

San Jose's Asian community mourns shooting victims
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San Jose Mayor **Matt Mahan** speaks to members of the media shortly before his inauguration ceremony.
Photo by Joseph Geha.

How San Jose mayor will tackle trash, homelessness and crime

By **Jana Kadah**
San José Spotlight

Like his late father who was a mailman, San Jose Mayor Matt Mahan said it's time to "deliver" solutions in America's 10th largest city – starting with the overflowing trash that's plagued San Jose streets.

During his nearly two-hour inauguration Wednesday, San Jose's 66th mayor focused on three key areas City Hall needs to fix: blight, homelessness and public safety.

Drawing roaring cheers from the crowd, Mahan zeroed in on people who dump trash and debris in San Jose. He said the city's code enforcement department has a 22% vacancy
See MAYOR, page 6

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Silver Creek High School freshman promotes accessible quality learning to underprivileged



School with nearly 300 students receives brand new notebooks and story books thanks to the fund-raising efforts of Silver Creek High School freshman **Saket Pathak**.

Books and learning supplies donated to 1,000+ children through Saket Pathak's Learning Quest organization

By **William Bellou**
Publisher

In the summer of 2017, Silver Creek High School freshman Saket Pathak witnessed poverty firsthand while visiting India.

When Saket's parents took Saket to visit a rundown schoolhouse in India, he realized that the students at the school were underprivileged. The school only had one playground piece, a used tractor tire. The students' classroom was located in a run-down building which lacked books and other learning supplies.

Saket decided to donate 200 books and

school supplies to the kids when he was in third grade, which put a smile on his face and made him realize how fortunate he was.

"When I returned to San Jose, I decided to keep advocating for the education of underprivileged kids who couldn't access educational supplies," Saket said. "This led to starting small fundraisers where I collected \$250 for an organization that specializes in buying books for kids in India. I also hosted spelling bees for local San Jose kids to promote the cause and managed to raise awareness in his local circle."

Fast forward to April 2022, Saket's parents told him that they would be going to India during the summer, which prompted Saket to ramp up his book funding efforts.

See PATHAK, page 7

Domingo Candelas is the newest San Jose Councilmember for Evergreen Valley Dist. 8

By **Jana Kadah**
San José Spotlight

From five down to one: After a nine-hour marathon council meeting January 24, San Jose has a new councilmember in District 8: Domingo Candelas.

"I am feeling very emotional," Candelas told San José Spotlight moments after winning the appointment. "Meeting with the community, setting up an office and making sure that we're diverse, that we're engaging, we're responsive, that's my top priority."

Candelas beat out four other hopefuls—Salvador Alvarez, Patricia Andrade, Sukhdev Bainiwal and Tam Truong—to snag the appointment to the vacant seat that covers East San Jose and Evergreen.

After a multi-round voting process, he ultimately won seven votes from councilmembers. The runner up, Alvarez, netted two votes.

Candelas is the director of local government affairs at Stanford University and previously worked for former Sen. Jim Beall and Valley Water. He will serve in the seat until the next regular election in 2024.

But his appointment was not without controversy.

Controversy

Dozens of San Jose residents spoke out against the process, with many saying they would've preferred to elect their next representative. Councilmembers also appointed a new representative in District 10, another open seat, last Thursday.



Domingo Candelas is the new Evergreen Valley District 8 San Jose councilmember.
Photo by Jana Kadah.

Candelas faced accusations from the other candidates that he cheated his way to the win. City Hall sources told San José Spotlight that Candelas might have been given insider information—including early access to questions the candidates were asked. Some candidates confirmed to San José Spotlight that they raised concerns after

he seemed "too prepared."

Alvarez and Truong said they reported to City Clerk Toni Taber that Candelas appeared to be violating the rules by using a cellphone and laptop while waiting to be interviewed.

Candelas spoke publicly during the meeting about the allegations
See CANDELAS, page 6

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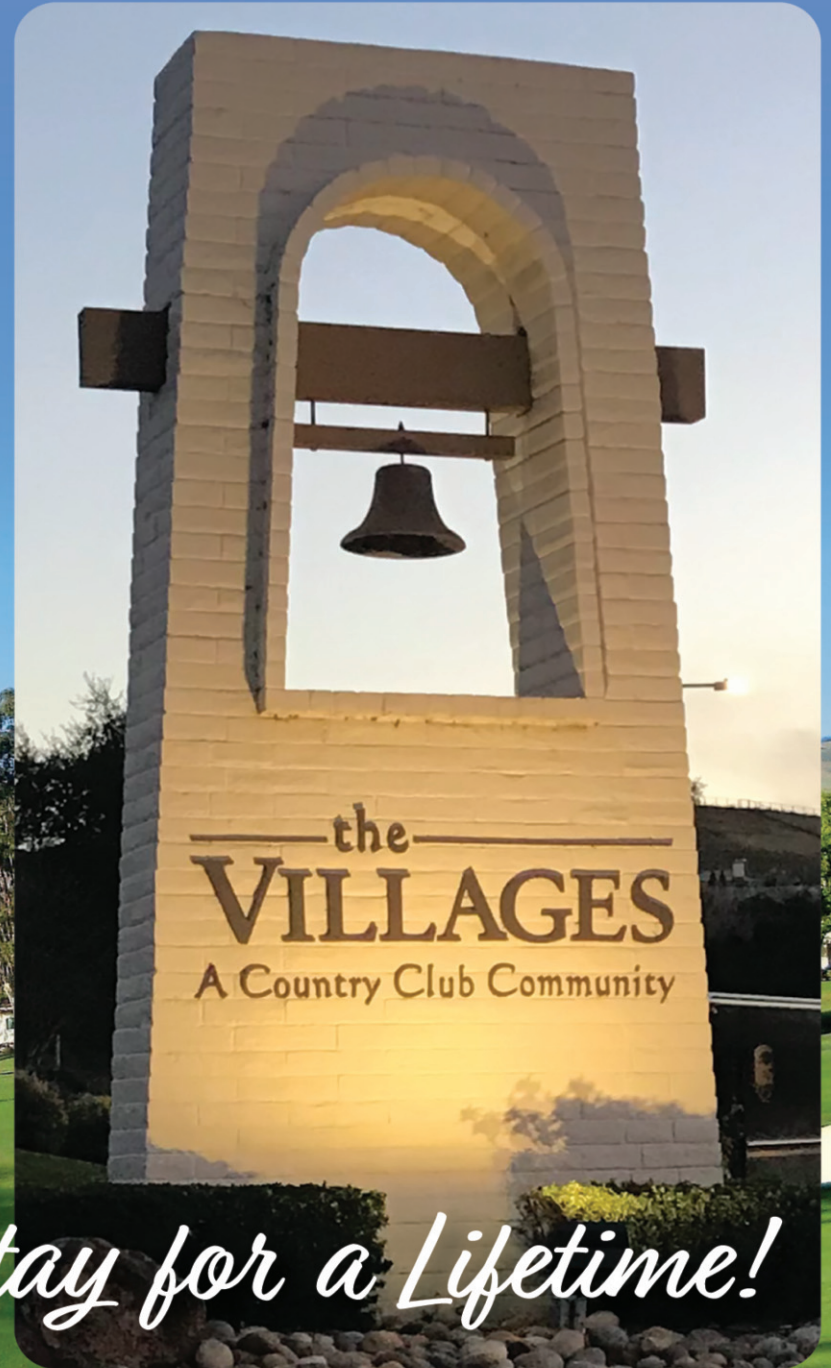
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NOTEBOOK



San Jose residents held a vigil at City Hall for those killed in recent mass shootings across the state. Photo courtesy of Santa Clara County Supervisor Cindy Chavez

San Jose's Asian community mourns shooting victims

By Lorraine Gabbert
San José Spotlight

San Jose residents held a candlelight vigil over the weekend to remember those killed in recent mass shootings across the state.

About 40 people gathered at City Hall Sunday night to honor these individuals, many Asian Americans, killed in mass shootings last week in East Oakland, Half Moon Bay and Monterey Park, a community outside Los Angeles. The Asian Law Alliance, which provides legal counseling, community education and community organizing, led the vigil.

"These tragedies affect all of us,"

Leika La Roque, community organizer with the Asian Law Alliance, told San José Spotlight. "We needed to have this moment when the community could be brought together... and remind ourselves that we aren't alone in our grief and our pain."

On Jan. 21, a gunman killed 10 people and injured 10 others at a dance studio in Monterey Park during a Lunar New Year's Eve celebration. The 72-year-old shooter died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound. A mass shooting in Oakland on Jan. 23, which killed one person and injured seven, came hours after a shooting in Half Moon Bay where seven people were killed and one was injured. The 66-year-old shooter is in custody. Police are still trying to determine who was involved in the Oakland incident.

In January alone, 40 mass shootings have claimed 73 lives in the United States, according to the Gun Violence Archive website, an independent research group that collects such data.

"It's really mind-numbing, one (shooting) after another," Richard Konda, executive director of the Asian Law Alliance, told San José Spotlight. "Everyone is traumatized by these kinds of incidents. I think it's important to create a space for people to come together, share and offer each other some comfort and solace."

Margaret Petros, executive director of Mothers Against Murder, a non-profit advocate for families of murder victims, said the shootings are devastating for families and friends of the victims.

"All I'm doing is thinking about the family members and what they're going through," she said. "How much help and crisis intervention they're getting."

Therese Santiago, community engagement coordinator for the Asian Law Alliance, said there's no easy way to respond to the unprecedented number of shootings, and however anyone is feeling about what happened is valid. She said the organization wants everyone to take care of themselves mentally and emotionally.

See SHOOTINGS, page 20

Valley Currents

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



EDITORIAL

San Jose City Council was wrong to appoint members

Flawed philosophy: Voting is bad for San Jose, but appointments are good?

When the San Jose City Council appointed two new members last week, it felt like democracy was stabbed in the back for many residents.

The council chamber was the scene of a lengthy and heated debate where the majority of nearly 500 residents expressed their opposition to the selection process to fill two open seats on the 11-member council.

District 10 became vacant after former Councilmember Matt Mahan became mayor and District 8 opened up because Sylvia Arenas was elected county supervisor.

Mahan sided with the majority of residents who pleaded for a special election, arguing that an election is more representative of the people.

Those that argue that appointments are faster and cheaper have lost sight in our long history of democratic values. How can you possibly put a price on democracy, or say it's a slow process?

A compromise would have been to appoint two councilmembers until the results of two elections are finalized. This would allow representation and coordination of budget issues and other funding allocations for Districts 8 and 10.

Appointment process resulted in character assassinations

False attacks on a candidate can wreak the reputations of that person for years, or in some cases, for the rest of a person's life thanks to the internet. For example, a divorce settlement, especially when not all of the facts are known, has nothing to do with a person's political acumen for holding office.

The good thing about the election process is that it gives time for those candidates who were thrown mud at to respond and set the record straight. For

example, one candidate was called a "carpetbagger" by an on-line news outlet, which is negative talk.

Another candidate, a respected community leader in Evergreen Valley, Sukhdev Bainiwal, received some negative character writings which require full disclosure of information, otherwise perceptions, attitudes and beliefs can be improperly built by the public.

On the public record of letters sent to the Mayor and all voting City Council Members (found in the City Council minutes) were these two letters that the public may not have read, which refute the bad things eluded to which could tarnish the reputation of Sukhdev Bainiwal who ran for the District 8 City Council position.

"San Jose Spotlight ...has misrepresented me by saying 'Singh declined to share contact information for his sister in India', in its recent article dated Jan. 20, 2023 ... with heading 'Allegations surface against San Jose council hopefuls.' During the interview I said that I cannot give contact for my sister due to her doctor's instructions that she not be disturbed in anyway due to her on-going mental health. I also told (the reporter) that her illness could be from her major car accident in 1995 or from childhood, which was totally disregarded in the article. I again reiterate that I have never seen any abuse of any sort mentioned in the article while I stayed with Sukhdev Singh Bainiwal and my sister in 1997 and 1998."

Rajinder Singh

This second letter (also a part of the public domain) was written by Sukhdev's son and is very enlightening and helps honestly to resurrect his father's honor.

"I am disappointed in the disregard for mental health and the level of journalism presented by San Jose Spotlight in its recent article...dated January 20, 2023... with the heading 'Allegations surface against San Jose city council hopefuls.' My mom had a difficult childhood

See EDITORIAL, page 6

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Times **Local News**

Candelas

Continued from page 1
and said he is “heartbroken and at a loss for words.”

“I got to know what issues are important to the city and I did my own homework and for the allegations to be raised against me is heart-breaking... I should not be blamed for doing my homework and my due diligence,” he said shakily.

After the vote, Candelas referred to the accusations as “politically charged.”

“It hurts but ultimately, I think my performance and my ability to relay the issues of what matters for District 8, the council saw that,” Candelas said. “We need to get to work. We need to start representing our community.”

The high-stakes meeting came to a halt after officials shuffled into a closed-door meeting to discuss a “litigation risk” with the appointment process—what ended up being the accusations against Candelas. Mayor Matt Mahan interrupted public comment to say concerns were raised with the appointment process. City Attorney Nora Frimann said there was risk of litigation related to the process “in terms of interviews and the process set up by the clerk, and the way it’s supposed to be followed.”

Looking visibly surprised, councilmembers went into an emergency closed session for



Five candidates are interviewed by the City Council publicly to determine who fills the open District 8 seat. *Photo by Jana Kadah*

about an hour. By 8:50 p.m., they emerged from the private meeting and reported that the process can continue, despite concerns.

The District 8 seat became vacant after former Councilmember Sylvia Arenas was elected county supervisor in November.

“Community engagement is going to be a top priority for me,” he said. “I want to make sure the residents of District 8 have direct access to their councilmember.”

He would not say whether he will seek reelection to the seat in 2024, but his application indicates that he plans on running.

When asked Tuesday how he makes tough decisions, he said his moral compass helps guide him and pointed to his faith as a Catholic. He said he was born and raised in District 8.

In his application for the seat, Candelas said that he’s worked on bills to provide funding

for transportation projects and road repairs, as well as legislation to allocate funding for affordable housing. “I intend to bring my experience of bringing many voices to the table and bridging the collaboration gap to ensure cohesion and get things done with accountability and performance standards,” he wrote.

Councilmembers lamented the difficult decision with the other four applicants boasting impressive experience and skills.

Alvarez is an executive analyst in the city’s Office of Economic Development who jumped into the District 8 competition to bring more services to the Evergreen area where he was born and raised. His father was a civil rights leader with United Farm Workers and his mother is a former Evergreen School District trustee.

Andrade previously told San José Spotlight she’s the best pick to replace Arenas because she knows the inner workings of government. She is the Evergreen School District board president and worked as a community relations staffer for Arenas.

As a Sikh community leader and a former San Jose airport commissioner, Bainiwal said he came to the U.S. when he was 11 years old and earned engineering degrees.

Truong is a sergeant in the San Jose Police Department and has won early support from prominent Vietnamese leaders hoping to expand representation on the council. He went to public schools in the district and is raising his two kids there.

Truong, Bainiwal and Andrade faced individual allegations of wage theft, domestic abuse and carpetbagging, respectively.

Editorial

Continued from page 4
where she endured trauma from the attack on the Golden Temple by the Indian army in 1984. My mom and her family were in the temple during the attack and escaped the carnage. In 1992 her mother was tortured by the police in India which was traumatic for her as she heard the news as she was in the USA at that time. She also had a major car accident in 1995. All of these traumatic events have left a severe mental toll on her. During this time some ill-wishing friends misdirected her and took financial advantages as she had eluded to me. The Sukhdev Singh Bainiwal that I know is a kind family man that goes out of his way to help people, which reflects his true character. I currently care for and provide for my mother. I will not make her diagnosis of treatment a matter of public discussion. I also ask that she not be disturbed. I will personally say that I was glad that I was in the custody of my father. My mother has also iterated the same sentiments. My father raising me offered stability that only he could have provided. Mother says it’s good that father took care of the son.”

Himmat Singh Bainiwal

The city should have had a special election rather than a selection.

There were thirteen residents interested in serving on the council from District 8 and 24 residents in District 10. Many are experienced leaders in their communities in public service and business. Then the council selected 11 finalists for both districts, and then selected two from the finalists, resulting in many residents questioning why city lawmakers actions make it seem like they believe voting is bad for San Jose; but appointments are good?

Mayor Liccardo, before leaving office, explained there were monies set aside for the special election separate from the general funds. Yet the available funds were not used with the excuse that voter turnout is low; but most would agree that this is a lame excuse. Certainly low voter turnout does not justify suppressing community voices.

Finally, something to ponder: Was the decision all about politics and power? I’m not sure we will ever know for sure.

William Bellou

Publisher, Times Media, Inc.

Mayor

Continued from page 1
rate while juggling a backlog of 4,000 trash-related complaints.

“Actions must have consequences – it is unacceptable for one person’s negligence to burden the entire community,” Mahan told a crowd of more than 2,000 gathered at the San Jose Center for the Performing Arts.

In addition to filling those vacancies, Mahan plans to improve the city’s 311 app – which allows residents to report blight and dump sites – to ensure they receive a photo of the cleaned-up area once it’s done. He also invited residents to scan a code on their phones to volunteer for a series of trash pickup days – starting with District 7 this weekend.

As San José Spotlight reported, the city app is riddled with problems including slow response times, language and disability inaccessibility and technological problems that make it glitchy and slow.

Mahan also created a new “neighborhood outreach” team in his office to aid beautification efforts and wants to expand programs that pay homeless people to pick up trash.

Public safety: Hiring more officers

When it comes to public safety, the new mayor



wants to double the city’s commitment of hiring 15 officers a year for the next five years to 30 officers per year. He plans to allocate city funding for recruitment efforts and to ensure cadets are paid – allowing young people with financial difficulties to work in law enforcement.

Mahan also wants to reinstate the bonus given to officers for recruiting new hires and increase outreach to minority communities to hire more officers of color.

A report by the city auditor found that San Jose is failing to meet police response time goals. For

priority two level calls, which are property or personal damage when the suspect has already fled, officers took an average of 23.9 minutes to arrive on scene – the goal is to be under 11 minutes.

To reduce delays and boost officer morale, Mahan promised to invest in better reporting tools, digitize cumbersome forms and find ways to speed up in-takes at the county jail.

Mahan also lamented that San Jose officers find themselves arresting the same people again and again. One individual, he said, was put in handcuffs 27 times in two years. Mahan wants to end this cycle with early intervention programs.

“I’m committed to working with our county leaders to ensure that when an officer takes someone to jail or Valley Medical Center, they are not simply returned to the street a day or two later when their situation demands further intervention,” he said.

Councilmember Bien Doan, a political ally of the mayor, said he wholeheartedly supports his plans – especially the emphasis on public safety.

“The basics of security, cleanliness, and taking care of our unhoused residents create more businesses, bring in more jobs, so people can survive around here,” Doan said. “When you solve the basics, everything else will fall in place.”

See MAYOR, page 20

SANTA CLARA COUNTY IS IN A SEVERE DROUGHT.



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Times Feature



Saket (2nd from left) and his brother buy books from a local school supplies store before visiting schools for donations.

Pathak

Continued from page 1

"I realized that I had the golden opportunity to make my previous book donation efforts at a much larger scale," explained Saket. "I wanted to focus on bringing simple children's books found in the USA over to India."

Saket believed the book donation would be helpful to the children in understanding the different literature styles not often found there. To facilitate his goal, Saket Pathak created a website which spread the word about his new organization, Learning Quest.

Saket received the support from school libraries, public libraries, and individual donors. In total, his organization collected more than 3,000 books ready to be shipped to India. In addition, he collected another 1,500 books for kids in the USA, which were donated to the Children's Book Project last September.

When Saket reached Pune, India in July of 2022, he got in touch with two organizations: Vowels of the People Association (VOPA) and Seva Sahayog. Saket also purchased another 1,500 books and learning supplies through his organization's collected funds.

With the help of VOPA, Saket was able to visit three different underprivileged schools, providing them with 3,800 books and learning supplies for students of all ages. Seva Sahayog helped Saket pack the remaining 800 books in small learning kits that were then sent to other schools. In total, Saket was able to successfully donate over 6,000 books and learning supplies to more than 1,000 children in India.

GoFundMe project

Saket recently launched a GoFundMe project where he's seeking funds for the expansion of his school supply donations.

"I now hope to improve the quality of education in places such as Somali, where only 37% of people can read English," Saket said. "I hope that this initiative can exceed my last goal and create additional donated funding."

Regarding future plans, Saket says "It would be wonderful to attract world-wide volunteers for Learning Quest, which can



Spelling bee hosted in Evergreen at Fowler Creek Park in October 2017 raised awareness of accessible education in parts of India.

help our mission of expanding our non-profit organization's efforts to different countries around the world."

Visit Learning Quest at: <https://learningquest.spathak.com/index.html>

Visit the Learning Quest GoFundMe at: <https://www.gofundme.com/f/accessible-learning-for-every-child>



Saket and his younger brother in 2017 visiting a small school in Pune, India.

Eliminating the gender gap in STEM fields

By William Bellou
Publisher

Aarna's News is making waves in the podcast world with its mission to eliminate the gender gap in STEM fields.

Founded by San Jose resident Aarna Sahu, the channel has been operating for the past three years and has quickly gained a following among listeners worldwide.

Sahu started the podcast as a hobby during her sixth-grade summer, but it quickly grew into a passion project that has since had a significant impact. Her goal is to provide young girls with role models in male-dominated industries by interviewing successful women from a range of backgrounds, including YouTubers, VPs of Engineering, and Executive Directors.

Succeeding in STEM with knowledge and resources

According to The Harvard Gazette, a lack of role models and persistent gender stereotypes are some of the external factors contributing to the gender gap in STEM. Sahu saw an opportunity to address this issue and provide girls with the knowledge and resources they need to succeed in these fields.

Her efforts have not gone unnoticed, as Aarna's News was named one of the 60 best Women in STEM podcasts to follow in 2022 by FeedSpot and ranked on the Russian Federation of Investing. With over 700 downloads



Aarna Sahu's channel Aarna's News has been operating for the past three years and has quickly gained a following among listeners worldwide on streaming platforms such as Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, and Anchor.

and listeners from 45+ countries, the podcast is well-renowned for its informative and inspiring content. You can listen to Aarna's News on any major streaming platform such as Spotify, Apple Podcasts, Google Podcasts, and Anchor.

Sahu's passion for encouraging girls in STEM has not waned, and she continues to produce new episodes that promote diversity and inclusivity in these industries. With her podcast, Aarna is making a difference in the lives of countless young girls and inspiring them to pursue their dreams in STEM.

Editor's note: For those of you who have not yet had the pleasure of following Aarna's News on Instagram, you can access her handle @aarnas_news and follow her podcast channel. Sahu states, "This way you can check out our recent offerings and never miss a single episode also, I would be delighted if you could take a few moments to share your thoughts by leaving a rating and review---your feedback is invaluable to us. We can't wait to hear from you!"

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O P E D



The day democracy died in San Jose

The farce of the City Council selecting new District 8 and 10 councilpersons for 2-year positions

I witnessed a profound failure of government occurring on Tuesday, January 24.

What happened was unprecedented in San Jose history.

Instead of allowing the voters to elect two city council members, the San Jose City Council decided to save millions by selecting two city council seats. This was a first!

The process was made up as the meeting went along. It was flawed. I spoke and was appalled at, in my opinion, the possible collusion of votes for certain candidates by San Jose City Council members which could be political in nature.

I think, and this is my opinion as a resident of District 8, that there could have been private conversations by the San Jose City Council members on who to vote for. If this is true, this could be a violation of the Brown Act; and I'm too tired to help prop up this law.

Our city officials let us all down as residents in my view. I believe the new mayor did not take enough precautions in announcing that there are no private discussions or phone calls for City Council members to collaborate and or collude as to who to pick.

In my opinion, selecting candidates instead of an election resulted in the best candidates not considered as finalists, including former councilmember Rose Herrera. This is why we have long established voting practices instead of an elite selection process by our City Council. Our law makers have broken our moral code in not honoring Democracy. Laws need to be enacted in the San Jose charter so this never occurs again.

Like many of District 8 residents, I wait-

ed five hours to speak less than a minute in favor of a candidate and I was cut off in my speaking unable to finish my final sentence with the rude yelling out of a city employee saying "TIME." That candidate I was trying to promote was a great candidate, but received very few votes from City Council.

This selection process is un-American, flawed and in my opinion, possibly corrupt. During the nine hours of the City Council meeting that day, a one-hour break was done for the City Council members to review if there were possible violations of law during the interview process (something about the possibility of one or more of the candidates use of phones and laptops during the wait period to be interviewed and other concerning allegations.) Oh brother! Why didn't our new mayor stop the proceedings?

As far as I am concerned, San Jose Democracy is dying, or dead.

When people feel like I feel, they're just not going to reach out to volunteer or help the city in any way in my opinion. What say you?

By the way, after the fiasco of interview procedures for District 8 (Evergreen and surrounding area), the City Council revamped the entire interview process and did things differently for the District 10 (Almaden) candidate process. Why is it that the East Side of San Jose is treated differently by the San Jose leaders?

As a parent and resident of District 8, I'm reluctant to help volunteer or help the City of San Jose anymore.

Kevin Larsen
Evergreen Valley

Times Local News

Significant enrollment growth seen at Evergreen College

Evergreen College and San Jose City College has 15.1% increase in enrollment

After two years of pandemic-driven enrollment declines, San José – Evergreen Community College District (SJECCD) and its colleges show significant enrollment growth compared to last year, based on early 2023 spring term enrollment data.

As of the first day of spring semester classes, both Evergreen Valley College (EVC) and San José City College (SJCC) reflected year-over-year increases of 15.1 percent in unduplicated student headcount.

"These are preliminary numbers that don't reflect late-start classes or the adds and drops that typically take place at the beginning of each academic term," according to Dr. Raul Rodriguez, SJECCD's interim chancellor. "This clearly shows that not only have we stemmed the tide in terms of the enrollment declines that impacted nearly every higher education institution during the COVID-19 pandemic, we have reversed that trend and are regaining much of that lost enrollment quickly."

Regaining enrollment lost during the pandemic has been a point of emphasis for both EVC and SJCC, where faculty and classified staff have been focused on the effort. "We have invested a lot of time and energy into innovative recruitment and retention strategies to ensure that not only are we bringing large numbers of new students onto campus, but we are also retaining and graduating the students that were already here," said Dr. Tammeil Gilkerson, EVC president.

Free tuition program and supplemental monies for textbooks

Among the successful strategies has been a free tuition program, which has provided free tuition and zero fees to any students enrolled in at least six units at either EVC or SJCC. At EVC, students taking 15 or more units can also receive up to \$1,500 for textbooks and course materials. This program is still available and enrollment remains open for spring semester late-start classes.

The enrollment increase is apparent in both transfer and career education programs, which is a positive sign for SJCC, according to Dr. Rowena Tomaneng, the college's president. "In addition to our general education and transfer offerings, we have built robust career education programs at SJCC. Due to the hands-on nature of the learning in these programs, some were particularly hard-hit by the pandemic. We're pleased to see strong enrollment growth in these areas," she said.

Last fall, SJCC broke ground on a new Career Education Complex, an approximately 85,000-square-foot facility that will house classrooms, computer labs, offices, student

"The enrollment numbers reflect a lot of hard work by a lot of people," Chancellor Rodriguez said. "They also indicate that our community continues to see the value of its local colleges. Students want to learn from the best faculty and leave with a degree that is valued by employers. They know they will have both at EVC and SJCC."

support spaces, and program-specific labs for training skilled workers in fields including health care, software and web development, computer information systems, construction, and more. The Career Education Complex is scheduled for completion in 2024.

While in-person classes and student support services returned to both EVC and SJCC in 2021, about one-third of classes remain online. "We know from surveys that what our students want and need are options," Chancellor Rodriguez said. "We have built our schedule with intention in order to make sure we are meeting the needs of our entire community."

Not only is overall enrollment up across SJECCD, but enrollment has increased among every racial and ethnic group compared to last spring as well, including American Indian students (119 percent), Asian American/Pacific Islander students (5.5 percent), Black/African American students (33.8 percent), Latinx students (16.8 percent), white students (30.6 percent), and multi-racial students (17 percent).

"These enrollment numbers reflect a lot of hard work by a lot of people," Chancellor Rodriguez said. "They also indicate that our community continues to see the value of its local colleges. Students want to learn from the best faculty and leave with a degree that is valued by employers. They know they will have both at EVC and SJCC."

While the semester officially began on January 30, both EVC and SJCC offer late start classes and free tuition this spring. Applications are still being accepted and it is not too late to enroll. Both colleges have also increased dual credit offerings in partnership with local high schools, which allow students to earn both high school and college credit simultaneously and at no cost.



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San Jose Legends: Frank Fiscalini's 100-year ride

*Former councilmember and
East Side Union High School
District superintendent*

By Joseph Geha
San José Spotlight

In a brief entry on the Santa Clara University athletics site, baseball player Frank Fiscalini was said to have played the game with “the mind of a veteran, while keeping the heart of a rookie.”

Nearly 80 years later, it seems not much has changed.

Fiscalini, who turned 100 in the fall, still shines with the vigor of youth when recalling the fond memories he's made while wearing the hats of a baseball player, World War II veteran, San Jose vice mayor, superintendent, CEO and great grandfather, among the many others in a life and career that has touched thousands.

Fiscalini has experienced enough joy, pain, success, failure and love for three lifetimes and inspired those around him every step of the way with his genuine and dedicated demeanor, according to his family, friends and former colleagues.

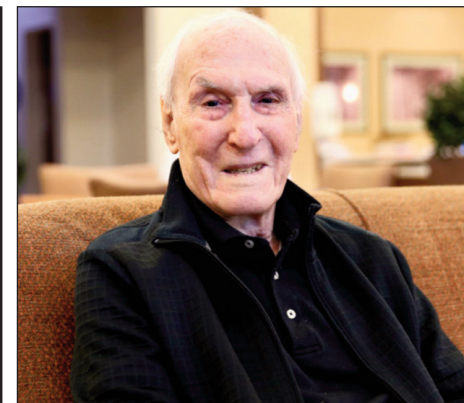
“I don't want to sound crazy, but I felt he was one of the greatest men I ever met,” Guy Klitgaard told San José Spotlight.

Klitgaard was hired in 1959 by Fiscalini, then East Side Union High School District superintendent, to teach at Andrew Hill High School. He was later promoted to help Fiscalini open up several schools in the district, and to serve as principal at Silver Creek and Independence high schools. He worked under Fiscalini for more than 20 years.

“He was a great guy to work for, he never looked over your shoulder,” Klitgaard said. When challenging moments arose, Klitgaard said Fiscalini told him, “‘You do what you think is right and I'll back you.’ How's that for a boss?”

Early in his career, Fiscalini taught in the East Side Union High School District—which only had three schools when he was appointed superintendent in 1956. He stayed with the district through 1982, spearheading the founding of 10 new schools.

“Among the many remarkable aspects of Frank's life are the vast diversity of ways that his leadership has impacted our community — invariably for the better — in our schools, the



Frank Fiscalini has been an educator, San Jose councilmember, vice mayor and so much more. Among all his accomplishments, he is most proud of his family. Photo by Joseph Geha.

arts, health care system, government, neighborhoods, and so many others,” said former San Jose Mayor Sam Liccardo. “I have yet to find anyone who has crossed paths with the man who doesn't offer some praise for him and his work.”

Family brings strength

Born and raised as one of seven children in San Bernardino to immigrant parents from Northern Italy, Fiscalini said he learned Spanish “in the street” as a child, trading language skills when playing with his Latino neighbors.

The language skills would come in handy as he opened some of the first integrated, large high schools in the South Bay as East San Jose's Latino population grew rapidly during his tenure.

“It opened doors for you I think that maybe wouldn't have been easily opened otherwise. People knew I cared,” Fiscalini told San José Spotlight. “I spent a lot of time in the community and I think it's necessary. People need to know their superintendent.”

Fiscalini moved to Northern California to attend Santa Clara University in 1942, but soon after enlisted in the Army and was sent to Texas for medic training and on to France in the battle against Nazis.

His years in the military interrupted his college education and pursuit of baseball, but he never looked at it as a burden, he said. “Nobody likes to leave home, but I think our generation had a great spirit of service and it was more in that context. ‘Dammit, I'm gonna serve my country.’ And you were willing to do whatever you needed to do,” Fiscalini said. “They could have put me any place.”

He returned home for a visit after the war, and was excited to hop into his 1929 Ford Model A, which he had purchased for \$100 from an employee at his brother's gas station in San Bernardino before the war. But it was gone. His dad said Fiscalini's brother Jim had sold it while he was away.

Laughing while recalling the memory of what his dad told him, Fiscalini said, “He didn't think you were going to come home.”

His family recently helped organize a Model A parade for his 100th birthday, and Fiscalini was able to ride in a 1931 model, similar to the one he had in his youth, he said.

Following the war, Fiscalini quickly married Joan, whom he met in junior college in Southern California, and returned to Santa Clara University to earn his degree. The two moved to San Jose, had four kids together and remained married for 64 years until Joan's death in 2010. Fiscalini said she was an easygoing person, who was “totally committed” to family.

“She took good care of me. There is a lot going on in one's life when you're building a career and building a family simultaneously,” Fiscalini said. “I don't want to say she was perfect because I don't believe any of us are, but if

See FISCALINI, next page



A photo of Frank Fiscalini during his days in the Army in the 1940s. Photo by Joseph Geha.

Times **Community****Fiscalini, continued**

anyone approached it, she surely did."

The family has since grown, and Fiscalini can count 13 grandkids to his name, and 10 great grandkids, as old as 16 and as young as one. Without hesitation, he said his family is what he is most proud of during his century of life.

"I wouldn't be where I am today without them," he said.

Lisa Hausle, Fiscalini's daughter, said their growing family has remained tight-knit for decades because of the love and support of her parents.

"You have your ups and downs as a family, but we always come back together and always support each other through good times and bad times, because that's what we were shown," Hausle told San José Spotlight. "They were both great examples of human beings and of parents."

Hitting his stride

After fighting a war, graduating from Santa Clara University, earning his master's degree in education from Stanford University, a doctorate of education development and management from University of Northern Colorado, and leading a more than 30-year career in education, some might slow down, but Fiscalini was only hitting his stride.

After retiring from the East Side Union High School district, he was hired as CEO of Alexian Brothers hospital system, where he worked for five years. He then took the helm of a massive restoration project of the Cathedral Basilica of St. Joseph, a Roman Catholic church in downtown San Jose.

Within a three-year span, he oversaw the structural work and decorative refurbishing of the church's dome, paintings and murals, organ and much more.

Coming off of the success of the restoration, Fiscalini ran for mayor of San Jose in 1990 against Susan Hammer, a city councilmember at the time. The race was one of the closest in city history, with Hammer beating out Fiscalini by less than 1% of the vote, he said.

Fiscalini's team urged him to fight the results, or push for a recount, but he declined, preferring to graciously accept defeat.

"One thing that sports teaches you is that you're going to win sometimes and you're going to lose sometimes. And when you lose, you can't bury your head in the sand. You get up to play another day," he said.

Two years later, Fiscalini ran for and was elected to the San Jose City Council, serving two terms and working well with his former rival Hammer for several years.

He said it was important to always maintain self-respect when running for and holding political office.

"When you're in the political realm, you represent the people that elect you, not yourself, and there is a big difference," Fiscalini said. "I think today, we are seeing more representatives of self than we probably are of the electorate, and that doesn't bode well for decision making."

The ultimate statesman

His leadership style did not go unnoticed by the community and his colleagues. He was later appointed vice mayor by former Mayor Ron Gonzales.

Edith Ramirez, an assistant city manager in Morgan Hill, started her nearly 30-year public service career as a staffer for Fiscalini during his second council term. She said he is known by many of those who worked with him as the "ultimate statesman" because of the way he carried himself. He was a foundational influence in her decision to continue in public service, she said.

"I'm getting teary-eyed just thinking about it. Watching him on the council, the way he interacted with his colleagues and with staff and the

community really placed this work as something very special, something honorable," she told San José Spotlight. "He was always humble, he was always respectful."

Ramirez said Fiscalini encouraged his staff to look beyond their own responsibilities and to do good wherever they could. The professionalism, grace and compassion he brought to the office had a cascading effect, she said.

"It really allows us as an entire community to elevate, to be more thoughtful, to be more caring and to be more intentional," Ramirez said.

Reflecting on his time in office, Fiscalini said he is proud of the city's work to establish lifelong learning institutions like the Tech Museum and the Children's Discovery Museum. A founding board member of Opera San Jose, he said he



Edith Ramirez and Frank Fiscalini in 2019.
Photo courtesy of Edith Ramirez.

hopes the city's current leaders will do more to prioritize funding for arts of all kinds.

"We'll be a lot happier and a lot more fruitful if we can have a strong arts program," he said.

At the century mark, having been in San Jose and the South Bay for 80 years, Fiscalini said he's witnessed the Valley of Heart's Delight transition from an agricultural society to Silicon Valley, and he doesn't lament the changes.

With so many institutions of higher learning in the region attracting talent from all over the world, he thinks Silicon Valley is well positioned for whatever the next big venture is.

"I'm confident that whatever the next stage is, we will likely be very successful. It very easily could come in space," Fiscalini said, with a nod to the future. "I hope I'm around to see it."

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Times **Community News**

Evergreen resident Ruth Pal-Freeman to be honored with Boy Scouts of America Silver Beaver Award

By William Bellou
Publisher

Evergreen Valley resident Ruth Pal-Freeman will be honored with the Boy Scouts of America Silver Beaver Award at a recognition dinner to be held at the Monterey Hyatt Regency Hotel on February 25.

The recognition dinner will be hosted by the Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council, Boy Scouts of America serving Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito Counties.

Of the 4,000 adults who volunteer for Scouting in our local area each year, only seven are selected by a peer panel for the "Silver Beaver Award." The Silver Beaver is the highest and most prestigious honor awarded to a volunteer by a local council.

The keynote address this year will be presented by Journalist, Author, TV Producer and Host, Mike Malone.

Ruth's story

Ruth's parents set the example of service for her as a child growing up in Santa Clara County, and she has followed in their footsteps by giving back to the community.

Her first involvement was with the PTA, and from that, she became involved in East Hills Little League and BSA. She worked for many years with Little League, even volunteering as a coach one year. But Ruth says her heart and soul were, and always will be, with Scouts!

She started with Pack 268 as a Tiger Cub parent and held almost every position in that Pack at some point. She was approached to bring Cub Day Camp to Lake Cunningham, and she became Program Director. She helped with Day Camp for the next decade, always available to help where there was a need.

Once her boys were in Troop 13, she became a merit badge counsellor and committee member until both sons earned their Eagle Rank. At that point, Ruth wanted to do more, and she became a Unit Commissioner. She has held that position for over a decade.

Scouting colleague and friend David Lo, says this about Ruth's service as Unit Commissioner:

"Ruth has served our community with positivity, dedication, and commitment. She has gone above and beyond in her roles. She is the definition of an unsung hero. Her efforts have benefitted thousands of youths in San Jose."

Ruth has been awarded the Distinguished Commissioner Recognition for her exemplary service as a Commissioner. She also has served as Roundtable Commissioner and has attending training at the Philmont Training Center in New Mexico. She currently serves as District Commissioner for Coyote Creek.

"Scouting is so fulfilling and has so much to offer, said Ruth. "It truly has become an extension of my family, which is fitting because the love of my family is what started me on this journey in the first place."



Evergreen resident David Lo to be honored with the Boy Scouts of America Silver Beaver Award

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David's story

In 2015, David wanted to enroll his then foster son, Jason, into the Cub Scouts.

The family joined Pack 163 after meeting them at the Milpitas International BBQ Festival. Within a few weeks, he jumped in as Tiger Den Leader without any knowledge of Scouting. After a fun-filled year, David was asked to take over as Cubmaster, where he enjoyed serving for three years.

At one point, the pack grew from 10 to 63 Scouts. During that same period, David helped the Coyote Creek District as Fall Recruitment Chair and then District Membership Chair. He was very proud of the district when it ranked #4 in the nation in the number of female Scouts and female Scouting units.

When Jason became an Arrow of Light Scout, David began his leadership transition by becoming the Pack Committee Chair and later a Committee Member, which he still is today. He has also taught technology breakout sessions, served as an Assistant District Commissioner, and currently serves on the Silicon Valley Monterey Bay Council's Executive Board. He is Vice President, Membership/Relationships, and is working to offer the Scouting program to more youth across the council.

He has received numerous awards in Scouting and has shared his knowledge and love of the Scouting program with others by teaching in the University of Scouting and other venues.

David is a past president of the San Jose Junior Chamber of Commerce (Jaycees), a former trustee, and a former district governor of the Junior Chamber International (JCI) California. He was also elected as a national officer and certified as an international trainer.

As a proud graduate of San Jose State University, David continues to give back by mentoring college students. He does this mentoring through AIESEC San Jose, an international student exchange organization, where he has served as their Chairman of the Board for the last decade.

He and his wife, Renee, spent a few years as a resource family for Santa Clara County's Social Services Agency, where they fostered and provided respite care for foster youths.

David is the founder of David Lo Consulting LLC, working mainly with semiconductor, architecture, engineering and construction (AEC), and non-profit organizations as an information technology consultant.

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SBA Tops \$10M in disaster assistance loans for severe winter storms, flooding, landslides, and mudslides

The U.S. Small Business Administration's Disaster Field Operations Center-West has approved more than \$10 million in federal disaster loans for California businesses and residents impacted by severe winter storms, flooding, landslides and mudslides that began late last December.

Businesses of all sizes and private nonprofit organizations may borrow up to \$2 million to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery and equipment, inventory and other business assets. The SBA can also lend additional funds to help business and residents with the cost of making improvements that protect, prevent or minimize the same type of disaster damage from occurring in the future.

For small businesses and most private nonprofit organizations of all sizes, SBA offers Economic Injury Disaster Loans to help meet working capital needs caused by the disaster. Economic injury assistance is available regardless of whether the business suffered any property damage. The deadline to apply for economic injury is Oct. 16, 2023.

Disaster loans up to \$200,000 are available to homeowners to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate. Homeowners and renters are eligible for up to \$40,000 to repair or replace damaged or destroyed personal property.

Applicants may apply online, receive additional disaster assistance information and download applications at <https://disasterloanassistance.sba.gov/>. Applicants may also call SBA's

Customer Service Center at (800) 659-2955 or email disastercustomerservice@sba.gov for more information on SBA disaster assistance.

Scammers targeting Social Security cost of living increase

Each year, the Social Security Administration (SSA) approves a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) for recipients of Social Security benefits and Supplementary Security Income (SSI).

Due to inflation, payments will increase by 8.7% this year. It's a significant increase – the highest COLA approved in more than 40 years – and scammers are taking advantage. If you or a loved one receive Social Security benefits, stay alert to the signs of a scam.

How this scam works

Scammers contact you by phone, text, or email. This "Social Security Administration representative" claims you must apply for your cost-of-living increase. They might ask you to visit a website, send information via text or email, or speak with them on the phone to get the benefit. The scammer will ask you to verify your identity by sharing personal details, such as your full name, address, or Social Security number. They may even ask for your bank account information, claiming that the representative will deposit the extra money directly into your account.

In any case, if you give your information to the person in question, they will have gained access to your most sensitive personal information, making you susceptible to identity theft. If you give up your banking information, they may even be able to gain access to your money.

How to avoid similar scams:

- Remember, the SSA's COLA is automatic.

You don't need to do anything to receive the increase in benefits. If someone tells you otherwise, you're likely dealing with a scammer.

- Know how the SSA communicates. According to SSA, "If there is a problem with your Social Security number, we will mail you a letter. Generally, we will only contact you if you have requested a call or have ongoing business with us." A call, text, or email from an SSA agent out of the blue is a red flag.

- Don't give in to threats. SSA will never threaten you with arrest or legal action. They will never suspend your Social Security number or demand payment from you. They will never ask for personal information or banking details to give you an increase in benefits. If someone demands these things or threatens you over the phone, they are not with SSA.

Valley Water now accepting applications for its \$1.4M 2023 Grant Program for water conservation projects

Valley Water is now accepting applications for its 2023 Safe, Clean Water Grants Program.

Each year, Valley Water provides funding for projects that support the mission of providing safe, clean water for a healthy life, environment and economy.

"We're dedicated to supporting projects that make a difference in our communities," said John L. Varela, Chair of Valley Water's Board of Directors. "Through our Safe, Clean Water Grants Program, we are able to work with Santa Clara County residents toward the common goal of protecting and enhancing our water resources."

The Grants & Partnerships Program is part

of the Safe, Clean Water and Natural Flood Protection Program, a parcel tax Santa Clara County voters overwhelmingly renewed in November 2020. For 2023, Valley Water has a total of \$1.4 million with no minimum or maximum amount per project that fits into the following categories:

- Water Conservation: Projects that research and identify devices, programs, and strategies that can help save water and promote conservation efforts.

- Pollution Prevention: Technical assistance, public education, or other means to reduce contaminants in water.

- Volunteer Cleanup Efforts and Education: Projects that assist with cleanup and watershed stewardship activities, as well as education and outreach about our watersheds.

- Wildlife Habitat Restoration: Projects that support or restore native plants and animals. Examples include creating or enhancing wetlands to remove non-native, invasive plants to protect threatened or endangered species.

- Access to Trails and Open Space Grants: Projects that provide and increase access to open space and creekside trails. Valley Water highly encourages applications from those working on projects that promote equity and allow resources to reach historically underserved areas. First-time applicants and applicants that demonstrate financial stability are encouraged to apply. Applications are due by March 10, 2023.

Valley Water will host one more of three virtual informational workshops, where applicants can learn more about the available grants and their requirements: March 1, 2023, from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m.

To learn more about the program and the available grant funding for 2023, visit valleywater.org/grants.

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Times Feature

TECH JARGON OF THE WEEK

Data Visualization

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:

Data Visualization

You may have noticed that the tech world today is revolving around data. With data, there is poten-



tial for great opportunities. However, many corporations are challenged to find value in the data that they have collected or invested in. For example, how can they use data to improve customer relationships? How – and to what extent – should they invest in this data?

These questions can be answered using data visualization.

Because of the way the human brain processes information, using charts or graphs to visualize large amounts of complex data is easier than poring over spreadsheets or reports. Data visualization is a quick, easy way to convey concepts in a universal manner – and you can experiment with different scenarios by making slight adjustments.

Data visualization can also:

- Identify areas that need attention or improve-

ment.

- Clarify which factors influence customer behavior.
- Help you understand where to place which products.
- Predict sales volumes.

Data visualization tools can be used in a variety of ways. The most common use today is as a BI reporting tool. Users can set up visualization tools to generate automatic dashboards that track company performance across key performance indicators and visually interpret the results.

Many business departments implement data visualization software to track their own initiatives. For example, a marketing team might implement the software to monitor the performance of an email campaign, tracking metrics like open

rate, click-through rate, and conversion rate.

Data visualization software allows the user to select the best way of presenting the data, but, increasingly, software automates this step. Some tools automatically interpret the shape of the data and detect correlations between certain variables and then place these discoveries into the chart type that the software determines is optimal.

Typically, data visualization software has a dashboard component that allows users to pull multiple visualizations of analyses into a single interface, generally a web portal.

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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Supervisor Simitian recognizes *Silicon Valley Reads* for 20 years of service

Santa Clara County Supervisor Joe Simitian recently recognized *Silicon Valley Reads* for 20 years of building community through the shared experience of reading.

Silicon Valley Reads is a community engagement program that annually features books tied to a theme and brings people together by providing more than 150 free, public events each year in February and March.

“For 20 years now, *Silicon Valley Reads* has been bringing the entire County together to take part in the shared experience of reading,” said Simitian, who serves on the County Library Board and is an ardent supporter of the *Silicon Valley Reads* and *Celebrity Storytime* programs. “*Silicon Valley Reads* has built a reputation for excellence by bringing the community together to have interesting and thought-provoking conversations and first-hand experiences tied into the themes of the selected books.”

Over the past 20 years, *Silicon Valley Reads* has partnered with 37 libraries, 31 school districts, countless community organizations, and donors to bring together more than 10,000 annual participants (with 30% new participants each year) and put on more than 100 free events annually. The program was awarded a 2022 Golden Bell Award from the California School Boards Association.

“The long-term success of *Silicon Valley Reads* is the result of schools, libraries, community partners, and so many more

coming together to engage every resident,” said Reid Myers, *Silicon Valley Reads* Director. “Through engagement comes awareness, and through awareness comes stronger communities.”

Silicon Valley Reads launched in 2003 under the guidance of Colleen Wilcox, then-Superintendent of the Santa Clara County Office of Education, as an American Leadership Forum project that was inspired by a city-wide reading program Wilcox sought to scale-up to include the entire County. The program provided an opportunity to collaborate with superintendents, librarians, bookstores, and community members throughout the County.

“What started as a one-book, one-community program in 2003, has grown over the past two decades to a program that brings every community together throughout the Silicon Valley around a single theme,” said Jennifer Weeks, County Librarian for the Santa Clara County Library District. “We are very proud to be a part of this important reading engagement program.”

Comprised of both organizations and individuals, *Silicon Valley Reads* strives to promote open dialogue about ideas and interests that are relevant to Silicon Valley residents; to promote reading and literacy among all members of the community; and to support education and lifelong learning, critical for Silicon Valley to maintain its leadership in creativity and innovation.



Mayor Mahan's team visited the emergency evacuation center at the Seven Trees Community Center.

San Jose weathered recent storms as well as possible

By Mayor Matt Mahan

I'm sure we're all grateful to be on the other side of the recent atmospheric rivers that hit our state.

Thankfully, San José weathered these storms as well as we could hope, experiencing only limited flooding and damage.

Thank you to our Emergency Operations Center, SJ Police, SJ Fire, our various city departments, especially Housing and Parks & Rec, and our partners, including the American Red Cross and Destination:Home.

Together, we informed and empowered residents in areas with a high flood risk and successfully managed an evacuation order along our waterways that applied to hundreds of our homeless neighbors, many of whom found safe and supportive shelter at one of our evacuation centers.

In the spirit of making the most of an unexpected emergency, our team at the City pivoted quickly to establish additional shelter capacity at a few of our existing interim housing sites.

The last thing we wanted to do was simply send evacuated individuals right back

into our creeks and streets. Instead, we're helping them transition from our temporary emergency evacuation centers to Evacuee

Transition Facilities (ETFs) at San José's existing quick-build housing communities, including Rue Ferrari, Monterey/Bernal, and Mabury. Combined, the ETFs will accommodate up to 132 tents on pallets, with bathroom facilities and handwashing stations onsite. That means over 100 individuals who were recently living along a creek will now live in a managed environment with on-site staffing and basic services.

City staff and our partners will be working hard to create an individualized plan for each person and help them identify stable housing, job training, and other services as quickly as possible. This is a small, but meaningful progress toward my goal of ending street homelessness in San Jose (which currently stands at over 5,000 individuals city-wide).

We need to continue to lower the barrier to getting people off the streets and into safe and stable environments if we are going to end homelessness in our community.



From the Mayor
Matt Mahan
Mayor, San Jose

Ask the DMV

New Year, New ID!

Start your New Year off the right way by adding obtaining your REAL ID to your resolutions list!

Q1: When is the new REAL ID enforcement date?

A1: The REAL ID enforcement date has been extended until May 7, 2025. However, there is no reason to delay getting your REAL ID. Why wait when you can check it off your to-do list for this year?

Q2: What type of documents are required to apply for my REAL ID?

A2: 1 original or certified proof of identity, and 2 different printed proofs of California residency are required.

One original or certified document*

• Examples: valid passport, birth certificate

*Legal name change document(s) is/are required if the name on the proof of identity is different from the name on the other documents (marriage certificate, adoption papers, etc.)

Two different printed proofs of California



nia residency

• Examples: utility bill, bank statement, insurance documents (vehicle, health, homeowner's, etc.), tax return, rental or lease agreement, school documents

Social Security number (exceptions may apply)

Start your online application today and get REAL ID ready in three simple steps:

1. Gather your identification documents
2. Complete your online application and upload your documents

3. Visit the DMV office to complete your REAL ID application

Visit dmv.ca.gov/realid for a complete list of acceptable documents and to begin your online application.

For more information or answers to questions not listed here, please visit www.dmv.ca.gov.

Note: DMV offices are closed on weekends.



The African American Community Service Agency (AACSA) hosted its 43rd annual Martin Luther King Jr. Luncheon to celebrate Dr. King's life and legacy, including the work we're doing here in San Jose to ensure every member of our community has opportunities to thrive. "I'm committed to joining great organizations like AACSA to make positive change in our community," said Mayor Matt Mahan.



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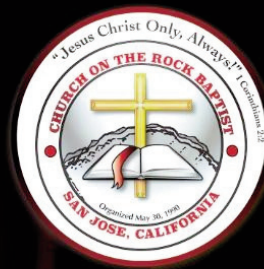
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Times Feature

Shootings

Continued from page 4

“Self-care and being with community is really what’s most important as we move forward day by day,” she told San José Spotlight. “If the number of shootings we’ve had in the past month alone is any indication, this is a problem that is not likely to go away, so it’s more important than ever that we all work communally and stick together to move forward.”



About 40 people gathered for a candlelight vigil at San Jose City Hall on Jan. 29, 2023 to honor the victims of recent mass shootings across the state. Photo courtesy of Santa Clara County Supervisor Cindy Chavez.

Mayor

Continued from page 6

Despite being on opposite sides of the political aisle, Councilmember Sergio Jimenez said Mahan was effective in highlighting his key goals.

“I look forward to evaluating the details of how he intends to meet those commitments while doing all the other important work of the city,” Jimenez told San José Spotlight.

Homelessness: An emergency crisis

Homelessness is a “humanitarian crisis,” Mahan said during his inaugural speech, and it’s time the city treated it that way.

If an earthquake displaced 4,975 residents – the number of people sleeping on San Jose streets – FEMA would have shelters lined up on public lands, Mahan said. The city must handle homelessness the same way.

Mahan spent the past year on the campaign trail advocating for putting pre-built homes for homeless residents on public land – costing far less than building homeless housing elsewhere from the ground up.

“We know that by using basic, pre-built modular units placed on government owned land, we can create safe homes for a fraction of the current cost,” he said.

He plans to double down on former Mayor Sam Liccardo’s plan to build 1,000 new tiny homes. San Jose nearly reached that goal, with roughly 1,000 in the pipeline. Mahan hopes to see them built by 2024. He also wants to find sites for another 1,000 units after that.

Mahan drew the loudest applause from the crowd when he would end “San Jose’s era of

unmanaged encampments.”

South San Jose residents Chris and Jessica Turk, who attended the event Wednesday, said they avoid taking their preschool daughters on walks because of the rampant homelessness.

Jessica said she hopes Mahan will create homeless housing that caters to people with mental health issues, drug addiction and economic troubles.

“I like that he was talking about mental health, and trying to rehabilitate people instead of just putting them in houses,” Turk told San José Spotlight.

After watching Mahan’s speech, South Bay digital political marketing consultant

Christopher Higgenbotham said it remains to be seen how much progress the new mayor might make.

“I think if you’re going to bring the whole common sense idea and say that you are going to be unique and innovative, and run this city as a business, you’ve got to show us what it is,” he said. “Any public business opens up their books and shows what’s going on and we get to judge if they’re doing good or bad.”

Drawing on his background as a businessman and tech entrepreneur, Mahan wants to use data to track the city’s progress toward these goals.

He announced he’ll soon unveil a public “Dashboard of Results” showing how the city is tackling blight, homelessness and crime.

“My father taught me that a mailman always delivers,” Mahan said. “I believe our government should too.”



THREE LITTLE PIGS WENT TO MARKET – Actually, there were more than five juvenile pigs foraging up near Grant Lake near the top of Quimby Rd in Evergreen last week. “Hopefully, they stay there,” said Evergreen resident photographer Wesley Lee of Fowler Creek.

VTA Trading Cards now available

Just in case you were wondering what the rarest trading card around is... we may have the answer: A VTA Trading Card! Starting this week, selected VTA bus and train operators have two limited edition trading cards to hand out to passengers. And they're free!

The cards feature the photographic art of VTA bus operator Danny Quintana, with five bus photos and five light rail train photos. On the back, each card features an interesting little factoid about public transit, along with helpful information about VTA. You can collect all ten to win prizes! Two new cards will be distributed each month. (More info on how to win prizes for collecting coming soon).

This week, you can find trading cards from certain drivers on routes 500, 523, 66, 52, 40, and 21. And certain light rail operators will have them as well. You just have to ask! Eventually, they will also be available at VTA Customer Service Centers at 55 w. Santa Clara Street, or 3331 North First Street, San Jose.

The cards released this week feature the VTA light rail train in front of Levi's Stadium and a VTA bus in a crystal ball.

About VTA
Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) is an independent special district that is responsible for bus, light rail and paratransit operations, transportation planning, and serves as the county's congestion management agency.

VTA to receive \$375M for its BART extension

The award helps secure federal funds

The State of California awarded \$375 million to the Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA) for its BART extension into Downtown San Jose and Santa Clara on Tuesday, January 31. The new award brings the state's total commitment through the Transit and Intercity Rail Capital Program (TIRCP) to \$1.125 billion. This infusion of funds is an important step for VTA to qualify for a federal contribution of roughly \$4.6 billion, approximately 50%

of the estimated project cost. "We are grateful for the allocation of TIRCP funds, and we celebrate the other transit agencies whose projects will also benefit from TIRCP resources," said VTA General Manager/CEO Carolyn Gonot. "This award brings VTA \$375 million closer to securing a historic federal investment in Silicon Valley mobility." In addition to vast mobility and environmental benefits, the investment in the 6-mile, four station



extension of the regional BART commuter rail system brings a robust return on investment through stimulating the regional economy with direct and indirect creation of some 75,000 jobs and by increasing the Gross State Product (GSP) through additional spending and wages. Early pre-construction activities are planned to start this spring with major construction beginning next year.

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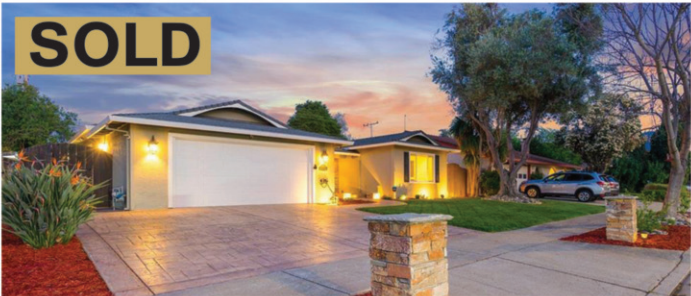
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Publishing



CATALYTIC CONVERTER ETCH AND PROTECT PROGRAM

**In memory of The Nguyen
and the Nguyen Family**

**Please join the San Jose Police Department and the
San Jose Police Foundation for the Catalytic
Converter Etching Program.**

**Etching a converter with your license plate or
VIN number will assist police to help track the
converter in the event it is stolen and recovered.**

EASY AS 1-2-3!
AND IT'S FREE!



1



**Make an appointment with
one of our partners by
calling your choice below.**

2



**Register your vehicle
for the program.**

3



Get Etched!

**THE FOLLOWING BUSINESSES ARE CURRENT SAN JOSE POLICE DEPARTMENT ETCH AND PROTECT PARTNERS. IF
YOU ARE AN AUTOMOTIVE BUSINESS OWNER WHO WISHES TO PARTNER WITH THE SAN JOSE POLICE
DEPARTMENT ETCH AND PROTECT PROGRAM, PLEASE CONTACT CAPTAIN TRAYER: 3301@SANJOSECA.GOV**

CAPITOL HONDA 745 CAPITOL EXPY, SAN JOSE 408-445-4422	STEVENS CREEK TOYOTA 4202 STEVENS CREEK BLVD. SAN JOSE 408-984-1234	SPEEDEE/MIDAS 1825 E. CAPITOL EXPY, SAN JOSE 408-531-0701
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Disclaimer: Etching the catalytic converter does not guarantee it will not be stolen, nor is it guarantee of recovery...but it could help!

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1622 MONTEVAL COURT



\$2,150,000 | 6 Bed | 3.5 Full Bath | 2554 Sq Ft | 12,013 Sq Ft Lot

TWO PRIMARY BEDROOMS (one on ground floor) in this desirable Montevideo area of Almaden Valley situated at the end of a quiet court. This beautiful home features new interior paint, carpeting, fixtures, lighting, luxury vinyl flooring, updated kitchen and baths, and includes a downstairs bedroom suite, and a rare 6 bedrooms. Quartz slab kitchen counters & backsplash, white cabinetry, new fixtures and hardware. Recessed lighting. Sunroom. Spacious backyard. Montevideo is one of Almaden's friendliest neighborhoods with activities including a 4th of July parade. There is a clubhouse, a pool and a baby pool, and a large grass area.



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The Swan has been the #1 Agent in Almaden Valley each year for the last 14 years as measured by Dollars per Agent Per Year. She is the only Almaden Valley specialist to have been nationally ranked and recognized twice by The Wall Street Journal/RealTrends for being in the Top 250 Agents in the US. Additionally, Swan is consistently among the Top 100 Agents in the SF Bay Area.



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