch trail to Calero's Lisa Killough trail, allowing hikers, cyclists, and equestrians to connect to nearly 30 miles of existing trails and bike ways throughout the two County parks.



Walking trails are popular at Santa Teresa County Park.

"This is an exciting opportunity," said County Supervisor Joe Simitian, in whose district the property is located. "Not only do we now have the possibility for residents to enjoy twice the park space, but with the purchase of this property we also have an opportunity to address parking challenges and pedestrian and equestrian safety."

Insufficient parking at the two parks is a consistent issue; vehicles often park illegally on nearby roads, causing complaints from neighbors. There are no parking options for

horse trailers at Stiles Ranch, and very little trailer parking at Rancho San Vicente, which means equestrians and cyclists often cross McKean Road without a designated road crossing, which can be unsafe as vehicles often exceed the posted 45 mph speed limit.

The acquisition of this property could provide an expanded visitor staging area and a safe trail across McKean Road. "The connection in and of itself is wonderful," said Simitian, "but the potential improvements over time are really an added bonus."

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Protecting Our Democracy Act takes aim at presidential abuses

Dear Editor:

It's no secret that Congress is polarized. Rarely does an issue receive strong bipartisan support. That's why it's so striking that 4 out of 5 voters agree that we must do more to safeguard our democracy from presidential corruption.

No president, regardless of party, should be able to exploit weaknesses in our political system for their 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 presi-

LETTER TO THE EDITOR



dents of either party can be held accountable.

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. Therefore, no president should be above the law. It's just common sense.

I'm urging Congress to pass the Protecting Our Democracy Act. It's time we put safeguards in place to prevent a corrupt president of any party from abusing the power of their office.

Evelyn Phelan
Almaden Valley

Valley Currents

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



California ranks fourth most bicycle friendly state in League of American Bicyclists 2022 Report

California took 4th Place in the annual ranking of Bicycle Friendly States by the League of American Bicyclists which was announced in Washington, D.C. last week.

The state Report Card found in today's report praises California for...

"...significant advances in bicycle policy in recent years, but those advances must be institutionalized more thoroughly in local Caltrans offices and in funding decisions made by Caltrans and the state legislature."

The report also stated, "While California's Active Transportation Program has expanded in recent years, it still fails to meet the demand for biking and walking investments with a nearly \$2 billion gap in funding in the last application round."

CalBike's \$2 Billion for Bikes campaign aims to fill the funding gap identified by the League. Many excellent projects in the Active Transportation Program didn't get funded in the last cycle due to lack of budget. Governor Newsom and the legislature have, so

far, tentatively committed up to \$1.1 billion in additional funding for biking and walking infrastructure in the next fiscal year, which is an encouraging first step, but California needs more.

Dave Snyder, executive director of Cal Bike, said of the League's report:

"California being named the fourth most bike-friendly state is wonderful news. But California can and should be the MOST bike-friendly state in the nation. The pandemic showed us that Californians love to bike recreationally. But more Californians would love to use bikes for commuting and shopping too, if they felt the streets were safe enough."

Snyder continued, "While funding for bicycles in California has increased recently, we are still ranked at 39th in per capita spending and 23rd in safety nationwide. To catch up, let's invest \$2 billion in safe bikeways that reach destinations where people want to go. By vastly expanding our bike infrastructure, California can become the climate and equity leader we claim to be."



The League of American Bicyclist was founded as the League of American Wheelmen in 1880. Bicyclists, known then as "wheelmen," were challenged by rutted roads of gravel and dirt and faced antagonism from horsemen, wagon drivers, and pedestrians.



Elizabeth Kamya, a representative with IFPTE Local 21, said the wage increase proposal for some city workers comes as high job vacancies continue to plague City Hall. Photo courtesy of IFPTE Local 21.

San Jose workers fleeing city, others rally for higher wages

By Tran Nguyen
Article courtesy of San José Spotlight

Hundreds of job vacancies, low wages and unmanageable workloads have city workers frustrated and demand-

ing changes.

More than 80 city employees gathered in front of San Jose City Hall early Tuesday as union leaders called for a pay increase for more than 3,000 workers. The city has a workforce of roughly 6,200 employees.

The coalition of unions, made up of Municipal Employee's Federation (MEF) 101 and International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE) Local 21, wants to see a 5.5% wage hike for next fiscal year, citing concerns over inflation, high job vacancy rates and a \$27.7 million surplus in the city's budget.

"What we're asking is an extra \$200 for groceries per month," Elizabeth Kamya, a representative with IFPTE Local 21, told San José Spotlight. "We want the city to invest in its workers. We're not asking for more than what we need."

San Jose, the 10th largest city in the U.S., has roughly 800 job vacancies across City Hall. The high vacancy rate has forced workers in some key services to work longer hours or pick up extra shifts, costing San Jose \$78 million in overtime last year. Union members said this is the direct result

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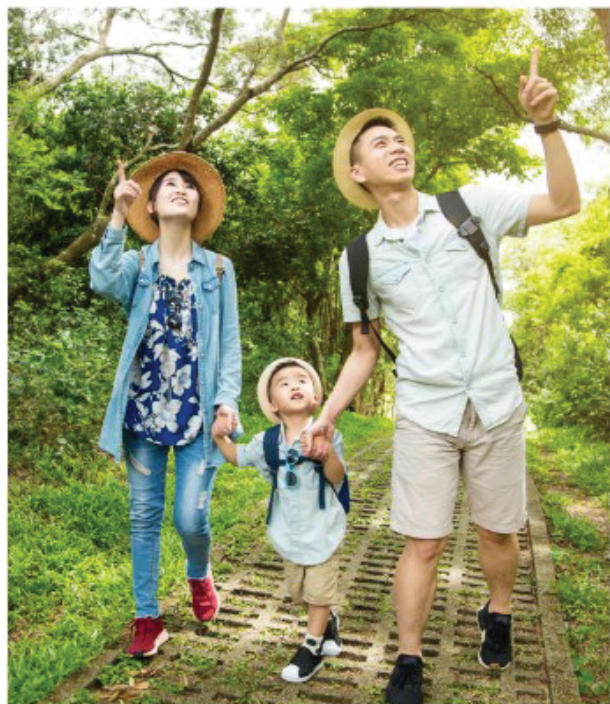
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Times **Notebook**

Workers

Continued from page 4

of the noncompetitive, low paying jobs in the city.

City workers last year successfully bargained for a 3.25% wage increase after months of negotiation. The contract guarantees a 3% increase for this year's contract, but the city also agreed to meet with union leaders again this year to discuss a higher percentage.

IFPTE Local 21 conducted a survey where more than 550 city workers—about two thirds of its members—said the current pay levels have forced many to move out of the city, go to food banks to feed their families and apply for various governmental assistance programs to stay afloat.

"We have had enough of (the city's) games and broken promises, we deserve better working conditions and to earn a livable wage," city worker Jill Mariani said at the rally. "There's always enough money for their lucrative salaries and for their pet projects, but for our staff that carry out the work—not so much."

Nick Rovetto, vice president of MEF, said San Jose has also become a "training ground" for other cities, where workers spend several months learning the job, then quickly depart for better offers at cities such as Santa Clara and Sunnyvale.

Since February, Rovetto said his group in the planning, building and code enforcement department has lost roughly 10 people who took other jobs around the South Bay.

"The workload has become insane with our vacancies," Rovetto told San José Spotlight. "What we're paid here is not efficient to retain people."

The lack of employees also affects turnaround time for residents in need of city services. Rovetto said he recently learned some residents had to wait seven to eight months before his team could respond to them.

City officials declined to comment on the proposal and Tuesday's rally.

San Jose, represented by law firm Sloan Sakai Yeung & Wong LLP, shot down the unions' proposal at a meeting last week, claiming the city has never agreed to adjust pay based on inflation and that wages are not the only factor in retaining workers, a letter from the law firm reads. IFPTE Local 21 shared the letter with San José Spotlight.

The unions and the city are heading to a second meeting this week, as workers expect a counter offer from the city.

Several San Jose council candidates spoke

in support of the unions' efforts at Tuesday's rally.

"I wouldn't be standing here today if it wasn't for the city librarians and city rec workers who guided folks like myself in a troubled neighborhood into better paths and better opportunities," said Omar Torres, who's running for City Council in District 3. "We're going to pay you right and we're also gonna make you love your job better."

Peter Ortiz, a candidate for the District 5 council seat, also vowed to be an ally to workers if he's elected.

"It's time that the city work for its working people," Ortiz said. "We cannot prioritize the best interest of our residents here in San Jose, while not prioritizing the interest of our workers to deliver vital services."



City worker **Jill Mariani** said many of her colleagues have left their jobs because of the low pay and unmanageable workload. Photo by Tran Nguyen.



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City employees gathered in front of San Jose City Hall the morning of April 19 as union leaders called for a pay increase for more than 3,000 workers. Photo courtesy of IFPTE Local 21.

Times **OpEd**

A follow-up to 'Hands of the poor'

Lady in the rain

In late March, it was raining in San Jose and I was told by others that the elderly lady was sitting in the rain with an umbrella.

The location is in the quaint area called Evergreen.

'They are the same person as we are'

Passer byes 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. 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, including this week, I brought her hot coffee and a hash brown from McDonalds.

This is a strong woman, perhaps 80 years old. Others told me it is not normal for such a lady to be house-less. 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, 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 but she spoke Vietnamese too.

She put cream in her hot coffee and added many sugars as I began to ask about her life to try to gain some perspective on her.

Parents killed at age 5

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 didn't 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.

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 and 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.

In the span of a half hour, I learned the following from the elderly lady who calls herself "Hanoi."

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

When asked about her parents she said they were killed when she was five in Vietnam during the war, long ago. 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."



Someone commandeered a Starbucks umbrella for her. This became her home.



"She reminded me of a snapshot of the painting by Edvard Munch called 'The Scream.'"

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 in 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 who were not part of her family.

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 figured out she meant, "Chicken roast," which is sold in supermarkets in plastic domes.

I do not wish 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 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 head wrapped with the nice jacket so she could keep warm.

I and others tried to get her help. We contacted many agencies and the city and county.

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 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. Some time 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 has the land she speaks of owning in one or two countries, 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.

Church groups, Councilwoman Sylvia Arenas and TEAM, Mayor Sam Liccardo and TEAM, HOMEFIRST, others pitch in best they can.

We found out some very important information. There is a countywide system that manages information on the homeless. This system is called the HMIS System (Homeless Management Information System). This was big news for the elderly lady and others too, can work with agencies to find out more about their past and too maybe monies due to her to create a new pathway of living.

NEXTDOOR to the rescue

NEXTDOOR (you can join for free) is a social media site that has neighborhood involvement. Through NEXTDOOR 100's of

Times **OpEd**

people connected and reached out to make phone calls in an effort to help this elderly lady. There were many who kindly visited her. Many Vietnamese speaking residents came and some bought her soup and had a long chat with her. This was nice because it brought socialization into play. More than one NEXTDOOR lady has visited kindly the elderly lady and they communicate to her. One said, "I told her mama people are trying to help you and you need to accept their help." They also said, "Ahhh, I hope soon she has a new safe home and she is happy." I reflect that this is the power of NEXTDOOR, for such comments energize me and others to not give up hope and NEXTDOOR connects so that "Hanoi," can get visits and get the beauty of social interaction in her native language.

Police help out the best they possibly can

The police often do not get thanked for what they do. They are often chasing the bad guys and gals and stolen cars, retrieving of hand guns and more. Such is the case and at a meeting a Police Captain stated they are working on things and are trying to help the lady on the bus bench.

HOMEFIRST is a company in San Jose that helps the homeless. They provide and run shelters and also temporary places called OWL centers. Their people too are visiting regularly with the elderly lady and offering help. There is only so much they can do with the laws set by our political leaders as approved by the citizenry.

Proposed Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment Court

At this point in time in San Jose and beyond, if a homeless person wants to set up camp in a particular place, it

can often result in them staying there a while. Last month Governor Newsome proposed a new policy framework that will allow less rights to those that sleep in the open, meaning individuals struggling with homelessness, mental health issues, substance abuse and more, can be put in a court ordered program and provided access to services such as treatment plans. It is just in the proposal stage and has a long way to go to be cobbled out into some kind of law. The governor calls it the 'Community Assistance, Recovery and Empowerment Court.'

Lady in the rain is impeded if she doesn't choose help

The cold reality is if a person is not a harm to themselves, they can stay on the street. Thus, Laura's Law does not work and is not implemented in the majority of situations.

The word "Freedom," in our constitution gives each person their rights. So, for now, the choices of the homeless can provide them lots of rights in their choices to make camp into open spaces of where they live overnight and during the day. To site a person living in the open takes time and it all has to be done very tactfully and without disturbing the legal rights of those who make choices to live in ways that do not allow a roof over their head. Some set up camp along highways or creeks for the land

is overseen by different agencies which often can lag in siting their living quarters.

With regard to "The Lady in the rain," many in the community and on NEXTDOOR help her and make phone calls to try to get paid county, city and organizations to help. They cannot help her if she does not wish to make new choices. It is all about American freedom. The level of mental challenge is tough to move the needle on taking one's rights away.

One of my concerns is how these conditions may affect the viewpoint of children as they grow and witness house-less people. Will they become desensitized to others who are poor?

Bus bench to be pulled

I happen to see VTA (Valley Transit Company) pulling bus stop benches in the area. They explain they are pulling the benches to update them. I begin to understand it may be a matter of time before all of the elderly lady's things are forcibly removed and set gently down on the lawn behind her. Many brought umbrellas and things to her. I kindly explain to her that VTA may be



VTA is clearing the area by replacing benches, but they are not sure if they will succeed with her bench.

removing the bench to replace it in weeks to come. This news makes her visibly angry. She says, "Stop trying to help me, help yourself."

As the days pass, I see the elderly lady look worse. I wonder if she has not had a shower for a while. Many give her clothes which she uses. She has water and other things. Her personality changes when she gets angry and she states, "I don't like communism, I am a United States citizen and the U.S. is a liar." She continues, "the social workers are robbers, banks are robbers, they killed my life."

Though things are tough, I just know that prayer can make a difference so I ask all who believe in a higher power to take a moment and pray for this "Lady in the rain," who has not taken a shower for a while. Next week I and others will ask her to walk near to get a shower with Dignity on Wheels and we hope she does not say, "NO." Unfortunately when I post religious things on NEXTDOOR they are removed. So let's pray for NEXTDOOR too and allow more freedom to post religious beliefs such as quotes from Mother Teresa or other religious figures. Prayer is the answer and the lady is Buddhist, so perhaps a Buddhist monk can visit her.

Kevin Larsen
San Jose resident

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Eight arrested including assault with a deadly weapon and hit and run during one of five simultaneous sideshowes on April 17.

Five simultaneous sideshowes dispersed in San Jose April 17

Eight arrested including assault with a deadly weapon, hit and run

Five sideshow incidents were reported throughout the city of San Jose on April 17 at approximately 4 p.m.

San Jose Police Officers dispersed participants and onlookers at the following locations: Old Bayshore Highway and Gish Road; Santa Teresa Boulevard and the Highway 87 interchange; Meridian Avenue and Fruitdale Avenue; Capitol Expressway and Capitol Avenue; and Lundy Avenue and Concourse Drive.

Using all available resources, the sideshowes were dispersed. At one location, Capitol Expressway and Capitol Avenue, some of the fleeing vehicles drove to the area of Story Road and Jackson Avenue where units met them and conducted enforcement action.

Felony hit and run

One of the involved side show vehicles that fled to Story Road rammed and struck a supervisor's patrol car. After the collision the driver

fled and struck an officer who was on foot in the immediate area conducting enforcement.

The suspect vehicle was later located and stopped in the area of White Road and McKee Road. The driver, 19 year-old Isaac Guzman of Los Banos, was taken into custody and arrested for two counts of assault with a deadly weapon on an Officer, felony hit and run, and for possession of a privately made firearm.

The Officer that was struck was transported to a local hospital with minor to moderate injuries. He was treated and released.

In total eight arrests were made, two for firearms violations. Three vehicles were impounded for 30 days and approximately 40 citations were issued for spectator and mechanical violations.

You may submit crime tips and remain anonymous by using the P3TIPS mobile app, calling the tip line at (408) 947-STOP, or on www.svcrimestoppers.org.

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SJ 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 Peralez 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 successive 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, Peralez, 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.

Debate

Continued from page 1

“I believe that local government has a responsibility for providing basic shelter and services including inpatient treatment services,” Mahan said, “but I also believe that when those are provided, individuals have a responsibility to come in from the cold and take advantage of those services.”

Perez said barriers to tackling homelessness include a lack of resources and coordination. He said the solution is getting people into shelters, even just sanctioned encampments, which he will fight for. He said to battle homelessness, the city needs county services, resources from the state and better coordinated efforts through a homeless task force.

Public safety deemed as an important priority

All agreed that public safety is another priority and additional police officers are needed.

Chavez said she’s running for mayor to end homelessness, bring down crime and make San Jose America’s safest big city.

“I believe we can wrap our arms around the city and clean it up,” she said.

She said the County of Santa Clara processes DNA faster than any other county in the country to get officers “the information they need to arrest rapists and violent criminals.” She said the city needs to attract “the best and the brightest” police officers and customize responses, pairing officers with therapists on mental health calls.

Davis said San Jose deserves to be the safest big city in America again.

“We must be a safe, clean and thriving city,” she said.

Davis said the city should add 250 more police officers over the next eight to 10 years, which is how long it may take due to budget constraints. She said increased traffic enforcement officers are needed to reduce traffic fatalities and keep drugs and guns from coming into the city and additional foot patrols are needed to deter crime in business districts. She would also like to see officers added to the Investigations Department “to solve crimes and put criminals away” and community service officers to write reports that get crimes solved. Lastly, Davis recommends revitalizing the mayor’s gang prevention task force to reduce crime.

Mahan said he would increase police staffing to reduce crime as the city only has 11 officers per 10,000 residents, while most cities have five times that amount.

“What we’re doing today is not keeping our community safe,” he said.

Mahan said a mayor has to hold people accountable, including inpatient treatment for addicts mandated by judges and picking up criminals who fail to appear for their court dates.

Perez said rebuilding the police department is one of his priorities. He said in 2010, the city had 1,400 police officers and now has 1,150.

“Ideally, we should be at over 2000 officers,” he said, “to work with the community and do proactive policing to make San Jose the safest big city in the country.”

Housing

The mayoral candidates differed on their reactions to Senate Bill 9, the California Housing Opportunity and More Efficiency (HOME) Act. SB 9 allows homeowners to subdivide a single-family zoned residential parcel or build

High Speed Rail

Continued from page 1

about the popularity of the rail project. But he said the results show majority support for the truncated version of the project.

“We’re now in 2022, it’s a long way away, and it’s been 14 years, but voters wanted to go forward even in its kind of abbreviated form,” DiCamillo said.

In 2008, California voters approved bonds to design and build a high-speed rail system that would run from San Diego to Sacramento by 2030. Cost overruns and delays have extended the timeline: the state’s current plan calls for a rail line linking Bakersfield to Merced by 2030, and then the Bay Area by 2033. According to the latest state estimate, finishing the complete route from Los Angeles to San Francisco could take \$105 billion.

San Jose Diridon Station set to become major transit hub

The high-speed rail line would feed into San Jose through Diridon Station, which is already set to become a major transit hub thanks to the expansion of BART from the north. At a recent VTA board meeting, officials from the California High-Speed Rail Authority said the project will require tunneling through the Pacheco Pass to connect the Central Valley to Gilroy, and then San Jose. A final environmental impact report is going to be received by the authority’s board later this month.

Projected \$50 billion in economic output

According to a high-speed rail spokes-

person, the connection between Silicon Valley and the Central Valley is projected to generate nearly \$50 billion in economic output.

“It’s encouraging to know the people of California are excited by the promise of the nation’s first high-speed rail system,” Anthony Lopez, a spokesperson for the High-Speed Rail Authority, told San José Spotlight. “We look forward to moving this project forward and putting high-speed rail into service by the end of the decade.”

Speeding through San Jose

Local officials and transit advocates are optimistic about the project’s potential impact on San Jose. Vice Mayor Chappie Jones, who chairs VTA’s board, told San José Spotlight he believes high-speed rail will transform Diridon into the equivalent of New York’s Grand Central Station on the West Coast.

“You’re going to have BART, light rail, buses and trains coming into that station, and having high-speed rail also come in will bring tens of thousands of riders into downtown San Jose,” Jones said. “The economic benefit of that alone is tremendous.”

Derrick Seaver, president and CEO of the San Jose Chamber of Commerce, said he’s not surprised people are supportive of the project, especially given the return of crushing traffic as the pandemic recedes. The Berkeley poll noted four out of 10 respondents are experiencing serious problems due to rising gas prices.

Seaver said there are many upsides to the project for the local economy, although he is concerned about construction.

“The struggle the business community has is all about the mitigation costs—where is the construction going to take place? What is the mitigation going to look like?” Seaver told San José Spotlight. “Downtown San Jose has a lot of activity already, with the BART project coming downtown, so this would be another element they would have to work through.”

Project could create more affordable homes for commuters

Jones noted the project will also allow more people to commute to San Jose from the Central Valley, where there are more opportunities for people to find affordable homes. Aside from the challenges of tunneling under the mountains that separate Silicon Valley from the Central Valley, Jones said he’s concerned about how the trains will travel through San Jose.

“That’s a big discussion in terms of grade separation. Do you want a train just going 110 or 125 miles per hour at grade level and crossing major intersections?” Jones said. “Imagine the safety concerns for vehicles and bicycles and pedestrians.”

Amtrak is considered slow

Monica Mallon, a transit advocate and San José Spotlight columnist, believes high-speed rail will be a major improvement over Amtrak, which she said is too slow. She said the greatest obstacle will come down to money.

“The funding has not been what (high speed rail staff) expected it to be,” Mallon told San José Spotlight. “I think they expected the private sector to step up a little more and contribute.”

a duplex.

Chavez said SB 9 treats every city the same, although San Jose has been responsibly building housing while cities like Cupertino and Palo Alto have not. She prefers Senate Bill 10, which gave the cities the option to increase density near transit areas or downtown. SB 10 allows local governments to pass ordinances prior to January 1, 2029, to zone any parcel for up to ten residential units, if located in transit rich areas and urban infill sites.

Davis said SB 9 eliminated single-family home zoning statewide, without giving cities a say. She is working to add an item to the 2024 ballot to make local control of land use decisions supersede the state’s directive.

“Community input in these projects is vital,” she said. “I have seen as a councilmember how important it is for the

community to have a say in what goes on in their neighborhoods.” She added that SB 9 obliterated the city’s General Plan which called for urban villages with denser housing near transit and walkable neighborhoods.

Mahan opposes SB 9. He said it doesn’t give cities like San Jose enough flexibility. Mahan said land use decisions have to be holistic, taking into account infrastructure, traffic and parking impacts and resources.

“We should do everything in our power to incentivize housing developers to build dense-

ly downtown,” he said, “and in urban villages that are well-served by transit.”

Mahan suggested the city impose fees and review processes to prevent density in single family neighborhoods to avoid additional traffic, congestion and air pollution.

Perez is in favor of SB 9. He believes it will allow for more housing during the housing crisis. Perez said he grew up in a rent-controlled four-plex that looked like the other single-family homes in the neighborhood.

He said living there allowed him to stay in the same K-12 school district, which granted stability and led to where he is today.

Candidates share their visions for the future

Chavez said she rallies people and knows what’s possible if people work together.

“If we could just get everybody focused on a

few key issues... addressing homelessness, public safety and affordable housing, I am so confident that we can make the changes that we need to together,” she said. “We have to keep at it until this city is a city that we’re all proud of.”

Davis said leadership and a coordinated effort are needed, as well as a strong partnership with the county for services.

“San Jose is certainly facing big problems,” she said. “I will focus on rebuilding public safety, protecting our single-family homes and

tackling homelessness and blight.”

Davis said she won’t waste time on policies that are ineffective, such as new gun owner mandates or non-citizen voting, which she voted against. She said it’s all about leadership and collaboration.

“It is really important for the mayor to bring people together and to focus on just a few issues,” she said.

Mahan said he is concerned about the direction the city is heading regarding homelessness, trash, graffiti, untreated addiction and mental illness, crime, the high cost of living and displacement.

“I’ve been frustrated with the way our local government operates,” he said. “At City Hall, we need to be radically more focused and accountable.”

Mahan suggested the city sets three to five measurable objectives each budget cycle. He said raises should be proportionable against the progress reached.

“We need to introduce real performance management in government,” he said.

But Perez said this “heavy-handed approach” won’t motivate public employees. He said for more than 16 years, the city workforce hasn’t felt supported by the city government, resulting in an exodus of police officers, firefighters and workers in planning and permitting.

“I want to be able to empower them to be able to do their jobs,” he said, “And create a city and a workforce that wants to be here and stay here, addressing the issues we have to be a competitive work environment, but also one where people feel valued.”

Times Feature

TECH JARGON OF THE WEEK

DeepMind

By Shubhi Asthana

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:

DeepMind

DeepMind is a division of Alphabet, Inc. which is the parent company for Google. It is respon-

sible for developing general-purpose artificial intelligence (AGI) technology. It was bought from a University College London spinout, DeepMind for a reported 400M euros in January 2014.

DeepMind uses raw pixel data as input and learns from experience. The researchers try to provide a large set of raw information to the algorithms as possible so that the systems themselves can learn the very best representations to use those for action or classification or predictions.

DeepMind technology has been challenged in many avenues; for example, it has been challenged to learn games on its own. For example, when it was tasked to beat the library of Atari games, it learned to understand the games

without changing the code. After a time, the AI could play the games better and with more efficiency than humans.

In pushing the boundaries of AI, DeepMind tasked itself with defeating the board game Go. Go is a computational challenge for AI, largely because of the complexity of choosing among the immense number of possible moves in the game. DeepMind developed a special project called AlphaGo, a computer program designed to play the board game. After numerous versions of supervised learning AI models, AlphaGo bested the No. 1 player worldwide in 2017.

Outside of playing games, DeepMind was used to improve power efficiency in the already optimized data centers at Google. DeepMind

was able to improve on the efforts of previous specialists by 15%, making a 40% reduction in cooling costs. It’s also been used in developing Google Assistant and helps create personalized app recommendations in Google Play.

As you can see, Google didn’t buy DeepMind for nothing. Indeed, it’s using certain DeepMind algorithms to make many of its best-known products and services smarter than they were previously.

About the Author

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

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Times **Community News**

San José Mayor, state leaders, volunteers plant city's first 'Pocket Forest' in Celebration of Earth Day

Goal set to plant 1,000 trees in lowest tree canopy area of San Jose

On Earth Day, Mayor Sam Liccardo, California Chief Service Officer Josh Fryday, Assemblymember Alex Lee, Councilmember David Cohen, and fifty volunteers planted thirty native trees at Baypointe Park.

The tree planting was the city's first "pocket forest." Councilmember David Cohen also announced his goal to plant 1,000 trees in District 4 which has the lowest tree canopy in San Jose.

"The consequences of our changing climate hurt us all, but disproportionately impacts many of our most vulnerable residents," said San José Mayor Sam Liccardo. "Growing our urban forest will continue to cut down on urban heating, helping to save lives and our planet in the process. Through our collective efforts we can create a healthier, more resilient city."

In February, 2022, San José City Council unanimously adopted the Community Forest Management Plan, which emphasized the urgency for an immediate increase in the city's tree canopy and established the need for innovative solutions to accomplish this goal as the city works to address other needs during its recovery from the pandemic. The trees for the City's first pocket forest were donated by Bloom Energy, and serve as a unique example of a private-public partnership between a company and a Council District with a direct allocation of money, time and resources to expand and actively maintain the city's tree canopy.

"We know that an important tool to address climate change and improve quality of life is planting more trees. Unfortunately, over the past decade, the tree canopy in San José's District 4 has dropped significantly and become lowest in the city," said Councilmember David Cohen,

District 4. "To address this, we are going to build a unique pub-

lic-private partnership to enlist volunteers and raise money in order to add trees to our parks and build pocket forests throughout the district. I'm thankful to our neighborhood associations and North San José business community for joining us in this effort."

This Earth Day event aims to inspire similar native plantings and greenery expansion across neighborhoods that have low levels of open space and trees in the city, especially those with the lowest levels of tree cover in the city. The risk to these neighborhoods, in addition to the lack of developed recreational open space, includes less protection from the warming climate offered by trees, which also help to sequester carbon in the atmosphere and contribute to lower street temperatures.

"This new Pocket Forest campaign in San José is an example of how the city and our state continues to provide opportunities for every Californian to take climate action," said California Chief Service Officer Josh Fryday. "It's crucial for California to continue to be a climate-resilient state by offering programs such as the California Climate Action Corps to help reach our sustainability goals, whether it's through volunteering to plant a tree or educating your community. Let's continue to set a national example and lead the way forward."

"Urban trees and forests play a critical role in climate change mitigation and adaptation," said Assemblymember Alex Lee. "They help filter air and water, control stormwater, conserve energy, and provide animals shelter and shade."



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Home Depot fire intentionally set

By **Matt Mahan**
Special to the Times

I'm sad to share that, as you've probably heard, the five-alarm fire that destroyed our local Home Depot and put many lives at risk was likely intentionally set.

The Santa Clara County District Attorney announced charges against a single male suspect who is linked to a number of other crimes in our area and was previously arrested 3 times in just the past year. The DA believes the suspect set the fire as a diversion while he attempted to steal a cart full of tools.

Repeat offenders must be accountable and we must intervene earlier and more aggressively to break the cycle of crime. Frankly, the status quo approach (e.g. zero bail, lack of alternatives to jail, very little intervention for drug-related non-violent crime) is not keeping our community safe. In a week, the Council will review a set of public safety policy recommendations that I've been working on with our Mayor and Councilmember Carrasco. Our proposal focuses on reducing the pretrial release of serious and violent felons, expanding drug treatment placements for relevant arrestees, and using technology to curb burglaries and theft of small businesses in high-crime neighborhoods. I also believe the City should focus on re-staffing our police department to match pre-recession levels. I'll share more details in our next newsletter.

On another note, I want to thank all of the first responders, especially our San Jose firefighters, for their bravery and facing enormous risk to keep our residents

safe. More than 100 firefighters battled the dangerous blaze for approximately 12 hours after 36 store employees and hundreds of customers safely evacuated the building. Countless adjacent homes also were saved thanks to our firefighters' courageous effort. We greatly appreciate the San Jose Police Department, Santa Clara County District Attorney, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms for their investigative work, catching the suspect, and pressing tough charges for this terrible act.

Finally, and following up on our last newsletter, I'm pleased to report that your City Council voted 7-3 to support my resolution opposing the wasteful and misleading ballot measure put forth by 4 of the Santa Clara Valley Water District directors. I was disappointed that a few of my colleagues thought that it was more important to maintain our relationship with a few of the VW directors than to speak up, but I'm glad we nonetheless took an official position as a body. We've since sent our resolution to neighboring cities, who we hope will take similar action. The measure in question will be designated as "Measure A" on your ballot in the June primary.

Please keep your eyes open for it, and remember that Valley Water spent \$3.2 million of ratepayer money and wrote a misleading ballot statement to extend their own terms in office amidst the worst drought in California's recorded history. I hope you'll join me and the City of San Jose in opposing this measure to send a clear message about our priorities and desire for accountability.

Please feel free to email my office at district10@sanjoseca.gov if you'd like more information on the upcoming Council meetings, including Council agendas, or have feedback for me on any of the items before the Council.

District 10 Report
Matt Mahan
Councilmember,
District 10

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Alamitos Winery – What is old is new again!

By Denelle Fedor

Alamitos Winery owners Shawn Coleman and Chris Maune have brought San Jose back to its roots...no pun intended. This pair traded their Rose Garden home for an 8-acre property located in New Almaden and boy, are we so glad they did!

Prior to purchasing the property that would become Alamitos Winery, the couple's original plans were to tear down their Rose Garden home and build a 9,000 square foot home in its place. They lived in a beautiful neighborhood rich in history and located down the street from the famous Rose Garden Park.

Before moving forward with their remodeling plans, they decided to take a quick look at a few open houses first to see if they might see another home that would be more practical than a huge remodel. The day they went out to look at houses, it was pouring rain, but they drove out to New Almaden anyway to see a home accompanied with acreage. Both men instantly fell in love with 23505 Alamitos Road – which did not include a winery at the time – but their vision was in full play. They made an offer which was accepted the same day. They traded one close knit community for another saying goodbye to the Rose Garden and hello to New Almaden.

Rich in history

In the early 1800's Chris and Shaun's land served as the home to thousands of miners who once lived within the English, Spanish and Hacienda villages. The Almaden Reservoir – across the street was created as part of the New Deal in 1935. Their property includes their personal home with a large lawn area, pool house, and caretakers' home. They share the property with many wild animals, including the infamous feral pigs that roam Quicksilver. Foxes will play with any



Shaun Coleman and Chris Maune holding Laura's Love Rose – named after Chris's Mom – while standing next to their Touriga Nacional vines.

shoes left outside. Bobcats live in the brush within the property and a pair of Mountain Lions tend to meet up for late night visits outside the winery gates. They have posted pictures and videos to their Facebook page – Alamitos Winery.

Caretakers Spencer and Abby live on the property. Abby assists with the wine tastings and events. Shaun and Chris wanted to include a water fall or something similar at the front gate, but it was cost prohibitive. When they shared the idea with Spencer, he said he could create a water display that would meet their budget, and he did. The beautiful water feature welcomes you as you arrive at the gates.

Historical landmark

Sonoma may have the oldest winery - The Buena Vista founded in 1857 by Hungari-

an "Count" Agoston Haraszthy, but San Jose was home to the first commercial winery in Northern California – the former Almaden Winery in 1852 which is a CA. historic landmark. San Jose was also home to Mirassou Winery built in 1854 located on Aborn Road in the Evergreen area. Both of these wineries closed decades ago ending agricultural winemaking in San Jose until now, where Shawn and Chris have given the wine-making industry a rebirth in San Jose. Alamitos Winery is part of the Santa Clara Wine Trail and is included in the Passport event for those who are participating.

Shaun's grandfather, John Enos Vargas (a distant cousin to former dairy owners the Vargas family who had a dairy at the end of McAbee in Almaden) immigrated to Livermore in 1923 after learning the Azorean wine making craft. Grandfather John made wine for many well-known wineries including Concannon and Cresta Blanca Winery – known today as Wente Vineyards. What is most interesting is that Mr. Vargas made the white wines for the former Almaden Winery. Shaun and Chris pay homage to him and the art of winemaking by bringing onsite estate winemaking and tasting back to San Jose.

Alamitos Wine Labels

Each Alamitos wine bottle features artwork of a different bird that populates the New Almaden area. The drawings are from original paintings that have been created by Shaun and Chris's family members. For example, Chris's aunt painted the raptor that appears on the 2018 Hawk Eye Syrah and Shaun's mom painted the Acorn Woodpecker and Chris's uncle painted the Barn Owl for upcoming wines. Chris's mom passed on in 2017; Laura's Love Rose (2019) is named after her. The artful bottles make beautiful vases after wine consumption.

Alamitos Estate Wines

Chris and Shaun unitized the hillside of their property to plant grapes – creating the Alamitos winery which opened during COVID in 2020. Alamitos has three levels to their Wine Club which is located on their website. They immediately gained numerous wine club members on the outset.

Due to the unique soil and temperate climate – and because the reservoir is across from their property which creates a late afternoon breeze, the microclimate keeps the area warmer during the day and cooler in the evening making these temperatures responsible for the successful growth of the award winning Alamitos estate wines.

They began planting in 2014 with two blocks of Syrah, one block of Sauvignon Blanc and one block of Touriga Nacional. Touriga Nacional is a Portuguese varietal considered the top notch of Portugal's finest vines which contributes to the blends that are used in traditional ports and Rose'. All of their wines are from the grapes Shaun and Chris grow on their property. The wines are extremely good – you can taste the earth and smell the vines with each sip. Combine the good taste and small batches made and something very special is created for everyone to enjoy, they do sell out.

They use original cooperages which is an older version of creating estate wines. They



Alamitos at night.

reused an older commercial refrigerator by hooking it up to an air conditioner to create just the right temperature control. The barrels hold the estate wine until bottling, and they also do barrel tasting. This kind of production of wine is joyful for it is all about going back to the basics.

Well respected and well-known wine-making consultant

Shaun and Chris brought on George Troquato as their winemaking consultant. Mr. Troquato is a third-generation vintner with 30 years of winemaking experience from California's Central Coast. He has worked with Los Gatos's Testarossa and Cinnabar Wineries. He is well respected and well known for his winemaking philosophy and understanding of sustainable soils and a minimal-intervention winemaking style.

Their wine is available for purchase directly from Alamitos Winery and delivery is available to those in Almaden and within San Jose by appointment.

See ALAMITOS, page 17



View of Vineyard and Reservoir while wine tasting.

Times Feature

Gun safety is critical to our communities

By Otto Lee

Santa Clara County Supervisor

In the early morning hours of April 3, 2022, a shooting broke out in Sacramento, horrifically taking the lives of 6 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.

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 meas-

ures 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



County Report

By Otto Lee
Supervisor District 3

SANTA CLARA COUNTY GUN BUYBACK

May 22, 2022

MILPITAS COMMUNITY CENTER
9 AM - 1 PM

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No Questions Asked.**

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the Youth Task Force – places where we can work together to end violence. Please send in an application if you are interested in serving.

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.

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- After you touch dirty tissues or dirty surfaces.
- Before you prepare food and before you eat.

Wash your hands **with soap & warm water** -OR- clean your hands **with alcohol-based hand cleaner.**

Santa Clara County
PUBLIC HEALTH

Times **Local Wineries**

Wine Tasting outside at Alamos Winery.

Alamos*Continued from page 15*

Shaun and Chris also have license to create Aguardiente which is a distilled spirit considered a Portuguese grape-based vodka. They consider Spencer to be the Master Distiller who allows the barrel to age and then he places the Aguardiente in a mason jar to sell. Consumption must be off site of Alamos Winery.

Alamos Fire Truck – Emergency and Delivery

Not every winery can share they sport an actual working fire truck; but Alamos Winery can. The truck has come in handy. There have been at least two fires within the vicinity of the winery where the truck was used. Chris, Shaun, Spencer, and Abby all have protective clothing and have been professionally trained on how to operate the truck in times of emergency.

The truck also is used for wine deliveries in the Almaden area. The truck is used to lead the New Almaden parade and residents have shared they have seen Santa Claus driving the fire truck during the holidays when Santa's sleigh was in for repairs.

Alamos Winery – From Vines to Wines – Estate Wine Tasting is Open!

Alleluia! Alamos Winery is open for their wine tasting experience on the weekends beginning on May 1st through October of this year, weather permitting. Step up to the vintage and original 1964 Silver Streak trailer where a bar made from 150-year-old barn wood from Gilroy, CA, sits. Chris and Shawn provide the hand-crafted small batch wine tasting experience through wine flights showcasing their estate grown wines. All wine-tasting is done outside where you can overlook the Almaden Reservoir and picturesque hillside and take in nature.

It is \$20.00 per person for the 4-wine flight. Reservations are re-

quired and allow for a 1-hour wine tasting visit at San Jose's only vineyard winery. Absolutely no children (including babies and strollers) and no one under 21 is allowed at the facility. No pets are allowed at the facility.

April 30, 2022, is a non-member appreciation event featuring Chef Matt with Alma Jackson's Fried Classy Chicken. The cost is \$50.00 per person.

Alamos is open for Mother's Day on May 8th – be sure to make your reservations now.

Stay tuned in August for a one-of-a-kind Alamos wine pairing with the famed Executive Chef Telmo Faria with Uma Casa located in San Francisco. Chef Telmo Faria will pair Alamos Wines with his authentic Portuguese dishes.

Shaun and Chris are dedicated to Alamos and becoming a part of the New Almaden Community. "So much of San Jose's agricultural land has been developed; here we are bringing agriculture back to San Jose," shared Shaun.

Shaun continued, "The nice thing is that we can share this with people – we can enjoy this property with the community while enjoying our estate wines."

Editor's Note: Did you know Alamos Vineyard winery offers a special setting for your private event. Also, if you join their wine club you gain access to delivery at home or business. To learn more visit their website at: <https://www.alamosvineyards.com>



Chris and Shaun holding their Egret Sauvignon Blanc estate wine. The wine came from the vines.

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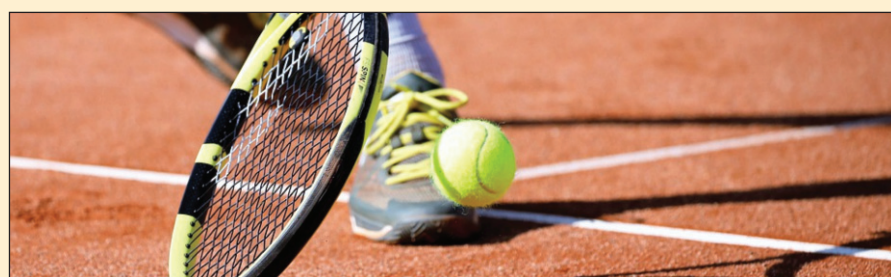
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TENNIS TIPS

Play matches like you practice

By Ken DeHart

We all feel like we practice at one level then compete at a lower level. Here are some tips to transfer your practice level into your match play performance.

Relax

When you are practicing, notice how relaxed you are. Record your tension level. On a scale of 1-5 with 1 being totally relaxed and 5 being totally tense, record your tension level as you practice. Ideally you will play at a tension level of 2 or 3.

When you are in a match, be aware of adjusting your tension level down from 4 or 5 to your practice tension level. As the importance of the match rises, so does your tension level. Between shots, games or sets, reset your tension level to your practice level.

Footwork and movement

Your ability to execute a shot depends upon the position your feet put you into. Out of balance or poor posture will usually produce a poor shot (posture = position and position = possession P+P+P). In practice, notice what height or point of contact allows you to produce your best shots. In the match, see the ball well to know how to get into your ideal hitting position. The pros average between 6-10 steps between each ball they hit. Those are called adjusting steps to put you into the best position to make your best shot.

Warm up your key shots

In a tennis match, about 70% of the balls you will hit are either a serve or return of serve, only 30% are ground strokes, volleys or overheads. How often do you practice your serve and the return of serve in your practice sessions? In fact very few players take enough practice serves in the match warmup to be confident and seldom do you practice returns in the warm up. Spend more time serving and receiving in your match warm up then on your ground strokes, volleys and overheads to improve your match play performance.

See the ball

Perhaps the most underrated skill is the ability to "see" the ball (focus on) versus "watching" the ball (scanning). Because of less pressure in practice, players often focus on seeing the ball better than in the match where they begin to watch the ball, the opponent and targets.

Your ability to see the ball as the opponent makes contact with the ball (versus looking at the opponent then trying to find the ball) is critical to the amount of time you have to react to a shot coming at you.

While nearly impossible to do, try to see the ball spin in the warm up when the ball speed is slower and you are closer to the net (you are legally blind to the ball when it is about 3-4 feet as it approaches you).

The trick is to keep the eyes and the head still at contact to provide your best chance to produce a quality shot. When the eyes move or the head shifts, even the slightest it will change the path of your arm and hand, thus the path of your racquet on any shot, serve, ground stroke, volley or serve. This is best represented by the pros who keep their head still almost until they have finished their follow through on any shot (see video of Fed or Nadal at contact and after)

Other tips

- Breathing at contact is important to relaxing at contact and timing your shot (count as you contact the ball and see if you are timing your breathing with contact).

- Warm up all your game in the match warm up to see how your shots feel that day. It is like taking a test in school. Study all the information so you will be prepared for anything on the test that day. You may or may not have to use it, but you were prepared if it shows up.

- Physically warm up before you go on the court. You are counting on your body to be able to perform as best it can, at least get it warmed up to give it the best chance and perhaps avoid injuries (jumping jacks are a great all body warm up activity in emergencies)

- Document how you felt in practice in your journal. Now document how you felt in your match and compare. Writing things down allows you to visually and mentally compare. You also revisit the experience as you write it down and usually discover more details than just your passing thoughts.

Discover what works for you. Each of us are different and value different bits of information. As we were told, "doing the same thing over and over and expecting different results is the definition of insanity". While you do want to "play out of your mind" there are more effective ways to experience being in the zone.

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



Times **Local News**

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

Basic universal income proposed for once homeless high school grads

\$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 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 actually 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.

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Times **Feature**

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 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 engineered 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



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.

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.

Shawn Ansari – Record Sale



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Web: www.eca-sj.org At the Episcopal Church in Almaden (ECA), we are joyful followers of Jesus Christ. Through worship, study, fellowship and outreach, we strive to nurture and grow a strong faith community of believers, a family of all ages, where each member feels welcomed, loved, valued and empowered to serve. Children are especially welcomed and cherished as an important part of God's family. All junior high and senior high students are welcome to participate in our Youth Groups. During the school year we have joint Sunday School with our sister church, the Congregational Church of Almaden Valley, UCC. The Episcopal Church in Almaden offers the following regular opportunities for worship: Sunday at 7:30AM and 10:45AM, Holy Communion service. Each Sunday service is followed by a coffee hour for friendship and conversation.

Q) What is Islam, who are Muslims, and what is the Quran?

A) Islam is a faith and way of life. Islam began in the 7th century. People who follow Islam are known as Muslims. The Quran is the Divine book that guides Muslims to practice Islam. "Hufazik Allah Waeayilatakm" the English meaning is "May Allah (swt) protect you and your family". Please visit our website to learn more.

FIRST CHURCH DOWNTOWN Worshipping at 55 N. 7th Street, in downtown San Jose. (Horace Mann school) firstchurchdowntown.com

Telephone: (408) 294-7254 x310. We are a community serving the Christ from the heart of the City, working to know Jesus and make Jesus known by serving, worshipping, and learning together. Worship services are at 10:00 AM at the Horace Mann Community Center (7th and Santa Clara Streets). Worship includes both contemporary and traditional music, a message that is relevant to real life, based in the Bible, and meaningful to people of all ages and backgrounds. We work in our community to provide real assistance and long-term, life-saving solutions: food, housing, counseling, and spiritual direction. Our children's & families' ministries include Sunday classes, outdoor family activities such as bike rides and fishing trips. Come, Make a Difference and feel the difference God can make in your life!

EVERGREEN ISLAMIC CENTER (EIC) <http://www.eicsanjosel.org> 2486 Ruby Ave, San Jose CA 95148. (408) 239-6668

"As-Salaamu-Alaikum" the English meaning is "Peace be upon you".

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