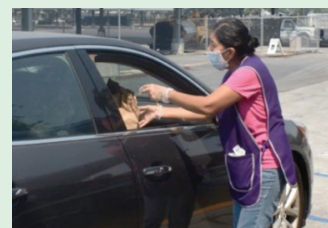


\$56k raised to assist children with disabilities in war-torn Ukraine
SEE PAGE 11



Train progress
High-speed rail to San Jose passes another hurdle
SEE PAGE 10

Santa Clara County schools help stamp out student hunger
SEE PAGE 2



SEPTEMBER 2022 ■ VOL. 18, NO. 9

Willow Glen Times

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Equestrians made their way around the parking lot to greet cyclists at the Shared-Use Trail Speaker Night.

Championing Safety: Partnership focuses on trail etiquette for county park visitors

As more trail users arrive at San Vicente, community spirit grows

By Rachael Parakh
Special to the Times

During the Covid pandemic, the number of visitors to Santa Clara County Parks tripled. Cyclists, hikers, equestrians and pet walkers headed into the great outdoors to explore nature for health and recreation.

With the large increase in park visitors, the need to know how to safely share trails with other users also increased.

It was during a Shared-Use Trail Speaker Night, led by County Park Captain Ali Famalett, at the Santa Clara County Horsemen's Association, that concerns about trail safety etiquette were verbally raised and discussed. The conversation centered around preventing serious trail injuries when park users pass by each other too quickly or without proper warning.

As a result of these important discussions, the Santa Clara County Parks and Horsemen's Association gathered representatives from numerous communities to set up an information table at park entrances to speak with visitors before and after their trail adventures. With partnerships in place, the first table event was Saturday, August 13th from 8:00-11:00am at

See SAFETY, page 7

San Jose's iconic bookstore Hickleebee's to be sold

Owners say it's time to retire after 43 years in Willow Glen

Willow Glen's iconic Hickleebee's Bookstore co-owner Monica Holmes has announced the bookstore she opened with her sister Valerie Lewis in 1979 is going up for sale.

Both Homes and Lewis say that they're ready to retire and hope to sell their popular Willow Glen shop.

"I could probably stick with Hickleebee's past 100 years old, but

I believe in exiting with grace," Lewis said in an email this week. "And it's time. We have every intention of finding the right owners to carry on the Hickleebee's tradition."

The bookstore located on Lincoln Avenue features a cozy children reading area. The shop's bookshelves are packed with books of laughter, romance, friendship, and adventure.

"The key ingredients that will contribute to the success of a new owner are all in place: a loyal customer base; a dedicated, hard-



Joy Steuerwald and her son, Harrison Prioste, enjoy Hickleebee's picture books. "Hickleebee's: The Evolution of the Bookworm," which opened 43 years ago, is going up for sale. Photo by Lorraine Gabbert.

working staff; the technology tools to remain current and relevant; and a beautiful environment that appeals to customers of all ages," the newsletter said, noting that the ideal new owner would be passionate about books and possess sound judgement, some creativity and a good sense of what it takes to operate a retail business. "We would be delighted to find a new owner who would enjoy steering San Jose's family center for literature and learning."

While it is primarily known — and proudly so — as a children's bookstore, Hickleebee's has long catered to readers of all ages and has hosted events featuring celebrities, literary and otherwise, including "Captain Underpants" creator Dav Pilkey, Chelsea Clinton, humorist Dave Barry, Supreme Court Justice Sonia Sotomayor, J.K. Rowling's promoting her first book, and late U.S. Secretary of Transportation Norman Y. Mineta.

Willow Glen resident Elizabeth Kooiman named to Dean's Academic Honor List at Baylor University

Willow Glen resident Elizabeth Kooiman, School of Engineering & Computer Science, has been named to the Dean's Academic Honor List for the Spring 2022 semester at Baylor University.

In 1921, Kooiman played in all 19 games of the season, starting in 18 of them. She holds the season high in assists (5), recorded 2 goals, one against SFA (9/16) and the game winning goal against No. 8 TCU (9/26).

Kooiman graduated from Valley Christian High School in San Jose in 2019. She played club ball for the California Thorns FC organizations and won a NorCal State Cup title. She was named Valley Christian High School Offensive Player of the Year.

The Dean's Academic Honor List recognizes Baylor undergraduates for their outstanding academic work during each semester. Students honored on the Dean's List earned a minimum semester grade-point



average of 3.70 with no grade lower than a "C" while enrolled in at least 12 graded semester hours.

Baylor provides numerous academic and research opportunities across various disciplines through 126 baccalaureate programs in fields as varied as business, engineering, nursing, pre-medicine, music and computer science, along with 80 master's programs, 47 doctoral programs (including the J.D.), the Education Specialist program and Master of Laws program.



Hickleebee's owners Valerie Lewis and Monica Holmes enjoyed working together at the Willow Glen bookstore for 43 years. They now want to sell the bookstore to travel and spend more time with their families. Photo by Lorraine Gabbert.

SEE OUR CLASSIFIED ADVERTISEMENTS INSIDE THIS ISSUE - PAGE 15

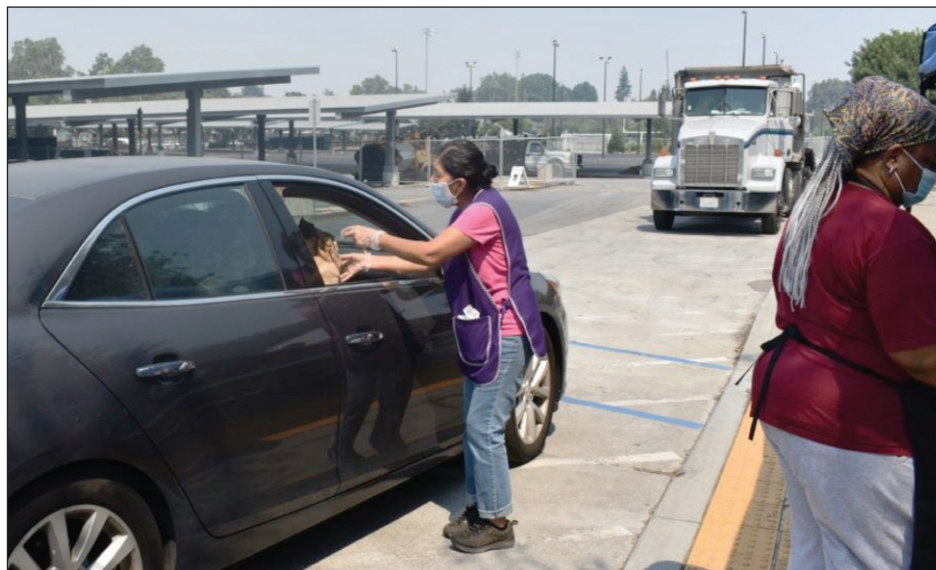
Santa Clara County schools help stamp out student hunger

By Loan-Anh Pham
San José Spotlight

Any San Jose student could receive a free school meal during the COVID-19 pandemic. Now California is making sure that doesn't stop with the start of this school year.

California is the first state in the country to pass the Universal Meals Program, which requires schools to provide free breakfast and lunch to students regardless of family income. California lawmakers will allocate \$650 million each year to the program. The state has already provided \$150 million in funding for kitchen infrastructure improvements and staff nutrition training.

Even in Santa Clara County, one of the wealthiest counties in the nation, food insecurity is real and impacts the area's most vulnerable populations including



An East Side Union High School District student receives a free meal in 2020 during COVID-related school closures. Students will continue to receive free meals this school year. *File photo.*

served, said Glenn Vander Zee, superintendent of East Side Union High School District. During the 2018-19 school year, the school district served an average of 3,700 breakfasts and 5,640 lunches a day. But during the 2021-22 school year that number jumped to 4,725 breakfasts and 7,640 lunches, an increase of 28% and 35%, respectively.

"The community has demonstrated both the need and appreciation for the availability of these meals," Vander Zee told San José Spotlight.

While schools have a responsibility and unique ability to work directly with students and families, free meals are only the first step, said Omar Davila Jr., a child studies assistant professor at Santa Clara University. Education policy needs to factor in all facets of a student's experience to provide the most effective resources, he told San José Spotlight.

"Universal programs are good, but insufficient," Davila said. "Inequality affects different groups in different ways, whether we're talking about gender, whether we're talking about race, nationality and so on."

Food insecurity also disproportionately impacts marginalized communities. Davila said socioeconomic status has a major impact on students, even in higher education.

"A UCLA study found that two of every three undocumented children in California were experiencing food insecurity," he said. "We know that even when we compare students who have the same academic skill sets, who are the same on paper, low income students are still less likely to graduate from college."

At Alum Rock Union School District, a free meal program has been in place for more than a decade in response to the district's high level of food insecurity within the community, said Superintendent Hilaria Bauer.

The school district provides breakfast, lunch and "light supper" to over 8,000 students and served more than 6 million meals to students and families during the COVID-19 pandemic, she said.

"We have been doing universal eating (programs) in Alum Rock since 2004," Bauer told San José Spotlight. "The state (is) catching up to the reality. It's very difficult to learn when you're hungry."

homeless residents and students. One in three children in the county are at risk of facing food insecurity, according to local food bank Second Harvest Silicon Valley. Compounding the problem is inflation, which has increased food prices and hit family budgets. Schools have stepped in throughout the summer to offer meal programs and keep students and families fed.

The new universal program addresses the stigma of food insecurity, said Tracy Weatherby, vice president of strategy and advocacy at Second Harvest Silicon Valley.

"We shouldn't be dividing kids up into 'free,' 'reduced' and 'paid,'" Weatherby told San José Spotlight. "There's also the fact that a lot of families don't apply because of stigma. They don't want to be seen as needing help."

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, school meals were mainly the responsibility of the federal government through the U.S. Department of Agriculture National School Lunch Program, which provided free or reduced-price meals based on a family's income. That shifted to the states during COVID-19, said Marjorie Freedman, a San Jose State University professor emeritus in nutrition.

"No child can pay attention if they're hungry," Freedman told San José Spotlight. "Look at the cost of food now with inflation. It's absolutely crazy how much basic necessities cost."

The shift to universal meals during the pandemic enabled more food to be

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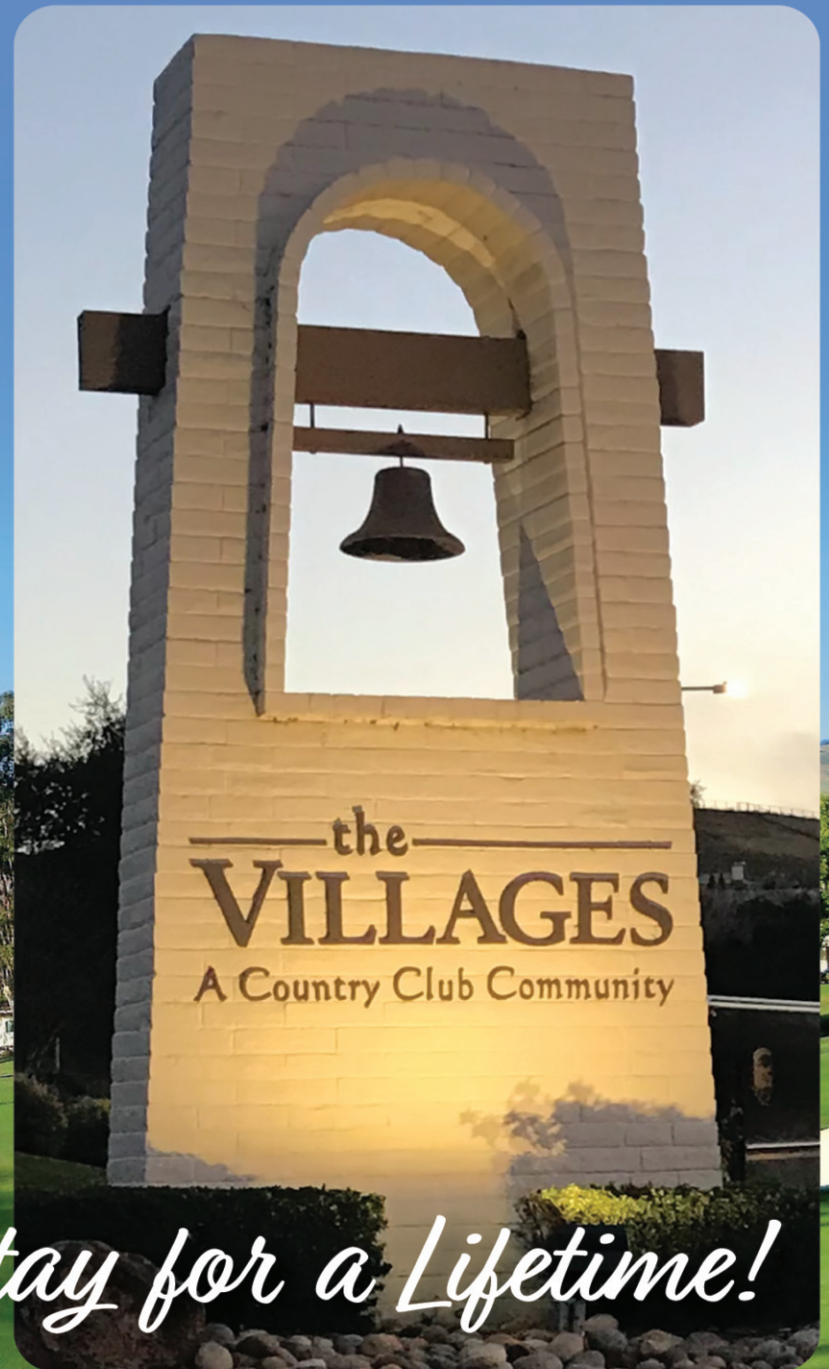
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OP ED

The fight for my life

My battle with omicron

By Kevin Larsen

Some capitalize the name of this virus variant but not me. I do not wish to give it any status.

It happened a while back.

This is a true experience with the omicron.

I took my Pfizer vaccine and was told once I got it I could not get the covid.

Earlier, key people in the news who earned a paycheck from the government said masks were not necessary then admitted to lying because they did not want a run on masks across the nation.

I began to wonder if paid people believed that the end justifies the means.

I was told the vax was good for children but then I was told it wears off and children really don't need a vaccine.

The booster I was told is the same as the first two shots I took. So the word "booster" was in my opinion double talk for the same shot I got earlier called a "vaccine."

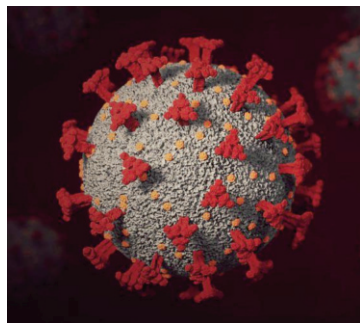
I began to realize that someone in government was redefining the word "vaccine," in my opinion.

Also, it is announced that currently the vaccine is being tweaked to better fight new strains of covid. This made me wonder why the old vaccine was still being administered.

Due to, in my opinion, lots of misinformation on the so-called vaccine, I decided to get only one booster and wait.

Following my preventative rituals of avoidance of people to steer clear of any transmission, I did these things; I wore a mask when going out, kept social distance, did not go into stuffy rooms, shopped quickly, washed my hands and more.

Still, as time went by, that



elusive foe snuck into my nostrils and I got sick. I got a runny nose, dry cough that felt like a rubber band was in my throat, had fatigue, a bit of a fever, aches and knew my body let the enemy in through the gates.

I took the little at home test but even with a college degree under my belt I did not mix the solution properly and the test came out negative. In my opinion the instructions are flawed in the package.

I realized I was supposed to put more of the liquid in the tube. After doing that, the test came out positive.

I felt I was facing death in the face and fighting a kind of virus that was not living. I also perceived that I was let down by government information so I went online and did my own research.

I learned in my opinion that this new omicron variant is less severe and is less likely to go into the lungs.

Would I meet the respirator?

I decided to fight the virus on my terms. This involved drinking lots of fluids and Gatorade because it has electrolytes in it and the cheaper brands don't.

I took vitamins and ate healthy including soups rich in nourishment.

I self-isolated and took constant oversight as to how I felt.

During day two things got worse because I perspired a lot. I noticed my dreams at night were almost like a horror film and I was not the victor nor the vanquished so I kept fighting.

I began to wonder if my heart would stop. I knew I needed to get a Will and or Trust set up for my assets. Would my ticker

See OMICRON, page 7

Valley Currents

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

Fundraising efforts for bronze 6-foot statue tribute to Norman Y. Mineta

Group raising \$150K for bronze tribute to late SJ mayor, U.S.

transportation secretary

By Times Media news staff

Two years ago, a group of Norm Mineta's friends began to fundraise for a 6-foot life sized bronze statue to be installed at the entrance of the San Jose Mineta International Airport and are now inviting tax-deductible donations to complete the effort.

The non-profit Quest Valley Charities (QVC) Inc. was created to lead the campaign. Honorary Co-chairs include Japanese American community leader Yosh Uchida, Congressmember Zoe Lofgren, State Senator Dave Cortese, Supervisor Cindy Chavez, and Mayor Sam Liccardo.

"Norman Y. Mineta was a tireless champion for our city—embodying our nation's greatest ideals to secure bipartisan support to serve his community. It is only fitting that he is memorialized for his remarkable life and landmark achievements, in his hometown of San Jose," expresses Mayor Liccardo.

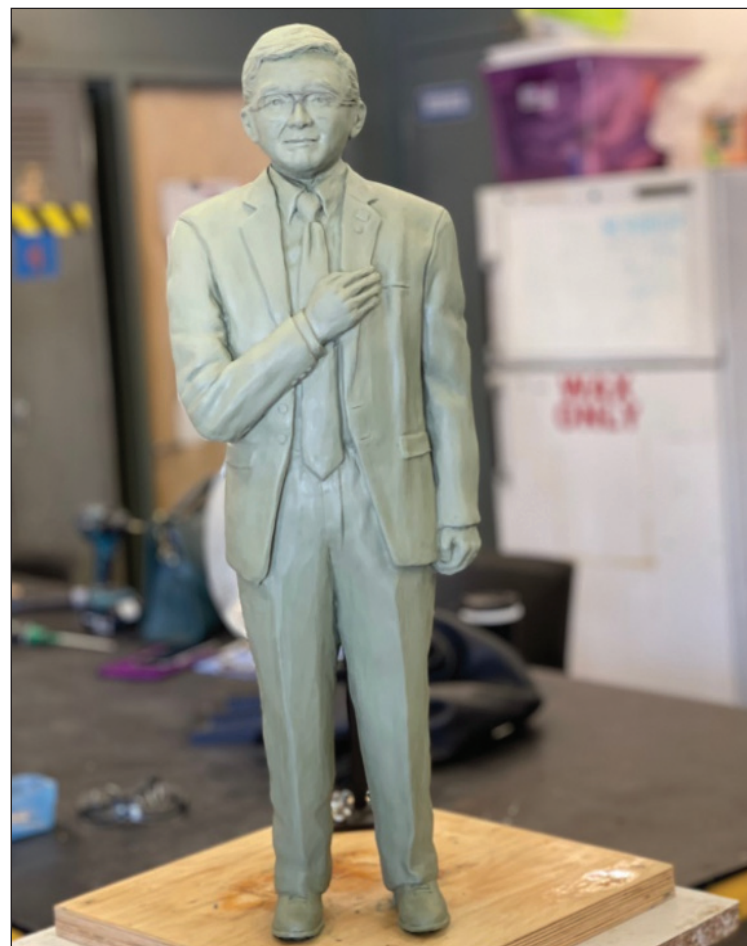
With Mineta's passing on May 3rd, 2022, the movement has gathered purpose with a desire to see him standing tall once again at his namesake airport. The first 15 donors of 10k or more will have their names engraved on the pedestal base. Every donor will be recognized at the statue's dedication.

Rod Diridon Sr., President of QVC, Inc. worked closely with Mineta on the Valley's transportation system. Mineta and Diridon also collaborated on legislation for Congress to authorize the Mineta Transportation Institute at San Jose State University.

"Norm Mineta is the most impactful person ever to come out of Santa Clara County," Diridon said. "His great work will be remembered forever."

Born a Japanese-American citizen on November 12, 1931, in San Jose, CA, Norman Yoshio Mineta never had what was considered a "conventional" life. Mineta's Japanese immigrant parents were prohibited from becoming American citizens due to the Asian Exclusion Act. During World War II, Mineta's family, alongside thousands of other Japanese immigrants, were forced from their homes and detained in internment camps.

Carl Guardino, Executive Vice President of Global Government Affairs and Policy for Bloom Energy and Vice



Chair of the California Transportation Commission, explains further:

"Early in his illustrious life, as a little boy sent to an internment camp during World War II, Norman Mineta made a conscious choice to 'grow better, not bitter.' Due to that decision, all of our lives have been improved by his service to our City, State, and Nation – As Mayor, Congressman, Cabinet Secretary to two Presidents, as well as mentor and friend to so many. This statue is a small tribute to a larger-than-life leader who has touched us all in such positive and profound ways."

In 1953, Mineta graduated from the University of California, Berkeley School of Business Administration. After graduating, Mineta joined the U.S. Army and served as an intelligence officer in Japan and Korea.

Following his service in the U.S. Army, Mineta worked with his father at the Mineta Insurance Agency, and later became the first Asian-Pacific-American mayor of a major U.S. city and served over twenty years in Congress.

He later served as the first Asian-American Cabinet member as U.S. Secretary of Commerce under President Bill Clinton and the only Democrat in George W. Bush's cabinet as Transportation Secretary. Mineta

was not only responsible for safely grounding all the airplanes after September 11, 2001, but also helped create the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) and organized the Department of Homeland Security.

Joyce Iwasaki, Japanese Community Ambassador said, "I've had the privilege of working with Norm and learned ways that helped him have an impact on his friends and family, in his community, his country, and the world. He did so by understanding that humanity is constantly changing, by being an attentive listener, by knowing how to work in alliances, and how important it is to respect all points of view. He was humble and likable. This statue project will remind people of Norm's contribution at all levels."

Mineta's life-long work in demanding justice, freedom, and equality for all people has set the standard for moving forward in politics, personal affairs, and more.

Norm's son, David Mineta, President and CEO of Momentum, shares, "It means so much to our family that a statue would be erected at the airport that bears his name. It is a permanent reminder about what he stood for and the values he learned growing up in this valley."

Willow Glen Times

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Times **Notebook**

Safety

Continued from page 1

San Vicente Open Space Reserve, a beautiful and highly active county park.

Equestrians, Liz Kehoe (horse Logan) and Jennifer Lien Gonzalaz (horse Bowtie) made their way around the parking lot to greet cyclists unloading their bikes. As they approached with their horses, conversation opened up quickly and easily. Many cyclists were glad to have the opportunity to ask questions directly and to learn that horses and their riders need to hear a voice (or trail bell) when approached, from the front or back, on a trail. Speeding by a horse and trying to quickly pass can put a rider in great danger if the horse startles. The recommended procedure in sharing trails with equestrians is to slow to a complete stop and let the rider communicate how they would like you to proceed. Jennifer Hodge, with Jenn's Pet TLC, concurred that hikers and those walking pets also greatly appreciate 'the call out' or bell ring. This allows them time to collect their pet(s) and move off the trail so cyclists can safely pass.

Rachael Parakh, Director of Public Relations for the Santa Clara County Horsemen's Association, passed out trail bells to cyclists and hikers and took photos for those

wanting to pose with the horses. Carrots were brought for visitors to feed them and some even took selfies as the horses nibbled from their hands.

Park Rangers Kristy Barton and Zachary Vasquez, were able to speak on behalf of another trail user group - wildlife. The current coyote advisory had some hikers wondering how to handle an encounter on the trail. The rangers reminded everyone to be mindful not to hike alone at dawn or dusk and to carry a trail bell to keep from stumbling upon an unsuspecting coyote or rattlesnake.

Janice Frazier, Trail Watch Volunteer with experience in trail design, advised visitors on map routes while Michael Gokey, Trail Watch Volunteer with experience in mountain biking, passed out waters to those returning from the hillside with empty flasks. The community event allowed various types of park users to become aware, knowledgeable and in the end, more understanding towards other trail users' safety needs.

Editor's note: The next information table is planned for November at the Hacienda entrance of QuickSilver Park. A representative from a local cyclist group is encouraged to join the team. If you have any questions or interest in supporting this safety initiative, please reach out to Rachael Parakh at: sccha.1939@gmail.com and title the email: Trail Partnerships.

Omicron

Continued from page 4
keep time?

I geared myself up with positive thinking to battle this unknown visitor from a laboratory. I began to reflect how this pandemic could have killed massive amounts of people like a meteor that crashed down long ago to extinguish the dinosaurs.

This virus could have been much worse. It could have killed off more people in our world. This new variant of the original virus was perhaps a kind of gift because it is milder in my opinion and also works to build up some kind of immunity resistance in my opinion to the original more deadly covid. I am not a doctor so I give no

advice here; I only take you on my personal journey.

On day three, I tested positive again but felt that I was beating back the virus. The interesting thing I experienced is a kind of extension of ache in all the body which told me in my mind that this virus is trying to take over my body.

With prayer, I fought back. I cheered on my body to attack back like a Roman gladiator and take no virus prisoners.

I knew that broth soups were going to be my weapons in the fight of the dead virus and help my fighter cells go into combat readiness.

I began to wonder if boosters were good to take and that maybe a more natural fight for health would build immunity in traditional mother nature ways.

I knew about the other

options of taking pills to fight the virus but wanted to give the soups a fighting chance. I think the healthiest of the soups is the Pho soups sold at many restaurants.

In facing death, I learned the important lesson of how to embrace life.

In day 5 with rest, I tested negative.

I'm not a doctor, nope. I am not recommending any strategies if one gets covid, I just wanted to express my personal life experience with my battle and victory over omicron.

I know omicron is a mysterious foe because it is not living. I think it is a ghost foe and it could arrive on the shores of my nose again to try another day to destroy my body.

For now, I am the victor!

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City of San José celebrates \$10 million in state funding for Vision Zero Project

Assemblymember Ash Kalra, Mayor Sam Liccardo, and city councilmembers recently celebrated \$10 million in state funds for San José's East San José Corridor Safety Improvement Project.

The project is part of the Vision Zero strategy a traffic safety initiative to eliminate deaths and severe injuries on roadways. San José's Vision Zero is a plan to eliminate deaths and severe injuries on City roadways. The

funding will improve the Senter Road corridor, one of the City's most dangerous corridors.

Improvements to the Senter Road Corridor include:

- Median islands and Enhanced Crosswalks
- Streetlights - Upgrade existing fixtures and add new pedestrian-scale lighting
- Pedestrian and Bike Sensors to provide signal timing extension
- Speed Calming (signs and outreach)
- Bikeway separated from traffic by concrete islands (similar to 10th/11th)
- Traffic Signal at Senter and Balfour
- Central transit signal priority
- Data collection and analysis

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Rebuilding Days

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

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

Ways to get involved

Volunteers Join us, safely, for Rebuilding Day, as an individual volunteer or with your corporate or community group.

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

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



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Times Feature

Airport Day returns Sept. 3

Family friendly classic car show, static airplane show, and more! Event goers encouraged to bring canned food for Second Harvest Food Bank

Continued from page 1

fun food all day. School robotics teams and ROTC will also be participating. And don't miss the Civil Air Patrol presenting the Color Guard during the National Anthem in the Opening Ceremony at noon. This is a great day for children to participate in a learning environment and have fun too!"

Aircraft

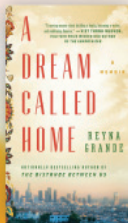
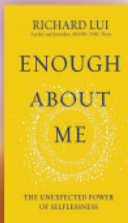
More than 40 static airplanes will be on display.

San Jose State University aviation program, one of the nation's oldest and the only public institution in California, is welcoming event goers to sit in their aircraft and talk with students and faculty. This gives everyone a chance to learn more about the educational opportunities we provide. The program offers a BS in Aviation with an emphasis in professional flight, operations, aviation management, and Maintenance Management.



Fun for all

For 14 years, Hot San Jose nights – Airport Day has been a huge family fun classic car show and airplane show for the entire family Saturday, September 3 from 10 a.m. – 3 pm. The event including parking is free.



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San José Unified School District Meal Program for 2022-2023

The San José Unified School District has finalized its program for providing meals for children served under the National School Lunch Program, the School Breakfast Program, and/or California's Universal Meals Program for the 2022-2023 school year.

All students who attend a San José Unified school are eligible to receive one complimentary breakfast and one complimentary lunch each school day, regardless of household income. No application or form is needed to receive a breakfast and/or lunch at no cost.

To ensure that each school site receives all of the state and federal funding it is entitled to, as well as to ensure that individual students receive the benefits they are entitled to, such as college application waivers, Advanced Placement (AP) and International Baccalaureate (IB) testing fee waivers, and Pandemic-Electronic Benefits Transfer (P-EBT) benefits, San José Unified's meal program includes alternative income forms and meal applications.

Households that fall within specific income levels may be eligible for services and supports in addition to a breakfast and/or lunch at no cost. Eligibility is determined by household income being less than or equal to the Income Eligibility Guidelines identified below. These guidelines are effective July 1, 2022 through June 30, 2023. Households determined to be free or reduced price based on the information provided on the alternative income form or the information provided on the meal application will receive confirmation of their eligibility.

All households receive a unique link for each student to complete the beginning of the year packet, which includes the alternate income form. Unless attending a Community Eligibility Provision school, see below for more information, all households should also complete the meal application. Students who are directly certified or categorically eligible do not need to complete the meal application.

One meal application for all children in the household can be completed at nutrition.sjsud.org. Households may submit a meal application at any time during the school year. Information provided on the meal application will be used for the purpose of determining eligibility and may be verified at any time during the school year by school officials. Households may contact Student Nutrition Services by phone at 408-535-6021 or by email at studentnutrition@sjsud.org to: receive further information or assistance on completing the alternative income form and/or meal application; request confirmation of eligibility status or for changes in household circumstances; discuss determination of eligibility status on an informal basis or request an appeal hearing with the Director.

San José Unified has nineteen schools participating in the Community Eligibility Provision. The Community Eligibility Provision is one of the federal provisions established to increase access to the National School Lunch Program and School Breakfast Program while decreasing the administrative burden on the school district. Households with students attending one of the following nineteen schools do not need to complete a meal application:

Allen at Steinbeck Elementary; Almaden Elementary; Anne Darling Elementary; Broadway High; Canoas Elementary; Empire Gardens Elementary; Ernesto Galarza Elementary; Gardner Elementary; Grant Elementary; Herbert Hoover Middle; Horace Mann Elementary; Liberty Alternative; Lowell Elementary; Merritt Trace Elementary; Muwekma Ohlone Middle; San José High; Selma Olinder Elementary; Terrell Elementary; or Washington Elementary.

2022-2023	Free Eligibility Scale					Reduced-Price Eligibility Scale				
Household Size	Annual	Month	Twice per Month	Every Two Weeks	Week	Annual	Month	Twice per Month	Every Two Weeks	Week
1	\$17,667	\$1,473	\$737	\$680	\$340	\$25,142	\$2,096	\$1,048	\$967	\$484
2	\$23,803	\$1,984	\$992	\$916	\$458	\$33,874	\$2,823	\$1,412	\$1,303	\$652
3	\$29,939	\$2,495	\$1,248	\$1,152	\$576	\$42,606	\$3,551	\$1,776	\$1,639	\$820
4	\$36,075	\$3,007	\$1,504	\$1,388	\$694	\$51,338	\$4,279	\$2,140	\$1,975	\$988
5	\$42,211	\$3,518	\$1,759	\$1,624	\$812	\$60,070	\$5,006	\$2,503	\$2,311	\$1,156
6	\$48,347	\$4,029	\$2,015	\$1,860	\$930	\$68,802	\$5,734	\$2,867	\$2,647	\$1,324
7	\$54,483	\$4,541	\$2,271	\$2,096	\$1,048	\$77,534	\$6,462	\$3,231	\$2,983	\$1,492
8	\$60,619	\$5,052	\$2,526	\$2,332	\$1,166	\$86,266	\$7,189	\$3,595	\$3,318	\$1,659
For each additional household member,										
add:	\$6,136	\$512	\$256	\$236	\$118	\$8,732	\$728	\$364	\$336	\$168

San José State of the City 2022 to be held Sept. 22

Mayor Sam Liccardo will deliver the State of the City 2022 address on Thursday, September 22, 2022, at the California Theater.

Doors will open at 5:15 p.m., and the event will start at 6:00 p.m.

A reception with light refreshments will follow. Residents are strongly encouraged to RSVP before the event.

For more information and to RSVP, visit: <https://tinyurl.com/yxtp58au>



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High-speed rail trains will share Caltrain lines in the future. *Photo by Lorraine Gabbert.*

High-speed rail to San Jose passes another hurdle

Commuters will be able to connect San Jose with Fresno in one hour

By Lorraine Gabbert
San José Spotlight

The California High-Speed Rail Authority board voted unanimously August 18 to approve the environmental impact report along the 49-mile section from San Francisco to San Jose. Board member Nancy Miller was absent. This section of the project is estimated to cost more than \$5.3 billion.

Anthony Lopez, spokesperson for the California High-Speed Rail Authority, said the next steps are finalizing the design and preconstruction. Cost estimates for Phase 1 between San Francisco and Anaheim range from \$76.6 billion to \$113 billion. Lopez said the board's recent action extends environmental clearance to more than 420 miles. The environmental reports for the final two Southern California sections are planned for 2023-24.

Rod Diridon, chair emeritus of the California High-Speed Rail Authority board, said prior to the pandemic, almost 200,000 people commuted each day from the Central Valley to the Bay Area, driving two- to three-and-a-half hours each way.

"You arrive exhausted. You had to leave before the kids got up," he told San José Spotlight. "When you get home, it's after the kid's little league game and maybe you get there in time to tuck them in. That's not a fit lifestyle."

Once complete, high-speed rail will connect San Jose with Fresno in one hour, a huge time saver for people who chose to move out of the area in search of affordable housing, Diridon said. Trains traveling at 200 miles per hour will significantly shorten travel times for commuters from the Central Valley.

"The most serious impediment for high tech and employment in our area is a lack of housing," Diridon said. "It will give Silicon Valley a new lease on life because we gain access to the affordable homes in the Central Valley."

The high-speed rail line will feed into San Jose through Diridon Station, which is set to become a major transit hub with BART's expansion from the north. To connect the Central Valley to Gilroy, and then San Jose, the project will require tunneling through Pacheco Pass.

Years in the making

The rail authority was created by the state Legislature and Gov. Pete Wilson in 1996. In November 2008, voters approved a \$9.95 billion bond measure toward the construction of a high-speed train, with Phase 1 from San Francisco to Los Angeles/Anaheim. In 2015 the project broke ground in the Central Valley.

As cost overruns and delays extended the timeline, a rail line is anticipated to link Bakersfield to Merced by 2030, and the Bay Area by 2033. Completing the route from Los Angeles to San Francisco could cost \$105 billion, according to a state estimate.

State Assemblymember Ash Kalra said high-speed rail will be a critical connection from the Central Valley both to the Bay Area and Los Angeles. The project will be also a job generator and will provide environmental benefits with less cars on the road, he said.

"I look forward to San Jose's Diridon Station being a huge, essential point for high-speed rail to connect with transit throughout the Bay Area, and ultimately to connect us to the rest of the state," he told San José Spotlight.

Brian Schmidt, policy and advocacy director for Green Foothills, said it's concerning how high-speed rail will impact the migration of bobcats, mountain lions and elk in Coyote Valley and Pacheco Pass. Green Foothills wants to see this mitigated with wildlife-friendly crossings.

"Both of those areas are very important migration corridors," he said. "Coyote Valley is one of two corridors connecting the relatively isolated Santa Cruz Mountain Range to the rest of the natural habitats in the state."

With an eye to the environment, high-speed rail will share electrified Caltrain tracks. Overhead wiring is already in place at Diridon Station, with \$800 million of its funding paid through the high-speed rail budget, Diridon said.

Boris Lipkin, California High-Speed Rail Authority Northern California regional director, said if federal, state and regional funding was in place, high-speed rail could be completed between San Francisco and Los Angeles in just over 10 years. But getting the funding is the challenge. Lipkin said in the era of climate change, it's essential to have people use trains powered by renewable energy rather than cars and planes.

"Turning that into reality is a huge undertaking," he said. "The scale of this thing is massive... but the benefits are also massive."

\$56k raised to assist children with disabilities in war-torn Ukraine

Hope Services celebrated its successful fundraising campaign to assist those with intellectual, developmental disabilities, and mental health needs in war-torn Ukraine on August 25.

From April 13-July 1, Hope Services' retail outlet, HopeTHRIFT, allocated 25% of every sale each Wednesday and Thursday at their three store locations (San Jose, Fremont, and Watsonville) to support nonprofit organizations providing on-the-ground services in Ukraine.

More than \$56,000 was raised, far exceeding the original fundraising goal. The money will be divided between two organizations, Save the Children and Humanity and Inclusion.

The campaign was the brainchild of Hope Services President and CEO, Chip Huggins. "In any conflict, those with disabilities and mental health needs face a disproportionate risk of abandonment and violence," he explained. "Watching the events unfold in Ukraine, we felt compelled to act and provide support however possible."



Chip Huggins
CEO of Hope Services

Once formulated, the plan was quickly put into action. Signage went up, and text messages were sent out to regular HopeTHRIFT customers. Business grew steadily from April on, and there was a lot of positive feedback, according to HopeTHRIFT Retail District Manager Shawn Bailey. "It was a win-win: we got people into the stores and also helped spread the word about the work we do right here in our own community," he said.

The two organizations selected

to receive the funds raised by the HopeTHRIFT Ukraine campaign, Save the Children and Humanity and Inclusion, were both selected based on their sterling credentials and their ability to deliver assistance immediately to those in need. "It was important to partner with organizations whose missions match ours: serving children and individuals with intellectual disabilities and those with mental health needs," says Cathy Bouchard, Hope Services' Specialty Director, who was tasked with finding nonprofits that would effectively implement the funds being raised. "We decided to work with two organizations, one large and one small. We thought it would be important to utilize the power of a large organization as well as access the nimbleness and flexibility of a smaller group," she recalls.

A familiar name to many, Save the Children has worked tirelessly since its founding in 1919 to provide refugees with assistance, improve access to education and quality healthcare, and protect children from harm. Today, the group is supporting the most



Children with disabilities at risk in eastern Ukraine.

urgent needs of children and their families in Ukraine and the region, providing essential humanitarian assistance such as food, water, hygiene kits, psychosocial support, and cash assistance.

"Save the Children is deeply grateful for Hope Services' support and partnership in response to the devastating crisis in Ukraine," says Dori Ives, managing director of individual philanthropy for Save the Children. "The

funds raised will enable us to distribute critical emergency supplies and protect children from harm in Ukraine and neighboring countries."

Humanity & Inclusion is the second organization to receive monies from Hope Services. This organization is known for positive things it has done in connecting resources and services to help those with disabilities in Ukraine.



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Times **News**

IN MEMORY

San Jose 'Community Champion' Joe Noonan dies at 48

San Jose lost one of its passionate advocates with the passing of Joe Noonan Aug 2. He was 48.

A tireless advocate for community organizations and projects, Joe most recently served in a leadership capacity with the Bay Area Furniture Bank, a non-profit that transports and donates surplus furniture to families in need.

Noonan's family moved to California from Elmhurst, Illinois in 1987. After working with technology companies, including Navteq, Cisco and JDS Uniphase in the 1990s and aughts, he came downtown to work for Broadway San Jose in 2010 and in 2012 joined the San Jose Downtown Association as its sponsorship manager for four years, contributing to the development of Downtown Ice and Music in the Park.

After that, Noonan held development positions with Christmas in the Park and the City of San Jose, where he promoted the Viva CalleSJ, Viva Parks and San Jose Al Fresco programs. He also managed the historic Twohy Building's apartments for many years.

On April 26, 2022, after being diagnosed with Stage 4 cancer, Noonan was honored by San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo with a city proclamation. Liccardo called him "an



incredible champion and cheerleader for our community."

As news of his death spread this week, accolades were posted to social media. "He spent his time cultivating relationships, connecting people, and caring about his community," longtime friend Steve Enders wrote. "He was always such a positive, helpful, friendly person," recalled promoter Bruce Labadie.

Noonan is survived by his sister, Jennifer Noonan Smoker of Washington, DC, and father Joseph F. Noonan of San Jose. His mother, Jacqueline Claire Noonan, predeceased him in 2020.

Friends and family are also welcomed to make donations of any amount to one of two charities Joe passionately endorsed - Hunger at Home and the Bay Area Furniture Bank.

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TECH JARGON OF THE WEEK

DeepLens

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:

DeepLens

DeepLens is an intelligent device that can run deep learning algorithms on captured images in real-time. The key difference

between DeepLens and any other AI-powered camera lies in the horsepower that makes it possible to run machine learning inference models locally without ever sending the video frames to the cloud. This new device managed to grow its fanfare to build a vibrant ecosystem of developers and ISVs — just like how Amazon Alexa did it. It enables a developer to easily experiment with machine learning, artificial intelligence (AI) and the Internet of Things (IoT). The DeepLens camera integrates with AI services hosted on the AWS public cloud.

Like Echo, DeepLens is an Amazon device suitable for at-home deployment. Unlike Echo, it’s an Intel Atom X5-based, Ubuntu Linux-powered, quad-core computer, with an

attached camera whose purpose is to scan for something or someone. Behind the device, on the server side of the system, Amazon’s servers run algorithms that scan the incoming contents of the video in search of something familiar: Any part of the image that its databases may have already tagged and identified.

DeepLens comes with multiple tutorials and sample projects to get started with a subset of machine learning technology called deep learning. A developer with limited deep learning or AI experience can use these programs to understand the basics of the technology. A developer who is more familiar with deep learning can use the device to deploy an application with audio and visual

recognition capabilities.

The device will have to go through multiple iterations before it becomes polished and sophisticated. Once the DeepLens platform becomes stable, original device manufacturers will start embedding that in their cameras.

DeepLens becomes an amazing playground to test how some of the emerging technologies such as IoT, edge computing, machine learning, and serverless computing come together to address powerful scenarios.

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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